

Study finds COVID vaccinations were significantly protective for children

October 7 2022



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Children with a pre-existing illness were at highest risk of severe illness or death due to a COVID-19 infection, but those who were vaccinated had a significantly higher level of protection, according to research to be presented on October 9 during the 2022 American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference & Exhibition.

The abstract, "Identifying Risk Factors for Severe Clinical Outcomes in Pediatric COVID-19 Patients In a National Electronic Health Record Repository," examined the effect of vaccination, clinical and demographic factors on severe outcomes in children with COVID-19 from March 12, 2020, through January 20, 2022.

"Using a large-scale, national electronic health record pipeline allowed us to explore the associations between risk factors and worse outcomes in children with greater statistical power," said author Lyndie Ho, a [medical student](#) at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

"Our study found that the national disease burden of COVID-19 in children is unequally distributed, with worse outcomes in children with pre-existing illnesses and along racial and geographic lines. Given the variance in child vaccination rates in the United States, we hope our research can inform outreach and other efforts to increase vaccination rates in children and adolescents, particularly in vulnerable regions and populations."

The research found that, across all age groups, presence of pre-existing [illness](#) and residence in the Census-defined South region were most often associated with severe outcomes (including hospitalization, ICU admission, use of inpatient respiratory support, and death). In eligible [age groups](#), vaccination was significantly associated with less severe outcomes. Infants had more [severe illness](#) than older children, the author found.

The research revealed persistent health disparities across racial and geographic lines throughout the pandemic. The study shows that infancy, African-American race, Asian race, Hispanic ethnicity, and preexisting illnesses are significantly associated with worse outcomes in [children](#) with COVID-19 nationally.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

Citation: Study finds COVID vaccinations were significantly protective for children (2022, October 7) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-10-covid-vaccinations-significantly-children.html>

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