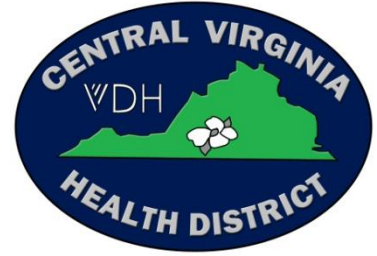


PRESS RELEASE:

CVHD To Begin Vaccinating Those 12-15



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(LYNCHBURG, V.A.)—Central Virginia Health District (CVHD) will begin vaccinating those aged 12 to 15, following federal approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for adolescents. The vaccine previously was approved for use in those aged 16 and older, while two other available vaccines are approved for those 18 and older.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention approved use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for those aged 12-15 Wednesday, accepting the recommendation of its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which met earlier in the day to review safety data for the vaccine in this age group. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Monday amended the vaccine’s Emergency Use Authorization to include those aged 12-15. “This approval marks an important step toward reaching herd immunity and further controlling the spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants,” said Dr. Lindsey Lockwood, public information officer and population health manager for CVHD.

In the Pfizer-BioNTech clinical trial, with about 2,000 participants aged 12–15, the vaccine was found to be 100 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 occurring at least seven days after the second dose. It is typical for a new vaccine to be studied in adults first and then to gradually include younger age groups.

Administration of the vaccine in adolescents will be the same as in adults: given in two doses, separated by 21 days. Adolescents are considered fully vaccinated 14 days after receiving the second dose. Side effects in this age group included pain or redness in the arm where the vaccine is given, fatigue, fever, and muscle aches.

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is the only one approved for use in those under 18 years of age, so parents and guardians should ensure that vaccine is offered before scheduling an appointment or attending a walk-in clinic. To schedule an appointment, adolescents and their parents or guardians can:

- Go to vaccinate.virginia.gov, and search for locations offering Pfizer-BioNTech
- Call 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682)
- Speak with their primary care provider

In most cases, adolescents must have the consent of a parent or legal guardian and be accompanied by a parent, guardian or someone acting in the place of a guardian to receive a vaccine. In a school setting, written consent is required, but a parent or guardian is not required to be present. It is recommended that you check with the facility that is offering the vaccination about consent and who needs to accompany the adolescent. Additionally, sites run by the Virginia Department of Health require the parent or guardian verbally confirm a minor’s date of birth; however, other providers may require additional proof of age.