

## Ask the Pediatrician: Do children who have had COVID still need the vaccine?

March 14 2022, by Dr. James D. Campbell

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**Q:** My son tested positive for COVID-19. Does he still need the vaccine?

**A:** Eligible children and [teens](#) should get a COVID-19 vaccine or

booster, even if they have had COVID-19. They should get vaccinated as soon as they are recovered from their illness and their isolation period has ended.

If your child has had COVID-19, they may be protected for some time from another infection. But right now, we do not have a [test](#) to reliably check how much or how long a person is protected after they get better. We know that people who have recovered from a COVID-19 infection can still get infected again with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

According to a recent report, vaccination is the safest strategy for avoiding future SARS-CoV-2 infections, hospitalizations, long-term problems and death.

If your child or teen had a positive test but did not have symptoms, they should wait until they are done isolating and then get vaccinated. If they had mild COVID-19 illness, they can get the vaccine after their isolation period has ended, as long as their symptoms have improved.

If your child or teen received the first dose and then tested positive for COVID-19, they should still get the second dose. If they did not have symptoms (asymptomatic) but had a positive test, they should get the vaccine after the recommended isolation period has ended.

If they had symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19, they should get the vaccine after their recommended isolation period has ended, their symptoms have improved and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

If they are 12 years or older, had already received two doses of the vaccine and then tested positive for COVID-19, they should get a booster dose if it has been at least five months since they completed

their primary series and they are no longer in isolation and their symptoms are improving.

If they received [monoclonal antibodies](#) for COVID-19 illness, they should get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as they have completed isolation, their [symptoms](#) are improving and they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. There is no longer a waiting period to get the COVID-19 vaccine after a [child](#) or teen has received monoclonal antibodies for COVID-19 illness.

Your pediatrician or pediatric specialist can provide vaccine guidance after recovering from multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) or serious COVID-19 illness that required hospital care.

If you are have questions about the COVID-19 [vaccine](#) or booster after severe COVID-19 illness, talk to your pediatrician.

We have come very far since the pandemic began. We now have effective tools to beat this virus—and keep everyone around us safe. But it will only work if we all do our part. Using all these tools—vaccines, masks, physical distancing, hand hygiene, testing and staying home when we are sick—will bring us across the finish line of the pandemic.

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