Most youth who get COVID-19 experience mild symptoms, however some may become very sick and require hospitalization. Others may experience serious, long-lasting health problems.

The potential harms of COVID-19 make the vaccine a recommended choice for everyone who is eligible to receive it - including youth.

Clinical studies have proven that the vaccines are safe and effective for youth 12 to 17.

**Why should young people be vaccinated?**

No. Youth 12 to 18 have the right to accept or refuse health care, including vaccinations. Some conditions apply: a health care provider must consider the treatment to be in the best interests of the minor and believe that the minor understands the benefits and risks of the care.

**Do youth 12 to 18 require parental/guardian consent to receive their vaccine?**

The SpikeVax (Moderna) and Comirnaty (Pfizer-BioNTech) mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are approved by Health Canada for ages 12 and up.

**What COVID-19 vaccines are available to youth?**
What about children under 12?

Vaccines for children ages 5-11 will be rolled out in November 2021. The first approved vaccine for this age group will be Comirnaty (Pfizer-BioNTech). Vaccinations for this age group will require a parent or guardian's consent. Parents can begin registering their children on the provincial website now.

Are there any side effects from the vaccines?

Side effects from the vaccine are usually minor and may include soreness, redness, swelling and itchiness at or around the injection site. Other reactions may include tiredness, headache, low-grade fever, chills, muscle or joint soreness, swollen lymph nodes under the armpit, nausea and vomiting.

After getting any vaccine there is an extremely rare chance of experiencing hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. If this happens, it will take place soon after the injection and the immunizing health-care provider will treat it. This is the main reason why vaccine clinics require people to wait 15 minutes before leaving the facility.

The benefits of protection from the danger of COVID-19 far outweigh the mild side effects that may result from a vaccine.

To register for a vaccine clinic visit [gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html](http://gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html)

What if I have more questions about the vaccine?

Reach out to your community health nurse or health centre. If you do not have access to a primary care provider you can call the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the day at 1-855-344-3800, seven days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Even after getting vaccinated everyone should continue to wear a mask, wash hands regularly and practice physical distancing.

For more information, visit [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)