Vaccination of children and adolescents from 6 months up to, and including, 15 years of age

COVID-19 mainly causes respiratory tract infections but can also cause symptoms in other organs. The vast majority of children and adolescents cope well with COVID-19. However, as with adults, those with certain medical conditions are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill. Annual vaccination is therefore recommended for people under the age of 18 with serious medical conditions or underlying diseases that may increase their risk of severe COVID-19.

Previously unvaccinated children aged 6 months to 4 years who have a serious underlying disease and have not previously had COVID-19 will normally require two or three doses, depending on the vaccine offered. The vaccination centre will provide information about the number of doses and the intervals between them.

Children aged 6 months to 11 years should be assessed individually by a doctor before vaccination.

The recommendation applies to children who:

- have received an organ transplant
- have an immunodeficiency
- have had a haematological cancer, such as leukaemia or lymphoma, within the past five years
- have another active cancer or are currently receiving, or have recently completed, cancer treatment within the past six months
- have a neurological or neuromuscular condition that reduces their ability to cough or impairs their lung function
- have severe chronic liver disease
- have severe chronic kidney disease with significantly impaired kidney function
- have severe heart disease
- have severe lung disease
- have another serious and/or chronic condition for which COVID-19 presents a serious health risk, following an individual assessment by a paediatrician. This may include people with congenital chromosomal abnormalities, such as Down's syndrome, or genetic syndromes.

COVID-19 vaccination for children

Vaccination is the most effective measure for preventing severe COVID-19. The vaccine does not contain live virus and cannot cause COVID-19.

Adverse reactions which normally occur one to two days after vaccination, are mild or moderate and resolve within a few days. Common side effects include pain and swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. Allergic reactions may occur.

Cases of heavy menstrual bleeding have been reported, but most cases are not serious and are temporary.

In very rare cases, inflammation of the heart muscle or the lining around the heart (myocarditis or pericarditis) may occur after vaccination. Symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath, palpitations and fever. If any of these symptoms occur, a doctor should be consulted. It should be noted that COVID-19 can have more serious effects on the heart than those that may occur after vaccination. This side effect should therefore not prevent children and adolescents from being offered the vaccine.

Before vaccination

Vaccination is voluntary. Children under the age of 16 must have the consent of their parents or guardians before being vaccinated. Where parental responsibility is shared, both parents/guardians must consent. Children under the age of 16 also have the right to receive information, and their views must be taken into account according to their age and maturity.

Tell the vaccinator if the child has previously had a severe allergic reaction or has received another vaccine within the past week.

Cut here

Child's name:	Date of birth:

I/we would like my/our child to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Tick the dose for which consent is being given:

Annual dose ☐

For previously unvaccinated children aged 6 months to 4 years who have a serious underlying disease and have not previously had COVID-19, or for older children with a serious underlying disease:

Dose 1 ☐ Dose 2 ☐ Dose 3 ☐

Parents/guardians with parental responsibility:

Parent/guardian 1:

Full name (please write clearly): _____

Signature: _____

Telephone number: _____

Parent/guardian 2:

Full name (please write clearly): _____

Signature: _____

Telephone number: _____