



# **RCH COVID-19 Immunisation for Patients aged 5-11 years**

## **Fact Sheet for Health Professionals**



From the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2022, patients aged 5-11 years who have a chronic medical condition are eligible and able to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) at RCH. All children aged 5-11 years are able to receive the Pfizer vaccine in the community by booking through the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

This fact sheet provides information for RCH practitioners to assist them in counselling patients regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

## 1. Who should get the immunisation?

Only current RCH patients with chronic medical conditions are currently being offered the paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. RCH is **not** currently vaccinating the parents/families/carers/siblings of patients or children of RCH staff members.

RCH will be prioritising long term RCH patients with chronic conditions to receive the vaccine first. E.g. those who have  $\geq 2$  medical treating teams.

Examples of eligible medical conditions are as follows. N.B.: This is **not** an exhaustive list, for conditions not listed please liaise with the RCH Immunisation Service to determine eligibility:

Conditions
Haematological diseases or cancers
Non-haematological cancer
Solid organ transplant recipients
Bone marrow transplant recipients or chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy recipients or those with Graft versus host disease
Primary or acquired immunodeficiency
Heart disease
Liver disease
CKD (chronic kidney disease)
Chronic lung disease
Chronic neurological conditions
Diabetes
Obesity
Severe mental health conditions
Those living with significant disability requiring frequent assistance with activities of daily living

## 2. How do patients book in?

RCH patients are able to book an appointment via the RCH Portal. Clinicians must ensure a patient's problem list is accurate and up to date to ensure a Portal ticket is sent. If a ticket is not sent, patients will need to book via the RCH Immunisation Service on 9345 6599.

## 3. How does the paediatric Pfizer vaccine differ to the adolescent/adult Pfizer vaccine?

The recommended dose for children aged 5-11 years is 10µg (0.2mL). The recommended schedule for vaccination is 2 doses, 8 weeks apart. This interval can be shortened in special circumstances to a minimum of 3 weeks, such as in an outbreak response, prior to the initiation of significant immunosuppression or international travel. Children who turn 12 after their first dose may receive the adolescent/adult formulation of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to complete their primary vaccine course. The paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine can be co-administered with other vaccines.

## 4. Where can I find resources about COVID-19 vaccine in special risk populations?

There are [guidelines on patients with immunocompromise](#) available from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). This provides specific information around number of doses, timing of vaccination with immunosuppressive medication and effectiveness of immunisation.

The Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre (MVEC) [immunosuppressed patient resource](#) summarises all currently available data and is updated regularly.

## 5. What should I do if I have further specific questions PRIOR to my patient being vaccinated?

If the guidelines above do not answer your question, or if your patient/patient's family has specific questions that need discussion with an immunisation specialist, including potential allergy/anaphylaxis or severe needle phobia, please submit a [Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services \(VicSIS\) eReferral](#).

There are generic COVID-19 vaccine related FAQs available from MVEC [here](#).

The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) has an [Allergy and COVID-19 Vaccination guide](#).

## **6. What happens if I have questions AFTER my patient has received their first vaccine dose? E.g. potential adverse event following immunisation, change in medication, timing etc.**

If you are concerned about an adverse event post immunisation, please report it via the [SAEFVIC](#) page.

For any specific patient concerns, please submit a [Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services \(VicSIS\) eReferral](#).

## **7. Useful links**

ATAGI [recommendations](#) on Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine use in children aged 5 to 11 years

RCH [Immunisation Service](#)

Clinicians Referral Guide to the Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services [VicSIS](#)

MVEC Needle phobia [resource](#)

[‘My RCH Portal’](#)