

 **OCEAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**OCHD ANNOUNCES PFIZER VACCINE FOR CHILDREN AGES 5-11 YEARS OLD NOW AVAILABLE AT NEW PEDIATRIC CLINICS**

(Toms River) – The Ocean County Health Department (OCHD) is offering the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5-11 years old at a new pediatric clinic to be held at the Ocean County Health Department WIC facility on Wednesday, November 10 from 3P.M. – 7P.M.

All following pediatric clinics are scheduled for every Monday through November and will also be held at the OCHD Women, Infants and Children facility located at 175 Sunset Avenue in Toms River. The Monday clinics will run from 4P.M. – 7P.M.

“The Ocean County Health Department has been preparing for this new pediatric clinic as soon as we learned a vaccine for children was close to authorization. All the resources are in place to start administering this important vaccine for the thousands of Ocean County children eligible for this series,” said Gerry P. Little, Ocean County Commissioner, and Liaison to the Ocean County Board of Health.

“The vaccine for children is another critical piece to getting us one step closer to bringing an end to this pandemic,” added Gary Quinn, Ocean County Commissioner Director. “The Ocean County Health Department has been running safe, convenient, and efficient COVID-19 clinics since the start of the pandemic and seasonal flu clinics for decades. The new pediatric COVID-19 clinic is being held in the WIC facility – which is such a child friendly environment - so parents can be comfortable bringing their young one’s in without the stresses that sometimes go along with a medical visit of this type.”

The Pfizer vaccine for children 5-11 years old is a 2-dose series administered 3 weeks apart and has the same active ingredients as the vaccine given to adults. However, the dosage between the two vaccines is much different and cannot be interchangeable. It is also safe to co-administer the COVID-19 vaccine with the flu vaccine at the same visit.

Other important information for parents to know:

* The Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5-11 are 100% free – regardless of insurance or immigration status.
* Children will receive a CDC vaccine card upon initial vaccination.
* Adverse side effects are rare. Much like the adult vaccine, some children may experience soreness at the injection site, headaches, muscle aches, low-grade fever.
* Pediatric clinic appointments are strongly recommended but walk-ins are accepted.
* A parent or legal guardian must be present at the appointment.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5-11 is just as safe and effective as the vaccines for adults and can provide as much as 91% protection. While COVID-19 tends to be much milder compared to adults, it can make children very ill and cause them to need hospitalization. In some instances, the complications from COVID-19 can lead to death. Close to 2 million children in the 5-11 age population have been diagnosed with COVID-19 since the pandemic started.

“We want to encourage parents to have their children vaccinated as soon as possible,” advised Daniel Regenye, OCHD Public Health Coordinator/Health Officer. “It is especially important with the holidays upon us and children travelling out of state or visiting with friends and family that may not be vaccinated. The vaccine can also help the spread to others. But most significantly, it can help keep children in school and help them safely participate in sports, play dates, and other group activities.”

The new Pediatric COVID-19 Clinic schedule for November being held at the OCHD WIC facility located at 175 Sunset Avenue, Toms River:

Wednesday, November 10, 2021 - 3P.M.-7P.M.

Monday, November 15, 2021 - 4P.M.-7P.M.

Monday, November 22, 2021 - 4P.M.-7P.M.

Monday, November 29, 2021 - 4P.M.-7P.M.

To schedule an appointment, please visit [www.ochd.org](http://www.ochd.org).

Additional COVID-19 vaccine information for children ages 5-11can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html

You can also follow the Ocean County Health Department on Twitter@OCpublichealth or like us on Facebook. Download the Ocean County Health Department mobile app free from the Google Play/Android and Apple APP stores.

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