

HHS to Stop Recommending Routine COVID Vaccination for Children, Pregnant Women

Last month, a CDC panel said it was considering narrowing universal recommendation for COVID-19 vaccination.

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A 3-year-old girl sits on the lap of her mother in a file photo during a vaccination. David Ryder/Getty Images



By Jeff Louderback

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The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) plans to stop recommending routine COVID-19 vaccines for children, teens, and

pregnant women, a senior agency official confirmed to The Epoch Times.

The development was first [reported](#) on May 15 by the Wall Street Journal. A formal announcement is expected in the upcoming days, according to the report.

Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [recommend](#) that individuals 6 months and older receive an updated COVID-19 inoculation.

Three COVID-19 vaccine shots have been authorized for use in the United States: Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech's messenger RNA-based inoculations, and Novavax's protein-based vaccine.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was supposed to decide on Novavax's application for approval by April 2, but missed the deadline, the company [reported](#).

HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. [previously said](#) that Novavax's vaccine is not effective. It is currently available under emergency-use authorization. The evidentiary bar for approval is higher than for the emergency-use authorization.

According to CDC data, around 13 percent of children and 14 percent of pregnant women had taken the updated COVID shot.

Kennedy has long advocated for vaccine safety. During the COVID pandemic, Kennedy was a vocal opponent of COVID-19 vaccine mandates, and he has frequently questioned their efficacy and safety.

Kennedy petitioned the FDA to revoke the emergency-use authorizations of COVID vaccines in 2021.

In 2023, the CDC [added](#) the COVID-19 vaccines to the vaccination schedule, following a recommendation from its vaccine advisory panel.

Last month, the same panel [said](#) that it is considering narrowing the universal recommendation for COVID-19 vaccination.

Officials [noted](#) in the same meeting that the United Kingdom and Australia are among the countries that do not recommend COVID-19 vaccine boosters for healthy children.

Like Kennedy, FDA Commissioner Marty Makary expressed concern about the efficacy and safety of COVID-19 shots. The FDA plans to debut a new framework for vaccine approvals next week, the Wall Street Journal reported.

“Separate from my role as a regulator at the FDA, I am not encouraging or insisting young, healthy children to get a COVID shot unless there is new evidence that emerges that suggests there is a clear benefit,” Makary said on May 15.

Makary noted that vaccine companies might be required to submit additional data to the FDA. Under Kennedy’s guidance, HHS has said it will require placebo testing for all new vaccines.

“We want to see vaccines that are available for high-risk individuals,” Makary added. “And at the same time, we want some good science. We want some good clinical data.”

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Jeff Louderback covers news and features on the White House and executive agencies for The Epoch Times. He also reports on Senate and House elections. A professional journalist since 1990, Jeff has a versatile background that includes covering news and politics, business, professional and college sports, and lifestyle topics for regional and national media outlets.

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