

COVID-19 Vaccination Q&A: 12-17 Cohort

1) When will teenagers (12 – 17 years) be able to register on the EVDS for COVID-19 vaccinations?

Vaccination registration for children aged from 12 to 17 opened on Wednesday, 20 October 2021 and vaccinations started on the same day.

2) Will my child need to be registered on EVDS before being allowed to be vaccinated?

Yes, your child will need to be registered on the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS).

3) Does my child need to provide proof of identity to get vaccinated?

Yes. Your child will need to provide original proof of identification such as a Smart ID card, birth certificate or passport. According to the current rules, you must bring the original identity documents. The identification documents provided at the site should be the same as that used for the child's EVDS registration.

4) Is this vaccine safe? What assurances can you give me?

The Pfizer vaccine that will be administered as a single dose to children who are between the ages of 12 and 17 years has been shown to be safe.

Children can experience common side effects such as pain at the injection site (upper arm), tiredness, headaches, muscle and joint pains, fever, and chills. These side effects are common, usually temporary and generally clear up within 48 hours.

Cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining outside the heart) have been reported but remain very rare (60 per million vaccinated adolescent males) and are often seen in male adolescents (teens) and young adults. The myocarditis or pericarditis cases can be safely treated.

The single dose of the Pfizer vaccine almost eliminates the risk of myocarditis which is mostly associated with the second dose when it does occur.

5) Will the vaccine be a single or double dose?

Children from 12 to 17 years old will receive a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

6) Can I prohibit my child from being vaccinated?

The Children's Act empowers a child of 12 years or older to consent to his/her own medical treatment if that child is of sufficient maturity and possesses the mental capacity to understand the benefits, risks, social and other implications of the treatment. Only where a child is not sufficiently mature or does not have the required understanding of the treatment, does a parent, guardian or caregiver of a child need to consent to the medical treatment on behalf of the child.

However, the Children's Act also stipulates that a parent, guardian or caregiver of a child may not refuse to withhold such consent by reason only of religious or other beliefs, unless that parent or guardian can show that there is a medically accepted alternative choice to the medical treatment concerned.

7) Do children need their parents' consent to get vaccinated?

No. According to the Children's Act 38 of 2005, children from 12 years old do not need consent from their parents for medical treatment; they can give their own consent. The EVDS has been adjusted so children from 12 to 17 years can register themselves.

Discovery vaccination sites require minors to be accompanied by an adult. In addition, the site will require the accompanying adult to complete a simple form onsite, as part of registration to confirm who has accompanied the minor to the site.

8) Are COVID-19 vaccines safe for pregnant youth?

Experts recommend that pregnant and lactating women be vaccinated.

In general, COVID-19 vaccines have been clinically proven to protect people from severe illness due to a COVID-19 infection. It's important to understand that, while pregnant women were not included in the initial vaccine trials, subsequently, thousands of pregnant women received COVID-19 vaccines around the globe. So far, vaccines have been shown to be safe and effective in pregnant women and youth and are encouraged.

9) Will Discovery accept walk-ins or do I have to book?

Discovery accepts walk-in vaccinations at all its vaccination sites. You might have to wait a little as we prioritise people who have booked slots ahead of time. We encourage you to book if you are able to.

10) Can I book an appointment on behalf of a child?

Yes, you can book an appointment at a Discovery vaccination site on behalf of a child:

- If you have your child as a registered dependant, you can book an appointment for them [using this link](#).
- If the child is not registered as a dependant, you may still make a booking. You or the child, if they are old enough, must first create an online profile and then make an appointment using [this link](#).

11) Can a child book their own appointment?

Yes:

- If they are a registered dependant, they can log in using their own details using [this link](#). If they do not yet have their own login details, they should first [register here](#), and then they'll [be able to make an appointment after registering](#).
- If they are not a registered dependant, they first need to create an online profile and book and appointment by using this [link](#).

Your child will need a cell phone number to be able to create an online profile and book their own appointment. An OTP is sent to this number during the registration process. This can be your number, or their own.