

India's vaccination program for age group of 15-18 yrs

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In news- India will start administering Covid-19 vaccines to children in the age group of 15-18 years from 3rd January 2022.

About the vaccination program-

- As per the Union Health Ministry, **Bharat Biotech's Covaxin** will be the only vaccine that will be administered to eligible recipients in the age group of 15-18 years.
- This makes it the **second Indian vaccine after ZyCoV-D, a DNA plasmid vaccine, to be approved for those above 12.**
- ZyCoV-D, by Zydus Cadilla, is a three-dose combination whereas Covaxin by Bharat Biotech is a two-dose vaccine to be administered four weeks apart.
- The company also says that **being an inactivated whole virion vaccine**, the dosage for children is the same as those for adults.
- **Children born in 2007 and earlier shall be eligible** to receive the vaccine under this program.
- Beneficiaries can register online through an existing account on Co-WIN, or after creating a new account through a unique mobile number.
- Children can book a slot using their parents' existing Co-WIN accounts.
- **All beneficiaries irrespective of their income status are entitled to get jabbed for free at government vaccination centres.**
- However, those who visit private hospitals or vaccination centres have to pay the requisite fees.

About Covaxin (for adults)-

- It is India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine developed by

Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Institute of Virology (NIV).

- The vaccine is developed using Whole-Virion Inactivated Vero Cell derived platform technology.
- Inactivated vaccines do not replicate and are therefore unlikely to revert and cause pathological effects.
- They contain dead viruses, incapable of infecting people but still able to instruct the immune system to mount a defensive reaction against an infection.
- Covaxin is included along with immune-potentiators, also known as vaccine adjuvants, which are added to the vaccine to increase and boost its immunogenicity.
- It is a vaccine with no sub-zero storage, no reconstitution requirement, and ready to use liquid presentation in multi-dose vials, stable at 2-8 degrees.