The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for ages 5 and up. The Pfizer vaccine is an mRNA vaccine. It is a 2-dose series with 3 weeks between each dose.

- For kids age 5-11: each dose is 10μg (1/3 of the adolescent/adult vaccine).
  - Since authorization, 9.5 million 5-11 year old’s have been vaccinated.
- For kids age 12-17: each dose is 30μg (same as the adult vaccine).
  - Since authorization, 17.1 million adolescents have been vaccinated.
- There are no COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for kids under 5 years old.

**The vaccine is effective.**

- Clinical trials showed 90-100% efficacy against severe disease.
- In the “real world,” the vaccine for 12+ year old’s is 81% effective against Omicron. For 5-11 year old’s, it is 48-71% effective against Omicron.

**Mild-to-moderate side effects are normal.**

- The most common side effects are fever, fatigue, headaches, chills, diarrhea, and muscle and joint pain. These usually only last a day or two.
- Rare side effects include swollen lymph nodes and skin sensitivity.

**Kids who get COVID-19 may have no symptoms or they may get very sick.**

- In 23 states, 1.26 million pediatric COVID-19 hospitalizations have been reported.
  - 30-50% of hospitalized kids with COVID-19 had no underlying conditions.
  - Hospitalization rates for COVID-19 are higher than for the flu for 7+ year old’s.
- Over 1,000 pediatric deaths have been reported. Although this seems low compared to adults, COVID-19 is now a top 10 cause of death for kids in the United States.
- Long COVID is reported among 7-8% of kids.

**COVID spreads more easily in unvaccinated communities. Vaccinating kids will help slow spread.**

**It's important for kids to get vaccinated.**

- Based on our knowledge of mRNA and the human body, we do not expect long-term side effects from the vaccines:
  - Vaccine ingredients leave the body very quickly. mRNA is very fragile and degrades within 72 hours. Ingredients do not linger in the body.
  - mRNA vaccines are not made of actual virus, so vaccines can't give you COVID-19.
  - There is no evidence that the vaccine can impact fertility.
  - Myocarditis (heart inflammation) has been linked to mRNA vaccines, but it is rare.
    - Children and adults are much more likely to get myocarditis from the COVID-19 virus than they are from the COVID-19 vaccine.
    - It is more common for young males and more common for the 2nd dose.
    - No myocarditis deaths have been linked to the vaccines.

**Long-term side effects from the vaccines are highly unlikely.**

**We do know that getting COVID-19 can lead to serious long-term health problems for kids.**

**Kids who already had COVID-19 should still get vaccinated.**

- Some people can get good protection from "natural" immunity. But, protection can go away over time.
- **Getting a vaccine after recovering from COVID provides extra, more reliable protection.**
- The vaccine protects against variants (like Omicron) better than "natural" immunity.

**Bonus facts...**

- Health care providers and experts support COVID-19 vaccines.
- Fully vaccinated kids will not need to quarantine if they get exposed (unless they have COVID-19 symptoms).
- It is impossible for mRNA vaccines to change DNA.

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Adapted from Your Local Epidemiologist (Dr. Katelyn Jetelina, MPH PhD) and Barry-Eaton District Health Department, March 2022