



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



1) Why should children and adolescents aged 6 months 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 analysis from the University of Hong Kong, 1,144 children aged 11 years or below who were hospitalized due to COVID-19 infection during the fifth wave of the epidemic, Paediatric Intensive Care Unit admission rate and mortality rate were 1.8% and 0.2% respectively, which are twice or more as high compared to seasonal influenza.

2) What types of COVID-19 vaccines are available in Hong Kong under the Government Vaccination Programme?

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines available under the programme, please browse Frequently Asked Question 3 (https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106953.html#FAQ_A3). For children and adolescents, if they choose to receive mRNA vaccine, they are recommended to receive the XBB.1.5 vaccine for completing their initial or booster dose (Free booster dose is applicable to immunocompromised children and adolescents under the Government Programme). With regard to different brands of XBB.1.5 mRNA vaccines, the Government will base on the vaccine availability to supply age-appropriate vaccine to children and adolescents. Eligible persons may still choose to receive inactivated vaccines.

3) How many doses of COVID-19 vaccination do children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years need for initial doses?

Initial doses Initial doses	For inactivated vaccine 如選擇滅活疫苗		For mRNA vaccine 如選擇信使核糖核酸疫苗 mRNA	
Group 組別	1st to 2nd dose 第一劑至第二劑	2nd to 3rd dose 第二劑至第三劑	1st to 2nd dose 第一劑至第二劑	2nd to 3rd dose 第二劑至第三劑
6 months - 4 years old 6 months - 4 years old	28 days	90 days	56 days	90 days
5 - 17 years old 5 - 17 years old	28 days	90 days	56 days	150 days
Immunocompromised 免疫力弱	28 days	28 days	28 days	28 days

- For immunocompromised children and adolescent aged below 18 years, if they have only completed three doses, they may follow the recommended schedule for immunocompromised persons to receive the next dose 90 days after 3rd dose free of charge. 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 28 (https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106953.html#FAQ_C28). Please also consult your healthcare professionals for details.
- It is advised to complete the first two doses with the same product when possible. For those who developed severe side effects after the initial dose and would need to receive another brand for the second dose, please obtain relevant doctor's certification letter (including the reasons to receive another brand for second dose) from your attending doctor or family doctor and attend the vaccination venue. Health care professionals will arrange the vaccination based on individual circumstances.
- After completion of the first two doses, those are recommended to receive additional dose(s) may choose to receive the same brand or another brand of vaccine. The interval between third dose and second dose should be given at the recommended interval of the brand of vaccine chosen for 1st and 2nd dose. For example, for persons who have received inactivated vaccine for the first two doses, the 3rd dose of COVID-19 vaccine should be given at an interval of 90 days after the 2nd dose.
- Emerging data suggest that two doses of mRNA 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 recommended first two doses of mRNA vaccine at 8 weeks (i.e. 56 days) interval for uninfected children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years.
- For children and adolescents with personal needs who can choose to advance the second dose of mRNA vaccine to after 28 days from their first dose under informed consent after consideration of individual risk and benefit. 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 mRNA vaccine intramuscularly at anterolateral aspect of mid-thigh, although their preference for an injection at upper arm (not applicable to infants) would be respected. Children and adolescents are recommended to receive inactivated vaccine intramuscularly at upper arm, and healthcare professionals will arrange the vaccination for infants at thigh when necessary. They can wear loose-fitting, easy to roll-up or other suitable clothing for ease of vaccination.

- For eligible children between 6 months 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 vaccination venues (except for those required prior booking) at the recommended vaccination interval according to experts' advice. Staff at vaccination venues will reserve small amount of daily quota for their vaccination. As the arrangement on vaccination venues is subject to change, please check the COVID-19 webpage at <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106952.html> before you make a visit.

4) Who can receive additional booster in 2023/24?

Under the Government Programme, immunocompromised children and adolescent who have completed initial doses may receive an additional booster free of charge in 2023/24, 180 days after last dose received or recovery from COVID-19 infection (whichever is later).

An additional booster (self-paid) in 2023/24 may be considered at least 180 days after the last dose or recovery from COVID-19 infection (whichever is later) for children and adolescent aged 6 months to 17 years with comorbidities based on personal choice as recommended by experts if they have completed the initial doses. Apart from vaccine used under the Government Vaccination Programme, there are other COVID-19 vaccines registered under Cap. 138A in Hong Kong. Citizens may consult a family doctor on the supply of registered COVID-19 vaccine in private market and consider receiving the vaccination for personal protection outside the Government Vaccination Programme **at their own expenses**.

5) Is there any difference in the ingredients and dosage of Sinovac / BioNTech / Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years and adults?

Sinovac vaccine: There is no difference in the ingredient and dosage for children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years and adults.

BioNTech vaccine:

12-17 years old:

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

5-11 years old:

The dosage for children aged 5 to 11 years is 10 micrograms (mcg) per dose (i.e. one-third of the dosage for adult), the active ingredient is the same as the vaccines given to adults.

For the first dose, children should receive the recommended age-appropriate vaccine and dosage based on their age on the day of the vaccination. If children received a 10 mcg dose of BioNTech vaccine as the 1st / 2nd dose and then turned 12 years old (but not yet reached 13 years old) by the time of the 2nd / 3rd dose, can choose to receive a 10 mcg dose of BioNTech vaccine or an adult dose for the 2nd / 3rd dose for their children.

If they have reached 13 years old already and choose BioNTech vaccine for the 2nd / 3rd dose, an adult dose of BioNTech vaccine should be given. Please also note question 8 for the venues information for 10 mcg dose and adult dose. If you cannot arrange booking for a 10 mcg dose, please visit the Children Community Vaccination Centre by walk-in.

