

# UW Health: Vaccinating children will be critical to fighting COVID-19 pandemic

Posted on Thursday, Apr 15, 2021

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, Wis. – While much attention has been paid to adult vaccinations, making sure younger children are eventually vaccinated against COVID-19 is an important part of ending the pandemic.

Some of the early data shared is positive, but there are still many unknowns related to inoculating children against COVID-19.

Currently, only the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is authorized in the United States for children ages 16 and 17, and the companies have applied to the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use authorization to use the vaccine in children as young as 12.

Pfizer is currently testing its vaccine in clinical trials with children 12 to 15 years old, and will be gradually advancing into trials with younger children. Moderna, the other vaccine currently authorized for use in the U.S., is also progressing in pediatric clinical trials, initially in adolescents but eventually to children as young as six months.

This process may take many months, so these vaccines may not be authorized for most children until late 2021 or early 2022, according to Dr. Jim Conway, professor of pediatrics at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, and an infectious diseases and vaccine expert at UW Health.

“When the time is right, it will be vital to vaccinate children if we hope to provide broad immunity for Americans against this dangerous virus,” Conway said.

“However, children are not small adults and we must make sure these vaccines are safe for them.”

Parents of children 16 and 17 years old are encouraged to get their children vaccinated with the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine now to help prevent the spread of the virus, which is currently expanding most in younger people.

For the time being, please help us slow the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Staying home as much as possible
- Wearing a mask
- Keeping a safe distance from others
- Washing your hands frequently
  
- Quarantining if you feel ill

Conway is available for interviews today, and a recorded interview is also available.