Vaccines are the best way for Vermont's children to stay healthy as the school year approaches. Make sure that your children age 12 and older are vaccinated. Find a location near you, including many clinics in Vermont schools in August and September. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>

People 12 to 17 years old:

You can get a vaccine at a walk-in clinic (without an appointment) or you can make an appointment. Be sure you are getting the Pfizer vaccine since that is the only vaccine that is authorized for people age 12 to 17. A child must have reached their 12th birthday to be eligible.

If you are making an appointment online through the state website, you will only see appointments for the Pfizer vaccine.

Certain pharmacies, including CVS and Kinney Drugs, are also offering the Pfizer vaccine to this age group, and some have walk-in opportunities.

For appointments made through the state website and appointments made through CVS, you will either need to:

Make an appointment through the website <https://vermont.force.com/events/s/selfregistration> or

Come to get your vaccine with a parent or guardian who can give consent or

Come to get your vaccine with a completed Immunization Clinic Consent Form <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Vermont-Dept-Health-Walk-In-Consent.pdf> and completed Prevaccination Checklist for COVID-19 Vaccine https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/pre-vaccination-screening-form.pdf

Walgreens requires a parent or guardian to be present and give consent at the appointment.

Vermont's high vaccination rates mean the vast majority of Vermonters are protected from the virus, which also helps keep the virus from spreading to others. With continued vaccination and common sense personal prevention efforts, it will stay safe for most Vermonters to return to the activities they enjoyed before the pandemic.

Cases of COVID-19 have been rising this summer, in large part because of the highly transmissible Delta variant. The vast majority of cases continue to be among people who are unvaccinated. This is why we strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to protect themselves by getting vaccinated as soon as possible.

A smaller percentage of cases have occurred among vaccinated people. However, data shows that the vaccine does what it’s supposed to do. People who are fully vaccinated are highly protected from severe illness, hospitalization and death.

**If you are unvaccinated:**

* Get your shot as soon as you can. See where to get your shot at a convenient time and place <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>
* You should wear a mask in public indoor settings. If you are not fully vaccinated, wearing a mask helps protect you and the people around you from getting or spreading COVID-19. A mask helps contain your respiratory droplets and can keep them from reaching other people. COVID-19 can spread even if a person does not have any symptoms.
* Take prevention steps: Wash your hands regularly, stay home if you feel sick, and get tested if you have any symptoms.

**If you are vaccinated:**

Remember, it is still possible to get and transmit the virus, so follow the prevention steps: Wash your hands regularly, stay home if you feel sick, and get tested if you have any symptoms.

Consider wearing a mask indoors as an extra layer of protection if:

* you have a weakened immune system or are around someone who does
* you have children who can’t be vaccinated
* you’re traveling to a place with higher transmission and lower vaccination rates
* you just feel more comfortable wearing one

There are no state COVID-19 restrictions or requirements for Vermonters or visitors to follow. However, consider which prevention steps you can take depending on your own situation, including whether to wear a mask.

**PREVENTION STEPS**

**Get the COVID-19 vaccine**

**Why –** The vaccine is the best way to keep from getting and spreading COVID-19. Vaccines help your body fight off the virus and keep you from getting sick. The more people who get vaccinated, the faster we can end the COVID-19 pandemic. When you are fully vaccinated, you do not need to quarantine after being in close contact with someone with COVID-19. You also do not need to wear a mask or stay 6 feet apart, except in certain situations or settings (for example, in a health care setting or long-term care facility, or if a mask is required at a business).

**How –**All three vaccines are safe and are working in the real world. Studies show them to be more than 90% effective in real-world settings in preventing mild and severe disease, hospitalization and death. The vaccines have also proven to be effective against the COVID-19 variants that are currently circulating. Read more about the [vaccines available in Vermont](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/about-covid-19-vaccines-vermont#vaccinetypes).

**When –**All people 12 years and older can [find a location to get a vaccine.](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine) Vaccine trials are underway for children under 12. Learn more about [vaccines for children](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/about-covid-19-vaccines-vermont#vaccinesforchildren).

