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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ISSUES NEW GUIDANCE REGARDING COVID-19 VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN



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**Tallahassee, Fla.**— The Florida Department of Health (Department) is the first state in the nation to issue guidance stating that healthy children from ages 5 to 17 may not benefit from receiving the currently available COVID-19 vaccine. The Department recommends that children with underlying conditions are the best candidates for the COVID-19 vaccine. This follows Surgeon General Dr. Joseph A. Ladapo’s announcement at a roundtable hosted yesterday by Governor Ron DeSantis.

“It is essential for health care practitioners to analyze existing data on the COVID-19 vaccine alongside parents when deciding to vaccinate children,” said **Surgeon General Dr. Joseph A. Ladapo**. “Based on currently available data, the risks of administering COVID-19 vaccination among healthy children may outweigh the benefits. That is why these decisions should be made on an individual basis, and never mandated.”

The guidance from Surgeon General Dr. Joseph A. Ladapo can be found [here](#).

On Monday, Governor Ron DeSantis hosted a roundtable with world renowned physicians and epidemiologists to discuss the failures of lockdowns and mandates in response to COVID-19, including the negative impacts on mental health associated with isolation. The experts also discussed the risks of the COVID-19 vaccine to healthy children weighed against the low risk that COVID-19 illness poses to them.

“If you are 75 years old and you haven’t had COVID-19, then I think it’s a no brainer to get the vaccine because you are high risk – even if there is a small risk for an adverse reaction – that’s much less than the benefit from the vaccine or preventing death,” said **Dr. Martin Kulldorff**. “For children, the story is very, very different. I think in public health, it’s important to be honest, not only about what we know, but also what we don’t know. If you go back and look at the randomized trials for children of the Pfizer vaccine that we used for the emergency use authorization, what those trials showed – and they had about a little over 4,000 people in total in these two trials – is that there is the reduction in mild infections. If you look at serious disease, the hospitalization and deaths, there was none.”

“For parents who are trying to decide on what they should do [with COVID-19 vaccines], the first thing that you want to do for harm-benefit analysis is: Is there a mortality benefit

for these vaccines for your child?” **said Dr. Joseph Fraiman.** “The question is, if you have a child who's at risk or has co-risk factors for COVID-19, that's a discussion with your pediatrician, but if you have a healthy child, the chances of that child dying are incredibly low, essentially close to zero, if not actually zero. Then the next part of the analysis that you would have to think about are the side effects of the vaccine and the symptoms of COVID-19. The vaccine causes severe symptoms in children and adults.”

“The argument for vaccinating children for that for the societal benefit is not what it used to be,” **said Dr. Tracy Høeg.** “We need to look at children who have already been infected – and we know according to the CDC that that's at least 58% of children, it's probably more by now. Especially for healthy children, we don't know if they've benefitted from being vaccinated on top of already having infection. That's actually true for adults. That's been shown with data from the CDC out of New York and California.”

The full roundtable hosted by Governor Ron DeSantis can be found [here](#).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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