



Points to Note and Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19 Vaccination for Children and Adolescents



1) Why should children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years receive COVID-19 vaccine?

In the early stage of the COVID-19 epidemic, the infection rate among children was relatively low. However, with the global pandemic of COVID-19 infection, overseas data show that the infection rate of children and adolescents is constantly rising. Under the spreading threat posed by mutant virus strains, children and adolescents who are yet to receive vaccination should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection. Vaccination is crucial to protect children and adolescents against COVID-19 disease to effectively decrease the rates of serious illness and death. Vaccination enables children and adolescents to resume normal school and daily life as soon as possible.

According to the recommendation of the Joint Scientific Committees joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (JSC-EAP), children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 years could choose to receive either BioNTech(Comirnaty) vaccine or Sinovac(CoronaVac) vaccine. Children aged 3 to 4 years can receive Sinovac vaccine.

2) How many doses of COVID-19 vaccination do children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years need?

For Sinovac vaccine as primary series

For CoronaVac (Sinovac) vaccine:							
Age group	1 st dose	Interval	2 nd dose	Interval	3 rd dose	Interval	4 th dose
3 -11 years old	●	28 days	●	● : 90 days ★ : 28 days	●	N/A 90 days (only for ★)	✗
12 -17 years old	★		★	★	★		★

For BioNTech vaccine as primary series:

For Comirnaty (BioNTech) vaccine:							
Age group	1 st dose	Interval	2 nd dose	Interval	3 rd dose	Interval	4 th dose
5 -11 years old	●	● : 56 days	●	28 days (only for ★)	★	N/A 90 days (only for ★)	✗
12 -17 years old	★	★ : 21 days	★	● : 150 days ★ : 28 days	● ★		★



General public
(except COVID-19 recovered persons)



Immunocompromised individuals
(except COVID-19 recovered persons)



Not yet recommended

- After completion of the first two doses, those recommended to receive additional dose(s) may choose to receive the same brand or another brand of vaccine.

- Emerging data suggest that two doses of BioNTech vaccine with a longer interval would result in better immune response, and the risk of myocarditis and/or pericarditis would be lowered. In view of the situation of COVID-19 in Hong Kong and overseas practice, JSC-EAP recommended two doses of BioNTech vaccine at 8 weeks (i.e. 56 days) interval for children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 years.
- For children and adolescents with special needs (e.g. study abroad) who choose to advance the second dose to after 21 days from their first dose, they need to bring along a signed parent/guardian consent form, and must be accompanied by their parent or guardian in person to the vaccination venue on the day of vaccination by walk-in.
- Children and adolescents are recommended by experts to receive BioNTech vaccine intramuscularly at anterolateral aspect of mid-thigh, although their preference for an injection at upper arm would be respected. They can wear loose-fitting, easy to roll-up or other suitable clothing for ease of vaccination.
- Immunocompromised persons below 18 years old have to bring the signed parent/guardian consent form and the doctor's letter, and be accompanied by their parent or guardian in person to the vaccination venue on the day of vaccination. For details of the specific groups of immunocompromised patients, please refer to the thematic website FAQ 34 (<https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/faq>).
- For eligible children between 3 and 11 years old who cannot make online bookings (e.g. children who are not holding Hong Kong Identity Card or Hong Kong Birth Certificate, recovered children, children who received COVID-19 vaccine outside Hong Kong, etc.), they can bring along the completed consent forms and be accompanied by an adult to go to the CVCs (except the ones run by private hospital) at the recommended vaccination interval according to experts' advice. CVC staff will reserve small amount of daily quota for their vaccination.

3) Is there any difference in the ingredients and dosage of COVID-19 vaccine for children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years and adults?

Sinovac vaccine: There is no difference in the ingredient and dosage for children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years and adults.

BioNTech vaccine:

There is no difference in the ingredient and dosage for children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years and that for adults.

The dosage for children aged 5 to 11 years is one-third of a dose for adults, but the ingredient is the same as that for adults.

If children received one-third of an adult dose of BioNTech vaccine as the 1st dose and then turned 12 years old by the time of the 2nd dose, they should continue to receive one-third of an adult dose of BioNTech vaccine for the 2nd dose. However, their parent/guardian can also choose to receive the full dose for the 2nd dose for their children.

