

Vaccine debate: Is it dangerous for children under five to get a COVID shot?

After the federal [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) delayed authorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 [vaccine](#) last week for children under the age of five in the United States, parents are making a passionate plea for its off-label use, according to a recent [Guardian](#) report.

Last summer, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) advised against off-label use for children under the age of 12, said 2021 AAP President Dr. Lee Savio Beers in a [statement](#).

“The dose may be different for younger ages. The AAP recommends against giving the vaccine to children under 12 [years] until authorized by the FDA.”

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The 10-microgram vaccine authorized for kids five to 11 has not been studied in younger children, who receive a 3-microgram dose in the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric trial, so it’s possible children younger than five can have more side effects if they receive the higher dose, according to the Guardian.

But the paper noted some parents and physicians argue the clinical trials have already demonstrated the 3-microgram dose is safe in young children.

“I don’t see a difference in a child four years and five years, except for the age – the immune system works the same,” said Dr. Wolfgang von Meissner, a family doctor in [Germany](#).

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