

# Myocarditis after COVID-19 Vaccination: What Parents and Young Adults Should Know



## What is myocarditis?

Myocarditis and pericarditis are terms to describe inflammation of the heart muscle, or outer lining of the heart. Common symptoms include chest pain, difficulty breathing, and abnormal heart rhythms. The body's immune system can often cause this inflammation in response to an infection, such as viruses.

## Myocarditis is not very common and is rarely fatal.

There are less than 200,000 cases of myocarditis in the United States each year, with less than 2% ever fatal. In the vaccine clinical trials of more than 3,000 children age 5 to 11, there were no reports of myocarditis from the vaccine.



- It is not known to be contagious
- Most cases are very mild
- Treatment is usually minimal, focused on managing symptoms (medicine and rest)

## Is there a connection to COVID-19 vaccination?

Possibly. The risk after vaccination is extremely rare, but it may happen. Myocarditis also occurs in people who do not get vaccinated. Children are more at risk of myocarditis after multisystem inflammatory syndrome, caused by COVID-19.

The CDC continues to recommend that everyone who is eligible get vaccinated for COVID-19.

## What signs and symptoms should I be aware of after vaccination?

Cases have mostly occurred in male adolescents and young adults. Symptoms appear to be more common after the second dose.

CDC recommends that recently vaccinated people seek medical attention if they develop any of these symptoms after being vaccinated, particularly in the first week after vaccination:



- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart

Most patients with myocarditis or pericarditis who received care responded well to treatment and felt better quickly. Patients can usually return to their normal daily activities after their symptoms improve. Those diagnosed with myocarditis should consult with their cardiologist before resuming activities, such as exercise.

**Remember, it is normal to have mild to moderate side effects during the first week after receiving any COVID-19 vaccine** such as fever, headache, fatigue, and joint/muscle pain.

## Vaccination is still the best choice.

The strong benefits of the vaccines far outweigh the potential risks of adverse vaccine reactions, like myocarditis. The vaccine is very effective at preventing death and disease, and includes protection against new, more dangerous variant viruses.