



MEDIA CONTACT:
Janenne Irene Pung, PIO
O: 231-547-7653
media@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

June 23, 2022

Health Department of Northwest Michigan

**COVID-19 Vaccines Available for Children 6 Months and Older
HDNW clinics scheduling appointments for children beginning Monday, June 27**

Following authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and recommendation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is [scheduling appointments](#) for children 6 months and older to begin their COVID-19 vaccination series.

HDNW will be offering both Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines for children 6 months and older. However, when vaccinations begin Monday, June 27, only the Pfizer vaccine will be available until the Moderna vaccines arrive.

“It’s good to see that we now have authorized vaccines to protect infants and young children,” said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, HDNW Medical Director. “Many families have been awaiting a safe and effective vaccine to reduce the risk of severe COVID disease and its complications.”

For children 6 months through 4 years old, the Pfizer series consists of three doses with a minimum of 21 days (about three weeks) between Dose 1 and 2, and eight weeks between Dose 2 and 3. Each dose contains about one-tenth of an adult dose.

The Moderna vaccine may be given to children 6 months through 5 years old. It consists of two doses at least 28 days (about four weeks) apart. Information will be released when this vaccine is available at HDNW clinics.

“Anyone with questions about the vaccines and whether the children they care for should receive them are welcome to talk with their provider – whether that’s a physician or a nurse at our clinics,” said Amanda Thompson, HDNW Family Health Director. “With people updating vaccinations for the start of preschool and kindergarten in the fall, it’s important to note that these vaccines may be administered with other vaccines.”

There are about 20 million children under the age of 5 in the United States, most of whom now qualify for the vaccine. COVID-19 has become one of the top 10 causes of pediatric deaths, and tens of thousands of children and teens have been hospitalized because of the virus, according to the CDC. While children and adolescents are typically at lower risk than adults of becoming severely ill or hospitalized from COVID-19, the effects of the virus are unpredictable. Vaccination is the best way to protect children from COVID-19.

Without the new age group included, the [CDC reports](#) that the percentage of residents 5 years and older who are fully vaccinated in the region are:

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

- Antrim County, 58.5%,
- Charlevoix County, 64.5%,
- Emmet County, 72.8%, and
- Otsego County, 55.8%.

Currently, there are no recommendations for booster doses for either Pfizer or Moderna with the youngest age group. In clinical trials, vaccine side effects were mild, similar to those seen in adults and older children and other non-COVID-19 vaccines recommended for children. The most common side effects were fatigue and a sore arm. The FDA report is available [here](#) for review.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has published a list of [frequently asked questions](#) to provide more detailed information on the pediatric vaccines.

To [schedule a vaccine](#), call 800-432-4121 or visit www.nwhealth.or/covid19imm.html. There are clinics scheduled in Charlevoix, Mancelona, Gaylord, and Harbor Springs next week with appointments available for children and adults.

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Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).