

Cyprus to vaccinate minors aged 16 and 17

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Cyprus is expanding its COVID-19 vaccination rollout to include teenagers aged 16 and 17, as one third of recent cases were minors, health authorities said Monday.

The [health ministry](#) said the youngsters would receive an mRNA [vaccine](#)

—Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna—if their parents consent.

The ministry said the decision was taken "after taking into account the recommendations of the Cyprus paediatric society".

It cited data from the contact tracing team to back up its decision suggesting "almost 30 percent of new coronavirus cases are people aged 18 and under, especially teenagers aged 15 to 18".

The ministry said that [scientific data](#) suggests that minors experience similar symptoms from COVID-19 as adults.

"The timely vaccination of children will contribute to ensuring that a new outbreak of the virus in the community is prevented and that younger ages and, consequently, their family and friends are protected," the ministry said in a statement.

It added: "The vaccination of students will contribute to the smooth operation of schools, with the physical presence of students".

Cyprus has seen a new surge in cases, with Saturday's 226 infections hitting a six-week high. The sharp rise is blamed on the more potent Delta variant spreading in the community and the low vaccination rate among the under 30s.

Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades is meeting scientists later Monday to discuss the recent spike in cases.

Some 63.6 percent of the adult population have received a COVID jab, while 47.8 percent have completed their vaccination with two jabs.

Cyprus has reported 74,785 coronavirus infections and 378 deaths.

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