

COVID-19 Vaccination Factsheet



Why the COVID-19 vaccination is important?

As a frontline social care worker, you are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 at work and at much higher risk of repeated exposure to the infection. As the rates of COVID-19 continue to remain high it is more important than ever to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

How is the vaccine given?

- The COVID-19 vaccine is given as an injection into your upper arm and is given as 2 doses
- There have been changes to the way in which these vaccines are given as the second dose is now given up to 12 weeks after the first dose
- This has changed from this being given 3 weeks after dose 1

Who can get the COVID-19 vaccine?

The NHS is currently offering the COVID-19 vaccine to people most at risk from coronavirus.

The vaccine is being offered in some hospitals and hundreds of local vaccination centres run by GPs and at vaccination hubs.

There may be a difference in when vaccines are available in different areas based on a number of factors and how the vaccine programme is being rolled out nationally in waves. This means that one geographical area may move through the priority groups at a faster pace initially than other areas. However, frontline social care workers are within the top priority groups for the COVID-19 vaccination.

Key facts about the vaccine

- The COVID-19 vaccine will reduce the chance of you suffering from the COVID-19 disease
- It will take a week or two for your body to build up some protection from the first dose
- Some people may still get COVID-19 after having the vaccine, but the severity of it should be reduced
- The evidence of passing on COVID-19 once you have been vaccinated is still unclear; however, people may still be able to pass it on, so you should continue with other forms of protection such as PPE, social distancing etc.

Side effects of the vaccine

Like most medicines, vaccines cause side effects with most being mild or short-term. Side effects with the COVID-19 vaccine commonly include:

- A painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where the person has been injected
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- General aches, or mild flu like symptoms
- Feeling feverish is not uncommon; however, a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19. If you become concerned about the symptoms call 111 for advice

Who cannot have the vaccine

The majority of people will be able to receive the vaccine; however, in some situations it is not recommended. This includes:

- A small number of people who suffer from severe allergies may not be able to have the vaccine
- Pregnant women should have the vaccination after their pregnancy has ended. If you have already had a dose and find out you are pregnant, don't worry - the vaccine does not contain a living organism of COVID-19 so you cannot pass this onto the child. However, you should not have the second dose until the end of your pregnancy



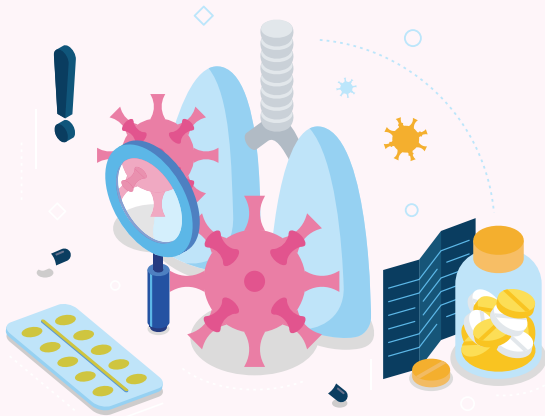
After having the vaccine

- You can return to work after a vaccination as long as you feel well enough to do the work
- Plan to attend your next appointment for the second dose of the vaccine, which will be detailed on your record card
- Continue to follow current infection control guidance in your workplace; wear PPE and continue to take part in screening programmes. Any government rules still apply to people who have been vaccinated

Tips on helping staff to get the vaccination

Employers can also support their workforce in getting vaccinated by:

- Having flexibility within the rota system to allow staff to build in time for their vaccination
- Providing staff with information on local vaccination centres in the area and displaying posters and other information to promote this to staff
- Organise transport for staff who are unable to get to the vaccination centres
- Share staff experiences of the vaccination process
- Ensure that staff are provided with information surrounding the UK's vaccination plan



How safe is the COVID-19 vaccine?

The vaccines approved for use in the UK have been developed by Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca.

They have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Any coronavirus vaccine that is approved must go through all the clinical trials and safety checks after all other licensed medicines go through. The MHRA follows international standards of safety.

Other vaccines are being developed. They will only be available on the NHS once they have been thoroughly tested to make sure they are safe and effective.

So far, thousands of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported.

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine?

The first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine will give some protection from coronavirus. Two doses of the vaccine provide the best protection.

There is a chance you might still get or spread coronavirus even if you have the vaccine.

This means it is important to:

- Continue to follow social distancing guidance
- If you can, wear something that covers your nose and mouth in places where it is hard to stay away from other people



Allergic reactions

Tell staff before you are vaccinated if you have ever had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

You should not have the vaccine if you have ever had a serious allergic reaction to a previous vaccine.

If you do have a reaction to the vaccine, it usually happens in minutes. Staff giving the vaccine are trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately.

COVID-19 vaccine ingredients

The 2 approved COVID-19 vaccines do not contain any animal products or egg.