If children aged 12 years or below received one-third of an adult dose of BioNTech vaccine as the 2nd dose, they can choose to receive either one-third of an adult dose or

a full dose as their 3rd dose as long as they have reached 12 years old but not yet reached 13 years old. If they have reached 13 years old already and choose BioNTech vaccine, a full dose of BioNTech vaccine for adult should be given.

4) Is COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective for children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years?

Phase I and II trials on the use of Sinovac vaccine in children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years showed that Sinovac vaccine is immunogenic, safe and well-tolerated. In addition, ongoing phase III trials also showed that Sinovac vaccine was well-tolerated in this age group. Available information from mass vaccination campaigns in mainland China among children and adolescents 3 to 17 years old (with over 210 million doses of Sinovac vaccine administered) has not shown major safety issues.

BioNTech vaccine has been assessed by experts and considered safe and effective.

The JSC-EAP opined that both vaccines are expected to lower the risk of severe disease or death.

In order to prevent outbreaks in schools, vaccinated children and adolescents should continue to observe personal hygiene and various control measures after returning to schools.

5) What are the possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccine for children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years?

Sinovac vaccine:

Most side effects for those aged 3 to 17 years are mild. The most common reaction after Sinovac vaccination is injection site pain.

Other common side effects	Injection site induration and swelling, fever, abnormal skin and mucous membrane, decreased appetite, nausea, headache, cough, fatigue, rhinorrhea and oropharyngeal pain
Uncommon side effects	Injection site pruritus and erythema, hypersensitivity, diarrhoea, vomiting, myalgia, laryngeal pain, pharyngeal erythema, upper respiratory tract infection, abdominal pain, upper abdominal pain, abdominal distention, dizziness, lymphadenitis, chest discomfort and blepharitis

BioNTech vaccine:

The overall safety profile of BioNTech in adolescents 12 to 15 years of age is similar to that in those 16 years old or above.

Very common side effects	Injection site pain and swelling; tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, diarrhoea, fever (Some of these side effects were slightly more frequent in adolescents 12 to 15 years than in adults)
Common side effects	Injection site redness, nausea and vomiting

Uncommon adverse effects	Enlarged lymph nodes, feeling unwell, arm pain, insomnia, injection site itching, allergic reactions (e.g. rash, itching), feeling weak or lack of energy/sleepy, decreased appetite, excessive sweating and night sweats
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Myocarditis and pericarditis are known adverse reactions of BioNTech, and the majority of cases occur after the second dose in adolescents. Adolescents should avoid strenuous exercise for one week after BioNTech vaccination.

6) Can children and adolescents aged 3 to 17 years receive COVID-19 vaccination if he / she has received / will receive another vaccine recently?

Making reference to overseas practice and recommendation of the World Health Organisation, experts had no objection to exercising flexibility by allowing provision of COVID-19 vaccines with seasonal influenza vaccine or other childhood immunisation vaccines on the same visit for vaccination under informed consent for administrative convenience and achieving better coverage.

7) For children and adolescents who acquired COVID-19 infection before, how many doses of COVID-19 vaccine should they receive after recovery?

According to the latest Consensus Interim Recommendation of the Joint Scientific Committees joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (JSC-EAP), vaccination arrangement for recovered persons takes into consideration the following factors: age group, whether one belongs to specific groups of immunocompromised persons, which brand of COVID-19 vaccine one intends to receive and the number of vaccine doses received before recovery. For detailed information on number of doses required and the respective intervals, please refer to "Factsheet on COVID-19 Vaccination for Persons with Prior COVID-19 Infection":

https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/factsheet_priorCOVID19infection_ENG.pdf

COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to persons who are unsure if they had a previous COVID-19 infection or persons who do not have their recovery record in the Department of Health's system as if they have not been infected. COVID-19 vaccine is safe in persons with evidence of previous SARS-CoV-2 infection, and prior COVID-19 screening before administration of COVID-19 vaccine is not required.

8) Where can children and adolescents at 3 to 17 years old get COVID-19 vaccines?

