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Physician General, Pediatric Professionals Discuss COVID-19 Vaccinations for Children Ages 5 through 11

Parents encouraged to schedule child's vaccination appointment now

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania Department of Health Physician General Dr. Denise Johnson today led a discussion about the COVID-19 vaccine available for children ages 5 through 11. The event, entitled Vax Facts: Facts About Pediatric Vaccines, is the latest in a series aimed at providing relevant and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and addressing the questions of citizens.

“The Pfizer pediatric vaccine is safe, and it is highly effective at protecting children against COVID-19-related illness, hospitalization, and death,” Dr. Johnson said. “Vaccinating children against COVID-19 is the best way to keep families and communities healthy and safe – while also keeping schools safe and open for in-person learning. To parents with a child age 5 and older, I encourage you to get them vaccinated and give your child the power to safely learn, play and be a kid.”

Dr. Johnson was joined by pediatricians versed in childhood vaccinations, including the COVID-19 pediatric vaccine:

- Dr. Trude Haecker, MD, FAAP, President of the PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics and General Pediatrician from Philadelphia; and
- Dr. Swathi Gowtham, MD, FAAAP, board-certified and fellowship-trained specialist in pediatric infectious diseases from Danville.

With parental consent, children ages 5 through 11 are able to receive the free FDA-authorized, CDC-approved and pediatrician recommended Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at pediatrician offices, health centers, pharmacies, and other healthcare provider facilities.

“With at least one quarter of all COVID-19 cases occurring in children, the approval of the COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 is a huge milestone for some 28 million kids,” Dr. Haecker said. “This vaccine provides the best protection we have against this virus. The pandemic has taken a toll not only on the physical health of children, but also on their social, developmental, and emotional health. Thankfully, this vaccine will move us closer to a return to normalcy for our children, and ensure that they can remain in

school, safely. I encourage all parents and caregivers to reach out to their pediatrician or primary care provider with questions and to schedule their child's vaccination."

"The approval of the COVID-19 vaccination for children ages 5 through 11 assures that these children can now be offered the same level of protection against COVID-19 that has been offered to older children and adults," Dr. Gowtham said. "The impact of COVID-19 in children should not be underestimated – around 600 American children have died of COVID-19 since the beginning of pandemic. As pediatricians, we want parents and guardians to be comfortable with the medical decisions they make for their children – please reach out to your child's health care provider about any questions regarding COVID-19 vaccine or any other vaccine. These vaccines give us hope that families can have healthier holiday season this winter, if all those who are eligible get their COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines."

The panel also pointed out that children ages 5 through 11 may only receive the Pfizer pediatric vaccine, while children ages 12 through 17 may only receive the Pfizer 12+ vaccine.

More details from today's event including the full video and information about the panelists can be found on [Facebook](#) and [PAcast](#).

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