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Sweden Decides Against Vaccinating 5- to 11-year-olds Against COVID; U.S. and EU Differ

As opposed to the United States and most of the European Union, Sweden will not be inoculating children ages five to 11 against COVID, since there is no “clear benefit” in doing so.

“The vaccines are safe, there are very good vaccines, but we are now focusing on the medical benefits of the individual child, and we don’t see that the benefits are great enough for us to recommend [the vaccines] for the whole group,” Britta Björklund of Sweden’s Public Health Agency said at a press conference on Thursday, per a report at [The Local](#).



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Björklund continued, “We don’t see that we want to vaccinate a whole group of children for the sake of society,” and added that “We want to see a clear benefit for the children themselves and the individual child so that’s why we don’t recommend it at the moment.”

According to the Public Health Agency’s [press release](#) on the matter (translated into English):

A general vaccination from the age of 5 is also not expected to have a major effect on the spread of infection at present, neither in the group of children aged 5–11 nor among other groups in the population.

As before during the pandemic, children are at a significantly lower risk of developing severe covid-19 disease compared with adults. In general, the younger the child, the lower the risk.

The agency notes that the recommendation was made after careful consideration and discussion with the country’s leading medical organizations and health authorities, such as the Pediatricians’ Association, the National Association of School Nurses, the Child Psychiatric Association, the Swedish Society of Infectious Diseases, vaccine coordinators within the regions, the Medical Products Agency, and others.

However, the Public Health Agency still recommends that children in that age group get vaccinated if they are susceptible to respiratory infections.

The announcement comes as Sweden [prepares](#) to lift most of its COVID-related restrictions beginning February 9, if the Omicron wave peaks by that point and the infection rate falls.

Europe

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) approved the emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5–11 in November.



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Although the EMA acknowledged that the limited number of children participating in the trials meant that vaccine manufacturers could not detect rare side effects, according to [Euro News](#), the agency still concluded that the benefits of the vaccines for this age group outweighed any potential risks.

Euro News added that the agency did, however, raise “some concern” over cases of myocarditis and pericarditis following the administration of mRNA vaccines, particularly in young males.

Most of the European countries have followed the EMA recommendation and begun inoculating children in that age group, with the only reported exception being the United Kingdom.

United Kingdom

The U.K. Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunization (JCVI) had [recommended](#) on September 3 against vaccinating children aged 12-15, noting that although “the benefits from vaccination are marginally greater than the potential known harms ... there is considerable uncertainty regarding the magnitude of the potential harms.” The JCVI added that the vaccines were ineffective against the then-dominating Delta strain, and said that the vaccines would have “little impact” on transmission rates.

However, that advice left the door open to the decision-makers to have a final say, and the country’s Health Security Agency later [decided](#) that children over 12 should receive the vaccine.

The country does not offer any COVID shots to children younger than 12.

The United States

The Pfizer-BioNTech shot for children was granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) in the United States in early November 2021. As of January 19, 28 percent of children ages 5-11 (8 million) had received at least one dose of the shot, and 19 percent (5.3 million) had been fully vaccinated, [according](#) to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Following the CDC’s recommendation of the Pfizer COVID shot, some of the nation’s top medical scientists sounded the alarm about the push to vaccinate a cohort that has essentially zero chances of dying from COVID while being at risk of developing severe complications from the vaccine, as *The New American* [reported](#).

Top medical professionals of the [Global COVID Summit](#) called on decision-makers to exclude children from vaccine mandates and urged parents not to vaccinate their children against COVID. The group’s Physicians Declaration cited the following evidence:

- Healthy children have negligible clinical risks from SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- The long-term safety data on using the current COVID vaccines in children is nonexistent. “Without high-powered, reproducible, long term safety data, risks to the long-term health status of children remain too high to support use in healthy children.”
- Children are at risk of developing severe adverse events from receiving COVID jabs. Studies show the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein-based vaccines are associated with permanent physical damage to the brain, heart, immune, and reproductive systems.
- Healthy, unvaccinated children are critical to achieving herd immunity. “Natural immunity is proven to tolerate infection, benefiting community protection while there is insufficient data to assess whether Covid vaccines assist herd immunity.”

Despite overwhelming evidence of the risks associated with COVID shots in children, the United States



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health authorities and pharmaceutical companies are looking to expand use of the products to include children even younger than five.

President Joe Biden's chief medical advisor, Dr. Anthony Fauci, [said](#) Wednesday that Pfizer COVID shots for children younger than five will be available by the end of February or beginning of March, and added that the regimen for that age group would likely require three doses.





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