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Tips on Talking to Kids About the COVID-19 Vaccine

Health officials are encouraging parents and guardians of age-eligible children to schedule an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine and prepare to support them through the process.

Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services Behavioral Health Director Emi Botzler-Rodgers said, "Talking to kids about the importance of getting vaccinated starts with listening to them about what their concerns are. There is so much information circulating about risks and myths, that it is our job to fact check and quell fears, so our youth can feel comfortable and safe getting vaccinated.

"From there we can talk to them about how important it is to get vaccinated so we can keep our community safe and return to as much of our previous activities and way of life as possible."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 12 years and older get a COVID-19 vaccination to help protect against the virus. "Widespread vaccination is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic," the CDC said. "Getting your child or teen vaccinated can bring you one step closer to enjoying the activities you miss."

Currently, the two-dose Pfizer vaccine is available for anyone age 12 and older. Moderna recently announced it plans to apply to the Food and Drug Administration for authorization to use its two-dose vaccine in children ages 12 to 17, and [Johnson & Johnson](#) began studying its one-dose vaccine in 12- to 17-year-olds in April.

The CDC advises that, just as in adults, children may experience some common side effects like chills and a headache after getting vaccinated, which are normal signs that their body is building protection. "These side effects might affect your child's ability to do daily activities, but they should go away after a few days," the CDC said.

To help identify and minimize mild side effects, the CDC recommends:

- Use a cool, damp cloth to help reduce redness, soreness and/or swelling in the place where the shot was given.
- Reduce fever with a cool sponge bath.
- Offer liquids more often. It is normal for some children to eat less during the 24 hours after getting vaccines.

- Ask your child's doctor if you can give your child a non-aspirin pain reliever.
- Pay extra attention to your child for a few days. If you see something that concerns you, call your child's doctor.

In preparation for the vaccine visit, the CDC recommends having a chat with your child, and to:

- Be honest with your child. Explain that shots can pinch or sting, but that it won't hurt for long.
- Engage other family members, especially older siblings, to support your child.
- Avoid telling scary stories or making threats about shots.
- Remind your child that vaccines can keep them healthy.

Read more from the CDC here: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/adolescents.html?fbclid=IwAR2i6xn-CDH053mTaX4H5SYh0K-fM6-8CgGS51ys-XW51cf1y0_6xSK2bQI](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/adolescents.html?fbclid=IwAR2i6xn-CDH053mTaX4H5SYh0K-fM6-8CgGS51ys-XW51cf1y0_6xSK2bQI).

View the Humboldt County Data Dashboard online at humboldt.gov/dashboard, or go to humboldt.gov/DashboardArchives to download today's data.

For the most recent COVID-19 information, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or [cdph.ca.gov](https://www.cdph.ca.gov). Local information is available at humboldt.gov or by contacting covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us or calling 707-441-5000.

Sign up for COVID-19 vaccination: [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov)

Check for vaccine availability at a local pharmacy: [Vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov)

Local COVID-19 vaccine information: humboldt.gov/VaccineInfo

Humboldt County COVID-19 Data Dashboard: humboldt.gov/Dashboard

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