Dear Colleagues,

On October 29, 2021, the FDA authorized the emergency use of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years (pediatric vaccine). On November 2, 2021, the CDC endorsed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for these age groups, aligning with the FDA authorization.

**Key Messages and Recommendations:**

- The pediatric vaccine formulation and packaging (orange cap-10 mcg dose) is different from the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine authorized for vaccine recipients 12 years of age or older (purple cap—30 mcg dose); this includes different instructions for storage, dilution/preparation, and administration.
- The pediatric vaccine is authorized and recommended for use in children 5-11 years of age as a 2-dose primary series with each dose administered 21 days apart; each dose is 10 mcg (0.2 mL after appropriate dilution).
- No safety concerns were identified in the pharmaceutical clinical trial, and a lower proportion of vaccine recipients experienced systemic side effects (e.g., fatigue, headache, myalgia, arthralgia, fever) compared to older vaccine recipients who were given the higher 30 mcg dose.
- All children and adolescents aged 5-17 years are recommended to be vaccinated with the **age-appropriate** dosing with a two-dose series of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of prior history of COVID-19 infection or seropositivity.
- If a child turns 12 years old between their first and second dose, they should receive the **age-appropriate** 30 mcg Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine (purple cap) formulation for their second dose to complete their series. However, the FDA EUA does allow for either dose formulation to be used in this circumstance. If a child receives the 10 mcg dose after turning 12 as a second dose to complete the series, the child is considered fully vaccinated, and this is not a medication error that would require a VAERS report.
- Booster doses or additional 3rd doses for vaccine recipients who are moderately-severely immunocompromised are NOT authorized nor recommended for children 5-11 years old.
• When screening for vaccine contraindications and precautions, note the ingredients in the Pfizer pediatric vaccine have been modified (see CDC’s Appendix C: Ingredients included in COVID-19 vaccines Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC)

• Primary care providers are strongly encouraged to enroll and become a COVID-19 vaccine provider to help more quickly vaccinate and protect children against COVID-19. See COVID-19 Vaccination Providers - Mississippi State Department of Health (ms.gov) for enrollment information.

Resources:

• COCA Call – Thursday, November 4th from 2-3pm ET (Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccines: CDC’s Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Series in Children 5–11 years old)

• Updated CDC webpage: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens

• Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC

• FDA Fact Sheet for providers: Healthcare Providers for 5-11 years of age, orange cap, (must dilute) (fda.gov)

• FDA Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers: Recipients and Caregivers 5-11 years of age (fda.gov)

Regards,

Paul Byers, MD
State Epidemiologist
Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program: MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier: MSHAN-20211104-00546-ALT
Program (HAN) Type: Health Alert
Status (Type): Actual ()
Message Type: Alert
Reference: MSHAN-00546
Severity: Unknown
Acknowledgement: No
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Expiration: Undetermined
Urgency: Undetermined
Delivery Time: 600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.
Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.
Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyyymm-dd-hhmm-TTT (ALT=Health Alert, ADV=Health Advisory, UPD=Health Update, MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service)).
Program (HAN) Type: Categories of Health Alert Messages.
 Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
 Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
 Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
 Health Info Service: Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.
Status (Type):
- Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
- Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
- Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded
Message Type:
- Alert: Indicates an original Alert
- Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:
- Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
- Severe: Significant threat to life or property
- Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
- Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
- Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:
- Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
- Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).