

Any COVID infection leaves strong antibody levels in kids: study

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(HealthDay)—Even a mild or asymptomatic case of COVID-19 triggers a strong antibody response in children and teens, new research shows.

"These findings are encouraging, especially because we cannot yet vaccinate [children](#) under the age of 12 against the virus," said study co-lead author Jillian Hurst, an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, N.C.

"The study shows that children who've had mild infections or even those who did not have any symptoms, develop an [immune response](#) that will likely provide some protection against future infections," Hurst said in a university news release.

She and her colleagues measured antibody response in 69 [young patients](#), aged 2 months to 21 years, with asymptomatic and mild symptomatic SARS-CoV-2 [infection](#). The median age was 11.5 years, and 51% were female.

Antibody response in the children did not differ based on the presence of symptoms, and [antibodies](#) against the coronavirus were still present in most of participants up to four months after infection.

The researchers also found that regardless of age, the children's antibody levels were the same or slightly higher than adults at two and four months after infection, according to the study published recently in the journal *JCI Insight*.

The findings suggest that giving COVID-19 vaccines to young children could lead to a level of antibody protection that's similar to or greater than that of adults, the researchers noted.

"Most studies of the immune responses of children to SARS-CoV-2 have focused on patients hospitalized for severe COVID-19 or multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children [MIS-C], or have assessed immunity only during acute infection," said study senior author Dr. Genevieve Fouda, an associate professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Genetics and Microbiology at Duke.

"Our study provides important information that SARS-CoV-2-specific immune responses, regardless of disease severity, may decline over time more slowly in children and adolescents," Fouda said in the release.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on [COVID-19](#).

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