

## Fact sheet: Immunisation providers vaccinating children aged 5 to 11

All South Australians aged 5 to 11 are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

Children aged 5 to 11 can get the paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at most SA Health vaccination clinics (including some mobile clinics), and selected GPs, Respiratory Clinics and pharmacies.

Children aged 6 to 11 can get a reduced dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at selected GPs and pharmacies. This is half of the dose given to people aged 12 and over.

Vaccinating children aged 5 to 11 against COVID-19 decreases spread of the disease to all age groups, as well as reduces the child's risk of rare but serious COVID-19 complications, such as paediatric inflammatory multi-system syndrome (PIMS-TS), and long COVID-19.

### COVID-19 VACCINE FOR CHILDREN

The paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for children aged 5 to 11. It is one third of the dose given to those aged 12 and over.

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is available as a half dose for children aged 6 to 11.

### SCHEDULE

The paediatric Pfizer vaccine and the half dose Moderna vaccine should be given in two doses 8 weeks apart.

The COVID-19 vaccine can be administered on the same day as an influenza vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines can also be co-administered with other vaccines if required, including routine childhood vaccines. Parents and legal guardians should be aware that this may be associated with an increase in mild to moderate adverse reactions.

It is important that children receive the correct vaccine for their age. If a child receives their first dose when they were 11 years old, and they turn 12 before their second dose, it is safe for them to receive the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for people aged 12 years and over for their second dose. The recommended dose interval is 8 weeks.

The dose interval between paediatric Pfizer vaccine primary course dose 1 and 2 can be shortened in special circumstances to a minimum of 3 weeks, for higher risk groups ([such as those with medical risk factors for severe illness](#)), or before international travel.

The dose interval between paediatric primary course doses 1 and 2 of Moderna vaccine can be shortened in the same special circumstances to a minimum of 4 weeks.

The benefits of earlier protection should be weighed against the benefits of the longer dose interval, such as a slightly lower risk of adverse events and a longer duration of protection.

For more information;

[ATAGI Clinical guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines.](#)

[Recommended and variations on vaccination schedule](#) on the Australian Government Department of Health website.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommend severely immunocompromised children aged 5 to 11 receive a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine two months after their second dose.

For more information, visit [ATAGI – Provider guide to COVID-19 vaccination of people with immunocompromise](#).

## VACCINATION AFTER COVID-19 INFECTION

ATAGI recommend that all people should wait for three months after confirmed SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) infection before they receive their next COVID-19 vaccine dose. The next scheduled dose should then be given as soon as possible after this period.

## UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If a child has an underlying medical condition and is medically unstable, you should discuss COVID-19 vaccination with their parent/legal guardian. You may decide to refer the child to the [specialist immunisation service](#) at the Women's and Children's Hospital if required.

ATAGI recommend severely immunocompromised children aged 5 to 11 receive a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine, two months after their second dose.

## SIDE EFFECTS

Common adverse reactions include pain, redness and swelling at the injection site. To date, no serious adverse events were reported in the clinical trials for children aged 5 to 11.

Systemic adverse reactions after both the first and second dose were less frequently observed in children aged 5 to 11 than in people aged 16 to 25.

Studies have shown that myocarditis and pericarditis in children under the age of 15 years of age is rare. Refer to the [ATAGI recommendations on Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine use in children aged 5 to 11 years](#).


## COVID-19 PACKAGING, STORAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

### STORAGE, DILUTION AND DOSES

#### PAEDIATRIC PFIZER COVID-19 VACCINE (5 TO 11)

The paediatric Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 will be distributed to vaccine providers in different packaging to the current vaccines.

It will be clearly differentiated by being dispensed from **orange-capped vials** instead of grey or purple capped vials.

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Description               | Paediatric Comirnaty (Pfizer) COVID-19 Vaccine (Tris/Sucrose Presentation)<br><b>Dilute prior to use</b> |
| Age Group                 | 5 years to less than 12 years  |
| Vial Cap Colour           | Orange<br>            |
| Dose and volume           | 10 mcg/0.2 mL  |
| Doses per vial            | 10 doses per vial (after dilution)   |
| Dilution required         | Yes<br>Dilute with 1.3 mL sodium chloride 9 mg/mL  |
| Recommended dose interval | 8 weeks  |

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Approved dose interval                            | 3 to 8 weeks*                    |
| Third dose (primary course for immunocompromised) | Yes (2 months after second dose) |
| Booster dose                                      | No                               |

\*A minimum three-week interval can be considered in special circumstances as outlined in [ATAGI Clinical guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines](#).


