Ohio | Department of Health

News Release

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COVID-19 Vaccinations for Ohio Children 5-11 Years Old Can Begin Today

Ohio Vax-2-School Expands to Include Younger Students

COLUMBUS – A large portion of the more than 367,000 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 pediatric vaccine formulation expected to arrive in Ohio over the coming days are already available, and can immediately be administered to children ages 5-11.

"We are on the threshold of a long-awaited step that brings us closer to getting through this pandemic," Ohio Department of Health Director Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, shared in a press conference this morning. "Thanks to the authorization of a COVID-19 vaccine for those ages 5 to 11 years old, we can now better protect these school-aged children from severe complications from COVID-19."

ODH also announced the official expansion of the Ohio Vax-2-School program to those ages 5 to 25, adding those between the ages of 5 and 11 years. Ohio Vax-2-School will award $2 million in scholarships to eligible Ohioans, and prizes include 150, $10,000 scholarships, and five, $100,000 grand prize scholarships. The program will include have a series of registration deadlines, and to be eligible for all prize drawings, Ohioans should register as soon as the first dose of the vaccine has been administered, ideally by the initial registration deadline of Sunday, Nov. 21. The deadlines are as follows:

- Sunday, Nov. 21, 11:59 p.m. – eligible for all drawings.
- Sunday, Nov. 28, 11:59 p.m. – eligible for the second drawing (75, $10,000 winners) and the grand prize drawing.
- Wednesday, Dec. 1, 11:59 p.m. – eligible for the grand prize drawing.

Ohioans aged 5-25, or their parents or guardians, can enter online once they have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at www.ohiovax2school.com.

Although children are less likely than adults to get severely ill from COVID-19, they most certainly can, and do, become ill – even seriously ill, and can suffer lasting complications from the virus. As of Nov. 1, more than 2,000 Ohio children under 18 had been hospitalized with COVID-19, and 15 had died. Nationally, the virus has taken the lives of nearly 800 children.

To date, more than 247 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine have been administered in the United States, helping to prevent severe cases of COVID-19 resulting in hospitalization and death. A smaller dose of this same vaccine, one-third of the adult size, was thoroughly studied and tested in clinical trials. The trials showed that the pediatric formulation was nearly 91% effective at preventing symptomatic infections, and no serious side effects were detected.

Ample supply of the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine will be available in all 88 counties. More than 367,000 doses are set to arrive in Ohio on a staggered schedule over the coming days during the first week of vaccine administration, including 252,300 ordered through the state's allocation and 115,200 ordered by pharmacies through the federal retail pharmacy program. Additional doses will continue to be delivered to providers in Ohio on a regular basis moving forward.

Providers across the state, including local health departments, pediatricians, family physicians, community health centers, adult and children's hospitals, and pharmacies, are receiving shipments and will be scheduling appointments or accepting walk-ins. As the shipments arrive, providers can begin to administer the vaccine. Ohioans are encouraged to call their provider for more information or visit gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634) to locate a provider or make an appointment.

Today's press conference, which also included Patty Manning-Courtney, MD, Pediatrician, Chief of Staff, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; Michael Forbes, MD, Pediatric Intensive Care Specialist, Akron Children's Hospital; and Michele Dritz, MD, Pediatrician, Cornerstone Pediatrics; Delegate at Large, American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Chapter, can be viewed online.

COVID-19 vaccines are widely available throughout the state. Many providers offer walk-in appointments, or Ohioans can schedule a vaccination appointment at gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Ohioans who want to learn more about the safety, efficacy, and side effects of COVID-19 vaccines should talk to their doctor, nurse, or pharmacist, or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine.

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