

Boosters recommended for kids 12 and older

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Parents have a new tool to protect their young teens during the current, record-breaking omicron surge: boosters.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now recommends Pfizer boosters for young people ages 12 to 15 who finished their two-dose

vaccination series at least five months ago. That means anyone who is 12 years and older who received the Pfizer series at least five months ago should get a booster.

"Vaccination in children is exceedingly important, and getting boosters for children who are age-eligible is important, too," says Colleen Nash, MD, MPH, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at Rush University Medical Center. "We know that [booster](#) doses have really augmented the protection that adults have seen against the omicron variant, and we expect that will be true for children as well."

In Chicago, more than 76 percent of children ages five and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine. "Any dose that a child receives is certainly beneficial, and we would encourage [parents](#) of those children who have received one dose to follow through with that second dose and complete the two-dose series," Nash says. "We would also encourage parents to get their kids boosters when they are eligible."

Getting kids boosted can also help protect them against multisystem inflammatory syndrome in [children](#) (MIS-C), a rare but severe and sometimes fatal illness, Nash says. MIS-C creates inflammation throughout the body that affects all of the major organs. Children with MIS-C can quickly become very ill and require intensive care.

Besides getting kids boosted if they are eligible, Nash recommends the following advice to slow the COVID-19 surge:

- Make sure kids have masks that fit well over their mouth and nose.
- Teach kids to wash their hands regularly.
- Practice social distancing.
- Get everyone in the household vaccinated and boosted if they are eligible.

Provided by Rush University Medical Center

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