The allowed vaccination arrangement for children transition from 11 to 12 years old is appended below:

Transition (11-12-12yo)	1st Dose (11 years old)	Interval	2nd Dose (12 years old)	Interval	3rd Dose (12 years old)
Scenario A	10 mcg	56 days	10 mcg	150 days	10 mcg
Scenario B	10 mcg	56 days	10 mcg	150 days	30 mcg
Scenario C	10 mcg	56 days	30 mcg	150 days	30 mcg

Transition (11-11-12yo)	1st Dose (11 years old)	Interval	2nd Dose (11 years old)	Interval	3rd Dose (12 years old)
Scenario D	10 mcg	56 days	10 mcg	150 days	10 mcg
Scenario E	10 mcg	56 days	10 mcg	150 days	30 mcg

6 months to 4 years old:

The dosage for toddler aged 6 months to 4 years old is 3 micrograms (mcg) per dose (toddler formulation). The active ingredient is the same as the vaccines given to adults.

For the first dose, toddler should receive the recommended age-appropriate vaccine and dosage based on their age on the day of vaccination. If toddler received a 3 mcg dose of BioNTech vaccine as the 1st / 2nd dose and then turned 5 years old (but not yet reached 6 years old) by the time of the 2nd / 3rd dose, they can choose to receive same dosage (a 3 mcg dose) for their 2nd / 3rd dose. If they choose to receive one dose of 10mcg BioNTech vaccine after reaching 5 years old as second dose, an additional dose of 10mcg BioNTech is recommended (as third dose).

If you cannot arrange booking for a 3 mcg dose, please visit the Children Community Vaccination Centre by walk-in.

The allowed vaccination arrangement for children transition from 4 to 5 years old is appended below:

Transition (4-5-5yo)	1st Dose (4 years old)	Interval	2nd Dose (5 years old)	Interval	3rd Dose (5 years old)
Scenario A	3 mcg	56 days	3 mcg	90 days	3 mcg
Scenario B	3 mcg	56 days	3 mcg	90 days	10 mcg
Scenario C	3 mcg	56 days	10 mcg	150 days	10 mcg

Transition (4-4-5yo)	1st Dose (4 years old)	Interval	2nd Dose (4 years old)	Interval	3rd Dose (5 years old)
Scenario D	3 mcg	56 days	3 mcg	90 days	3 mcg
Scenario E	3 mcg	56 days	3 mcg	90 days	10 mcg

Moderna vaccine:

The Moderna XBB vaccine currently used under the Government Vaccination Programme is suitable for individuals aged 6 months or above. Each dosage used for adolescents aged 12 to 17 years old is the same as the dosage for adults (i.e. 50 mcg). Each dosage used for toddlers and children aged 6 months to 11 years is half of the dosage of adults (i.e. 25 mcg).

6) Is COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective for children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years?

Experts opined that currently approved COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong are highly effective to lower the risk of severe disease or death.

BioNTech and Moderna vaccine have been assessed by experts and considered safe and effective.

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. In addition, the early clinical trial data from two doses of Sinovac vaccine in children down to six months of age showed that the vaccine was immunogenic and had no new safety concerns.

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

7) What are the possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccine for children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years?

Please refer to relevant Vaccination Fact Sheet or consult healthcare providers for details.

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

COVID-19 vaccines can be co-administered with, or at any time before or after, any other vaccines including live attenuated vaccines under informed consent. If clients / parents of children wish to space out COVID-19 vaccine with live attenuated vaccines (e.g. Measles, Mumps, Rubella & Varicella (MMRV) Vaccine; Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV)), an interval of 14 days is sufficient.

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

Recovered persons should take one dose less than uninfected persons. Recovery is defined as 14 days after the date of first documented positive test (nucleic acid test or rapid antigen test). The recovered persons should receive the remaining doses according to the interval for the next dose. The actual number of doses given would be marked as the dose sequence in the vaccination record. For detailed recommendation, please refer to "Factsheet on COVID-19 Vaccination for Persons with Prior COVID-19 Infection":

https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/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.

10) Where can children and adolescents at 6 months to 17 years old get COVID-19 vaccines and what documents to bring?

For latest vaccination arrangement and venues, please refer to the COVID-19 webpage at <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106952.html>.

Documents to bring:

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

For children aged 3 to 11 years, 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. 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. Should the identity document of the child does not bear a photo and the child does not have

student's handbook or other identity document with photo, discretion will be exercised to verify the identity of the child by other means in light of the circumstances.

For children aged below 3 years, parents are required to present the original copy of the identity document (e.g. birth certificate) of the child and bring along a consent form on the date of vaccination of the children. The children should be accompanied by their parents/guardians in person when receiving vaccination. If the vaccination is arranged by the school / centre in group, the accompanying teacher or staff should bring the aforementioned required documents and be responsible in clearly indicating the identity of each child.

For immunocompromised children and adolescents, 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.

11) For children and adolescents who got COVID-19 vaccines outside Hong Kong, what should they do?

For those eligible public who received COVID-19 vaccine outside Hong Kong, please bring along with your identity document, proof of your previous dose vaccination record (with date, venue of vaccination and type of vaccine) issued outside Hong Kong on the vaccination day. If they cannot make an appointment for the next dose with correct dose sequence of the vaccine through the online system, they may directly go to the vaccination venues for vaccination. Vaccination may be provided by staff after clarification and consideration of relevant details, including those of the previous dose vaccination. For details, please refer to FAQ 24 and 31 (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106953.html>)

12) 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 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.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106934.html> for the most updated information



新冠疫苗接種網站
COVID-19 Vaccination Website

www.covidvaccine.gov.hk



衛生防護中心Facebook專頁
Centre for Health Protection Facebook Fanpage
fb.com/CentreforHealthProtection

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