***TIP Find out where to get a vaccine at***[***healthvermont.gov/myvaccine***](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine)***.***

[**Things You Should Know About COVID-19 Vaccines**](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout.pdf)  
[Arabic](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Arabic.pdf)| [Burmese](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Burmese.pdf)| [French](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_French.pdf)| [Kirundi](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Kirundi.pdf)| [Nepali](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Nepali.pdf)| [Somali](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Somali.pdf)| [Spanish](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Spanish%20US%20.pdf)| [Swahili](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Swahili.pdf)| [Vietnamese](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Vaccine-FAQ-Handout_Vietnamese.pdf)

[**Find out About COVID-19 Vaccines in Vermont**](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/about-covid-19-vaccines-vermont)

**Stay home if you are sick**

**Why –**Staying home keeps illness from spreading to others.  
  
**How –**Cancel your plans and stay home from work. Let your friends, family or neighbors know you are not feeling well. Ask if they are willing to drop off food, prescriptions or other things you need while you recover.

**When –**Do this any time you have [symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/symptoms-sickness/symptoms) or other illnesses.

**Wash your hands**

**Why –**Washing your hands or using hand sanitizer rinses off or kills germs you may have on them. This lowers your risk of getting infected with a virus if you touch your face, nose or eyes. If you are sick (even if you don’t know yet), washing your hands lowers the risk of spreading your germs to others when touching shared surfaces, such as doorknobs.

**How** – Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

**When –**Any time, but it is especially important after going to the bathroom, after being in a public place, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

***TIP Keep hand sanitizer in your car, bag or attach a travel-sized, clip-on sanitizer to your key chain so you always have it with you.***lso wash your hands any times they are visibly dirty.

**Take care when getting together**

**Why –**Even though more than 84% of eligible Vermonters are vaccinated, there are some people who cannot get vaccinated. We need to continue to do all we can to protect children under the age of 12 and people who are not able to get the vaccine due to a weakened immune system or other health condition.

COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. Unvaccinated people who are closer than 6 feet from a person with COVID-19 are most likely to get infected.

**How –**If you are at an indoor gathering or event and are unvaccinated, wearing a mask and staying 6 feet apart helps protect anyone who is unvaccinated, at [increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html), or lives with someone who is at increased risk. Choose open areas where there is room to spread out. Keep a distance of at least 6 feet to lower the risk of droplets and particles that carry virus reaching you and others when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes sings, talks or breathes. This is typically easier to do if there are fewer people and you are outdoors.

**When –**If you are not fully vaccinated, continue to take care when getting together with friends and family or when you are in a crowd.

**Wear a mask if needed**

**Why –**If you are not fully vaccinated, wearing a mask helps protect you and the people around you from getting or spreading COVID-19. A mask helps contain your respiratory droplets and can keep them from reaching other people. COVID-19 can spread even if a person does not have any symptoms.

**How –**Bring a mask with you when you leave home.

[How to Select, Clean and Wear Your Face Mask](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html) (CDC)  
[Improve How Your Mask Protects You](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html) (CDC)

**When –**You may be required to wear a mask in some settings, even if you are fully vaccinated. For now, everyone should wear a mask in health care settings and long-term care facilities. Everyone is **required** to wear a mask on [public transportation](https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html), even if you are fully vaccinated.

For schools, child care, summer camps and out-of-school programs, the Health Department recommends that unvaccinated people 2 years and older wear masks when inside this summer. **For fall of 2021, all staff and students will be required to wear masks until otherwise notified.**

If you're gathering with people indoors and are not fully vaccinated, wearing a mask and staying 6 feet apart helps protect anyone who is unvaccinated, at [increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html), or lives with someone who is at increased risk. Read the CDC's [tips on how to carpool safely](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/organizations/carpooling-fs.pdf).

***TIP Store your face masks with your keys, phone or wallet so it's easier to remember, keep an extra in your coat pocket, bag or car just in case.***

Guidance on Mask Exemptions in Children and Adolescents

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/VT-Mask-Exemptions-in-Children-and-Adolescents.pdf>