



7/26/2021 Covid, Masking, Vaccination and School Recommendations:

It is the recommendation of our practice and that of the AAP that all students, >2 years old, wear a mask for school regardless of their vaccination status unless there is a medical contraindication to masking.

As the delta variant increases its impact on the pandemic, it has become crucial to have all eligible people receive vaccinations. Herd immunity numbers for this more virulent strain will need to be > than the 70% initially protected to decrease the spread in our communities. The Pfizer vaccine has been proven to be a safe and effective means for protection from severe disease, hospitalization and death from SARS CoV19.

FAQs:

Why does my vaccinated child need to wear a mask? There are many reasons. We are so thankful for those who are vaccinated and for those who vaccinated their children. But vaccinated people can still get Covid-19 and they can still spread Covid-19. There are many in our community who cannot yet receive the Covid vaccination, mainly those <12 years of age. When you send your child to school, the schools are unable to separate or identify vaccinated from unvaccinated students due to state law. With the delta variant being so much more virulent, and this new wave of the pandemic being truly a pandemic of the unvaccinated, it is likely that there will be cases in schools. If your child is vaccinated AND masked, she/he is less likely to become infected and bring it home, or to sports teams, or to other students. If your child is unvaccinated and masked, there is less chance that they will infect others.

Why did I get my child vaccinated if they still have to wear masks? Again, we appreciate the choice to vaccinate your children! Vaccinated people have >99% protection from death from this virus. They have >95% protection from hospitalization and severe disease. But vaccinated people can still contract and spread Covid-19, so to use the "swiss cheese" approach and use a mask when indoors with an unvaccinated population (students at school), just makes sense.

My school hasn't mandated masks. What should my child do? Many schools have been limited in their ability to fully protect their students due to limitations created by state mandates. But you as a parent have every right to send your child to school with a mask and discuss with them the importance of wearing it at school. It is what our docs will be doing with their children.

Should I keep my child home from school? This is a very personal decision. Elementary school students especially had a hard time without in-person education last year. And so far, it seems like masked in-person education is still a viable option for most kids. If your child or a family member has a medical condition that leaves them more vulnerable to Covid-19 and they cannot yet receive a vaccination, please call your doctor to discuss this issue.

How can I get my child protected and vaccinated? We are ready and able to give all children 12 years and older the vaccine at our clinic. Call today for an appointment.

Are you seeing the delta variant at TVP? We do not do genetic sequencing in our office, but we are seeing a large spike in positive cases over the last 2 weeks. We have every reason to believe these spikes are due to the delta variant. We are mostly seeing children getting it from their unvaccinated parents. We have had children from age 6 months to 22 years who have tested positive in the past 2 weeks. Overwhelmingly, the sentiment of these parents is fear and concern but a resolve to get vaccinated as soon as they are able and to encourage others to do the same.

When will my 5-11 year old child be able to get the vaccine? We are hearing that the studies on this population will not be complete until winter. We are disappointed with the wait but know that this is necessary to ensure a continued safe dosing schedule for these children. As soon as it receives an EUA for this population, Tanque Verde Pediatrics will have it to give. We are considering shutting our clinic down for the day after the EUA is administered (except for same day sick visits) so that we can vaccinate this population as soon as we are safely able to do so.

What do we do in the meantime? Promote vaccinations to anyone who is on the fence. Have them call their physician for more information to feel good about getting the vaccine. Get your flu shot this fall to avoid another febrile illness in our community. **Encourage mask wearing for your children when they return to school, regardless of their immunization status.**

**Thank you for your continued commitment to the health and safety of our community!
TVP staff shares this with you!**

Sincerely,

The Doctors and Staff of TVP