Homologous Pfizer-BioNTech booster safe for adolescents

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For adolescents aged 12 to 17 years, reactions to homologous Pfizer-

BioNTech booster vaccination occur with similar frequency as after receipt of the second vaccine dose, and they are generally mild to moderate in severity, according to research published in the March 1 early-release issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Anne M. Hause, Ph.D., from the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Response Team, and colleagues characterized the safety of Pfizer-BioNTech booster doses among adolescents aged 12 to 17 years by reviewing adverse events and health impact assessments during the week after receipt of a homologous Pfizer-BioNTech booster dose. About 2.8 million U.S. adolescents received a Pfizer-BioNTech booster dose during Dec. 9, 2021, to Feb. 20, 2022.

The researchers found that during the study period, 3,418 Pfizer-BioNTech booster doses were reported to v-safe, a voluntary smartphone-based safety surveillance system for adverse events after COVID-19 vaccination. Reactions were reported to v-safe with a frequency that was equal to or slightly higher than after receipt of vaccination dose 2, and they were mainly mild to moderate in severity and were most often reported on the day after receipt of the booster. Overall, 914 reports of adverse events were received by the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System after booster doses: 91.6 and 8.4 percent were nonserious and serious, respectively.

"Preliminary safety findings for booster doses among adolescents are generally similar to those reported after a primary series in this age group," the authors write.

More information: Anne M. Hause et al, Safety Monitoring of COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Doses Among Persons Aged 12–17 Years—United States, December 9, 2021–February 20, 2022, *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2022). DOI:

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