

# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Physician Groups Encourage Families to Get Their Teens Vaccinated Against COVID-19**

RALEIGH – The North Carolina Medical Society (NCMS), the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians (NCAFP) and the North Carolina Pediatric Society (NCPeds), representing thousands of physicians and PAs who treat young people throughout the state, strongly encourage all families to make sure their children ages 12 and up are vaccinated as soon as possible against COVID-19. Clinical trials currently are underway to ensure the vaccines are safe and effective in younger children as well.

“As we have said since the first COVID-19 vaccine was authorized early this year, everyone who is eligible should get vaccinated. It is the most immediate and effective way to stop this pandemic,” said NCMS President **Philip Brown, Jr., MD**. “Millions of people around the world have been vaccinated safely and current trends in COVID cases and deaths in our state are encouraging as more North Carolinians are getting vaccinated.”

Currently, the Pfizer vaccine can be given to teenagers ages 12 and up. The vaccine is free even to those without insurance and regardless of immigration status. The vaccine is being offered at numerous places throughout the state, including physician offices. Be sure to check with your child’s doctor to see if their practice is offering the vaccine. If not, you can [find a vaccination spot near you at this website](#).

“It is so exciting that more children can now be vaccinated against COVID. This is a great path forward to decreasing the risks of serious illness and long-term effects due to COVID infection. In addition, it is vitally important children return to the social, educational, and extracurricular activities that contribute to development and mental wellness. Decreasing rates of infection will lead us back toward getting together with family and friends, visiting with grandparents, opening up summer camp options and more,” said Vice-President of the NC Pediatric Society **Kenya McNeal-Trice, MD, FAAP**. “As a pediatrician and mother, I urge all families to make sure their children are protected against COVID.”

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services reports that in North Carolina, more than 100,000 children 0 to 17 years old have tested positive for COVID-19 and the percent of COVID-19 cases in children 17 and under has been increasing. Thousands of adolescents received COVID-19 vaccines during clinical trials and tens of millions of adults in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. No data suggests that COVID-19 vaccines impact teen’s development or their ability to get pregnant in the future.

“It’s crucial that we get as many North Carolinians vaccinated as possible, regardless of their age,” said President of the NCAFP **Jessica L. Triche, MD, FAAFP**. “We’ve seen a tremendous drop in the spread of COVID, but we are not done yet. Please make sure you and your children are vaccinated against COVID-19.”

As the state slowly returns to pre-pandemic habits with the easing of public health protocols like mask mandates and capacity limits in shops, restaurants and other mass gathering venues, it is crucial that the large majority of North Carolinians are vaccinated to ensure everyone’s safety and to prevent mutations of the virus that could lead to a resurgence in cases.

Please make sure everyone eligible in your family is vaccinated and watch for updates on authorizations of COVID-19 vaccines for younger children.

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***About the North Carolina Medical Society***

*“The North Carolina Medical Society is the oldest professional member organization in North Carolina, representing physicians and physician assistants who practice in the state. Founded in 1849, the Society seeks to provide leadership in medicine by uniting, serving and representing physicians and their health care teams to enhance the health of North Carolinians.”*

***About the North Carolina Pediatric Society***

*Founded in 1931, the North Carolina Pediatric Society (NCPeds) is the state affiliate Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics with more than 2,000 pediatrician and pediatric health professional members. Its mission is to empower pediatricians and its partners to foster the physical, social, and emotional well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.*

***About the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians***

*The North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians, Inc. (NCAFP) is a non-profit professional association headquartered in Raleigh representing over 4,200 family physicians, family medicine residents and medical students across North Carolina. The NCAFP is a constituent chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians, based in Leawood, Kansas.*