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Teens in Moderna's vaccine trial share their experiences and mild side effects as data show the shot is effective in younger people

For the teens who participated in Moderna's latest COVID-19 vaccine study, the scariest thing about the clinical trial was the jab itself.

Paul, 17, told Insider he's "not the biggest fan of shots." (The teenager declined to share his last name to protect his privacy.) But he said once the initial nervousness wore off, he wasn't too stressed about being a part of a scientific study.

Moderna announced Tuesday that its coronavirus vaccine appears to be highly protective in 12-to-17-year-olds. The biotech enrolled more than 3,700 teens in a study to determine whether their immune responses were comparable to the vaccine's efficacy in adults.

Insider spoke with four teens who participated in the Moderna trial after their second shots in March. They still don't know if they got the vaccine or placebo injections, but the experience was "pretty chill" overall.



Parents signed up their kids for any vaccination opportunity

Paul told Insider his mom came across the clinical trial signup when she was searching for ways to get him vaccinated in February. At age 17 with no major health conditions, he wasn't yet eligible based on his state's vaccine rollout criteria.

Ella Bates, 13, said her mom heard about the Moderna trial from a friend and called to learn more that day. Bates was happy to participate, since she knew the trial could benefit both herself and others.

"I know that doing this can help scientists know if the vaccine is safe for kids or not," Bates told Insider. "And I could possibly be getting a vaccine, which could protect me."

Two-thirds of the teen volunteers received the vaccine, while the other third got placebo shots. Until Moderna follows up with them, some of the participants are left guessing whether or not they got vaccinated based on side effects.

Some of the teens had mild side effects like achy arms and fatigue

Many adult vaccine recipients experienced some side effects, such as headache, fever, or chills, after getting their second shots. Scientists aren't sure if kids will have the same reactions or something milder, Insider's Aria Bendix previously reported.

Bendix talked to a pair of 13-year-old brothers who "felt a bit run down" after their shots in the Moderna trial. One brother had a sore arm and some fatigue after his first shot, while the other felt more tired a couple days after the second one.

Paul said he was sore after the first shot, but not the second one. Bates, on the other hand, felt fine after her first jab and had a headache and some mild muscle aches after her second shot.

The volunteers reported any side effects to Moderna via e-diaries. They also went to their local clinics to get blood drawn so the researchers could monitor their antibody levels.

Ella's mom, Cristy Bates, told Insider she's proud of her daughter's small contribution to science.

"For me, it is remarkable that Ella will have a small role in history, testing it to ensure it is safe for kids," Bates told Insider. "I am so proud of her for being willing to take time off of school and get blood draws — which are not fun — just to help other people."

To view the full article, click [here](#).