Sinovac vaccine:

- Arrangement made by school: Please contact the school enrolled for details.
- Designated private doctors or clinics: Students can make an appointment for vaccination of Sinovac vaccine directly with one of more than a thousand private doctors or clinics under the Vaccination Programme (The list of private doctors/clinics is available at the designated website of the Vaccination Programme www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/VSS), or can attend the vaccination activities

arranged by organisers (organisations, companies etc.) at non-clinic setting (the list of doctors providing vaccination at non-clinic setting is available at the designated website:

https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/list_vssdr_covid_non_clinic_eng.pdf).

- Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs), designated General Outpatient Clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority or designated Student Health Service Centres (SHSCs) of the Department of Health:

Bookings can be made through the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme website (<https://booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp>) directly.

BioNTech vaccine:

❖ **Adolescents aged 12 to 17 years**

- Arrangement made by school: Please contact the school enrolled for details.
- Private healthcare institutions:

Please visit https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/list_vssdr_covid_bnt_pilot_eng.pdf for the contact details of enrolled private healthcare institutions for making enquiries and appointment for vaccination direct.

- Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs) or designated General Outpatient Clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority: Bookings can be made through the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme website (<https://booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp>) directly.
- Hospital COVID-19 Vaccination Stations: Mainly to enable patients visiting the hospital for follow-up appointments and visitors, in particular patients of specialist out-patient clinics, to receive BioNTech vaccination without prior booking when they have their follow-up medical consultation. Please browse the website for details:

<https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/programme>

(List of Hospital COVID-19 Vaccination Stations:
https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/HA_HCVS_Location_ENG.pdf)

❖ **Children aged 5 to 11 years**

- As special dilution procedure is needed for BioNTech vaccination in children, **Children Community Vaccination Centres (CCVCs)** were set up by the Government for children aged 5 to 11 years to receive BioNTech vaccines.
- Children **cannot** receive BioNTech vaccination in venue other than CCVCs.
- Bookings at CCVCs can be made by parents / guardians for the children through the thematic website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk)

- Arrangement made by school: Please contact the school enrolled for details.

Persons aged below 18 years should bring along the Consent Form for COVID-19 Vaccination completed by their parents or guardians for COVID-19 Vaccination.

For children aged 11 years or below, an accompanying adult (e.g. adult relative, domestic helper or school teacher if the child receives vaccination via group arrangements by schools) is required to be present physically at the venue on the day of vaccination.

For immunocompromised children and adolescents receiving the third or the fourth dose, an accompanying parent or guardian is required to be present physically at the venue on the day of vaccination. They should also bring the relevant doctor's letter to the vaccination venue.

Children and adolescents need to bring the original identity document to the vaccination venue on the day of vaccination. If the identity document of the children (e.g. birth certificate) does not bear a photo, please remember to bring their latest student's handbook bearing their photograph for verification.

9) For children and adolescents who got COVID-19 vaccines outside Hong Kong which were not Sinovac or BioNTech, what should they do?

For persons who are partially vaccinated outside Hong Kong with locally unavailable COVID-19 vaccines on the "List of COVID-19 Vaccines Recognised for Specified Purposes" and under the World Health Organization's Emergency Use Listing, the JSC-EAP recommended them to complete their vaccination course with vaccines using the same platform or any suitable locally available alternative at least four weeks after the previous dose according to their needs. For those who had fully or partially been vaccinated with vaccines not on the aforesaid lists, they are recommended to start over with vaccines available in Hong Kong following the local recommended schedule.

10) How can I use the electronic ways to access the vaccination record?

A paper vaccination record will be provided to the children and adolescents after receiving vaccine. For accessing the electronic version of the COVID-19 vaccination record, parents or guardians could use the Electronic Vaccination and Testing Record System (<https://www.evt.gov.hk>) to download the electronic vaccination record; alternatively, they could register the Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHealth) online (<http://apps.ehealth.gov.hk>). Please refer to website (<http://www.ehealth.gov.hk>) or contact eHealth Registration Office at 3467 6300 for more details.

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Please refer <https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/> for the most updated information



更多防疫資訊

For more information on fighting the virus:

www.coronavirus.gov.hk



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