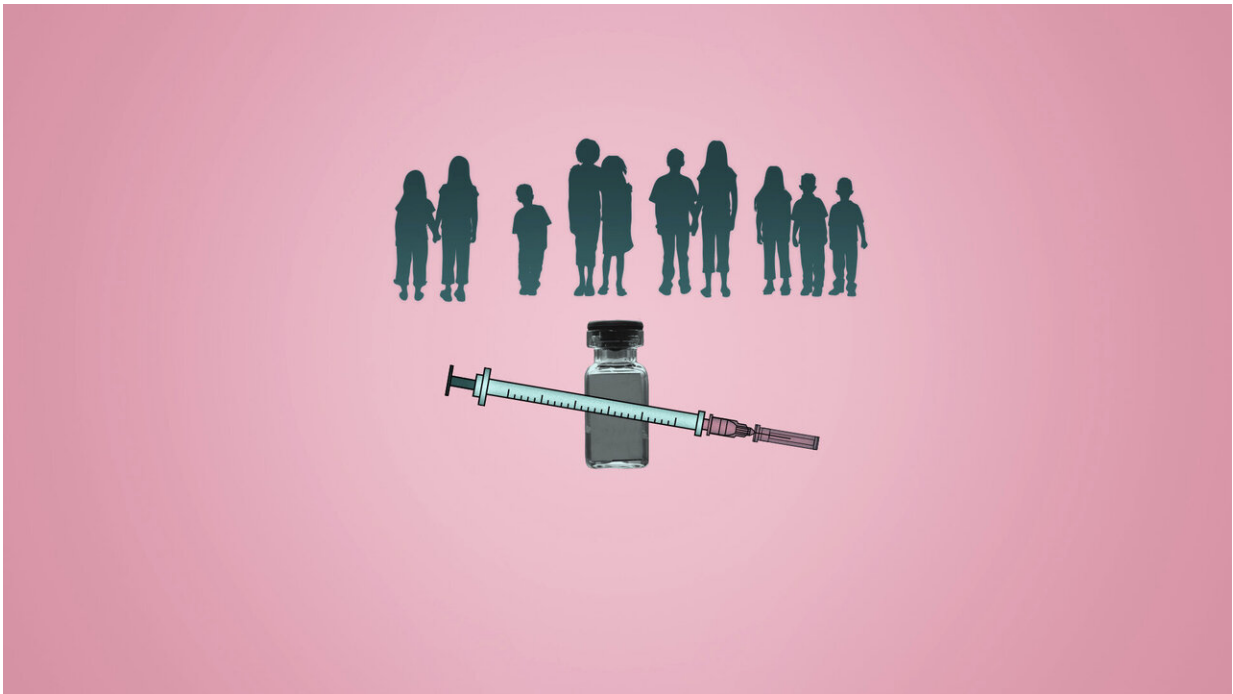


Will children be able to get COVID-19 vaccines?

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Will children be able to get COVID-19 vaccines? AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

Will children be able to get COVID-19 vaccines?

Not until there's enough data from studies in different age groups, which will stretch well into next year.

The Pfizer vaccine authorized in the U.S. this month is for people 16 and

older. Testing began in October in children as young as 12 and is expected to take several more months. The Food and Drug Administration will have to decide when there's enough data to allow emergency use in this age group.

Depending on the results, younger children may be enrolled for study as well.

Moderna, which is expected to become the second COVID-19 vaccine greenlit in the U.S., began enrolling study participants ages 12 to 17 this month, and will track them for a year. Testing in children younger than 12 is expected to start in early 2021.

It is uncertain if the results on [younger children](#) will come in time for vaccinations to begin before the next school year.

Positive outcomes in adult studies are reassuring and suggest it is safe to proceed in testing kids, said Dr. Buddy Creech, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University and director of its [vaccine](#) research program.

Even though [children](#) usually don't get very sick from COVID-19, they can spread the virus to others, said Dr. Robert Frenck, who is the lead researcher for Pfizer's study in kids at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. At least 1.6 million youth have been infected, 8,000 have been hospitalized and 162 have died from the virus, he noted.

"It's really important, not only for themselves but also for society," Frenck said.

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