ATAGI recommends that, when possible, pre-drawn doses kept at room temperature should be used within 1 hour to minimise any potential risk of infection.

For more information, see the [ATAGI recommendations on Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine use in children aged 5 to 11 years](#).

## MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINE (6 TO 11)

There is no specific paediatric formulation for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

The same formulation of the Moderna vaccine is used for adults, adolescents, and children aged 6-11 years. However, the dosage is lower (50µg; 0.25mL) for children under 12 years and is the same dose used as a booster for individuals aged 18 years and over.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Description                                       | Spikevax (Elasomeran) Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine<br><b>No dilute required</b>                |
| Age Group   | 6 years to less than 12 years  |
| Vial Cap Colour                                   | Red<br> |
| Dose and volume                                   | <b>0.25mL(50µg).</b>   |
| Doses per vial                                    | 20 doses per vial (after dilution) if all for 0.25ml doses                                 |
| Dilution required                                 | Not required   |
| Recommended dose interval                         | 8 weeks  |
| Approved dose interval                            | 4 to 8 weeks*  |
| Third dose (primary course for immunocompromised) | Yes (2 months after second dose)   |
| Booster dose                                      | No   |

\*A minimum four week interval can be considered in special circumstances as outlined in [ATAGI Clinical guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines](#).

ATAGI recommends that, when possible, pre-drawn doses kept at room temperature should be used within 1 hour to minimise any potential risk of infection.

For more information, see the [ATAGI recommendations on the use of Spikevax \(Moderna\) COVID-19 vaccine in children aged 6 to 11 years](#).

## ADMINISTRATION

The vaccine is given as an intramuscular (IM) injection. The preferred site is in the deltoid muscle.

The primary course for children receiving paediatric Pfizer or half dose Moderna is **two doses given eight (8) weeks apart**.

For severely immunocompromised children aged 5 to 11, a third primary dose is given two (2) months after the second dose.

## **ERROR MITIGATION**

### **PAEDIATRIC PFIZER COVID-19 VACCINE (5 TO 11)**

The **orange-capped vial** paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine should be stored, diluted and drawn up in separate areas.

Once diluted the vaccine should be clearly labelled and securely stored separately.

Two clinicians need to check all vaccines separately to ensure:

- > Correct vaccine for the age of the recipient
- > Correct dosing interval as applicable
- > Correct amount of dilution for that vaccine
- > Correct dosage amount for the recipient
- > Correct labelling for that vaccine once thawed and diluted
- > Correct storage and labelling, with clearly defined separate areas for paediatric and adolescent/adult formulations

### **MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINE (6 TO 11)**

The same formulation of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is used for all eligible age groups, with dosages varying depending on age and scheduled dose.

Health professionals involved in administering Moderna to children aged 6 to 11 must ensure diligent checking processes are in place with a minimum of two clinicians. Two clinicians need to check all vaccines separately to ensure:

- > Correct vaccine for the age recipient
- > Correct dosing interval as applicable
- > Correct dosage amount for the recipient
- > Correct labelling for that vaccine once thawed
- > Consideration for separate clinics/times for children and adolescents/adults if possible
- > Correct storage and labelling, with clearly defined separate areas for paediatric and adolescent/adult dosages if pre-prepared in clinics offering Moderna vaccination to all age groups.

Program Error mitigation resources are available at [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/covidvaccineclinical](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/covidvaccineclinical)

## **RESOURCES**

For more information, see the [ATAGI clinical guidance for COVID-19 vaccine providers](#) and visit the [COVID-19 vaccination advice for vaccine providers](#) page on the Australian Government Department of Health website. The Australian Government Department of Health website also has a range of [translated information](#).

For information about the use of the COVID-19 vaccines in South Australia, visit

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/covidvaccineclinical](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/covidvaccineclinical) or call the SA COVID-19 Information Line on 1800 253 787.

For answers to general questions about the COVID-19 vaccines, read our [COVID-19 vaccine frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#).

---

For more information

**SA COVID-19 Information Line 1800 253 787**  
**[covidvaccine.sa.gov.au](https://covidvaccine.sa.gov.au)**



**Government  
of South Australia**

SA Health