

Public COVID vaccination FAQs

SAFETY

Q. Is the new COVID-19 vaccine safe to use?

A. The vaccine has been approved to use. A dedicated team of MHRA scientists and clinicians carried out a rigorous, scientific and detailed review of all the available data, starting in October 2020.

The MHRA expert scientists and clinicians reviewed data from the laboratory pre-clinical studies, clinical trials, manufacturing and quality controls, product sampling and testing of the final vaccine and also considered the conditions for its safe supply and distribution.

[The National Institute for Biological Standards and Control](#), part of the agency, has been and will continue doing, independent laboratory testing so that every batch of the vaccine meets the expected standards of safety and quality.

Q. How effective is the vaccine?

A. The first vaccine to be approved is the Pfizer vaccine. The vaccine is given in two doses – three weeks apart – and data from clinical trials showed the vaccine is 94% effective in protecting people over the age of 65 from coronavirus, with trials suggesting it works equally well in people of all ages, races and ethnicities. There were also no serious safety concerns reported in the trials. It is important that you receive both doses of the vaccination.

Q. Are there any known or anticipated side effects?

A. Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short-term, and not everyone gets them. Even if you do have symptoms after the first dose, you still need to have the second dose. You may not be protected until at least seven days after your second dose of the vaccine.

Very common side effects include:

- Having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection. This tends to be worst around 1-2 days after the vaccine
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- General aches, or mild flu like symptoms

As with all vaccines, appropriate treatment and care will be available in case of a rare anaphylactic event following administration.

The MHRA have advised that people with a history of allergic reactions do not receive the vaccination.

Q. Should pregnant women have the vaccination?

A. There are no data as yet on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy, either from human or animal studies. Given the lack of evidence, JCVI favours a precautionary approach, and does not currently advise COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy.

Women should be advised not to come forward for vaccination if they may be pregnant or are planning a pregnancy within three months of the first dose.

Data are anticipated which will inform discussions on vaccination in pregnancy. JCVI will review these as soon as they become available.

Q. What is the evidence to show the Pfizer vaccine is safe for BAME communities?

A. The phase three study of the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine demonstrated a vaccine efficacy of 95%, with consistent efficacy across age, gender and ethnicity. Overall, among the participants who received the COVID-19 vaccine 82.1% were White, 9.6% were Black or African American, 26.1% were Hispanic/Latino, 4.3% were Asian and 0.7% were Native American/Alaskan.

Q. I have had my flu vaccine, do I need the COVID-19 vaccine as well?

A. The flu vaccine does not protect you from COVID-19. If you are eligible for both vaccines you should have them both, but normally separated by at least a week.

Q. Will the COVID-19 vaccine protect me from flu?

A. No, the COVID-19 vaccine will not protect you against the flu. If you have been offered a flu vaccine, please try to have this as soon as possible to help protect you, your family and friends from flu this winter.

Q. Is the vaccine vegan/vegetarian friendly?

A. Yes, the Pfizer vaccine does not contain any meat derivatives or porcine products.

If, and when, further vaccines are approved we will publish information about known allergens or ingredients that are important for certain faiths, cultures and beliefs.

Q. Is this vaccine being delivered by volunteers in Lincolnshire?

A. No. All vaccinators are fully qualified, and have received an additional, specific training program relating to the delivery of this vaccine.

Some volunteers are supporting with admin functions.

PRIORITY GROUPS

Q. Where will people get the vaccine?

The NHS is rapidly putting in place new deliver channels tailored to the particular logistical requirements of the first Covid vaccine to be approved:

- **Hospital Hubs:** Dozens of NHS trusts will act as hospital hubs where patients and staff can be vaccinated on site. These hubs are where we know the Pfizer vaccine can be stored safely. [There are 50 hubs in the first wave](#) and more hospitals will start vaccinating over the coming weeks and months as vaccine supply increases and the programme ramps up.
- **Local Vaccination Services:** To make it as easy as possible for those who are eligible to access a vaccination safely, Local Vaccination Services will also be available. These

community and primary care-led services will vary based on local and logistical considerations but will include GP practices, local authority sourced buildings or other local facilities and as vaccine supply increases in the New Year, local pharmacies too.

- **Vaccination Centres:** The NHS will also establish vaccination centres, where large numbers of people will be able to go and get a jab. The majority will open in the New Year when supply of the vaccine increases. They are being set up in local venues such as sports stadiums and concert venues that offer the physical space to deal with large numbers of people while maintaining social distancing.

Q. Who will get the vaccine first and why?

A. The independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) will advise Government on which vaccine/s the UK should use, and priority groups to receive the vaccine based on the best available clinical, modelling and epidemiological data. This will depend on the properties of the vaccine, those most at need (including health and care workers) and the unique medical circumstances of individuals.

The NHS will follow clinical guidance by DHSC and JCVI on the prioritised people eligible for COVID-19 vaccine and therefore plan for vaccine rollout accordingly.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination Immunisation has published advice on priority groups in order of priority:

1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
2. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. All those 75 years of age and over
4. All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. All those 65 years of age and over.
6. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
7. All those 60 years of age and over
8. All those 55 years of age and over
9. All those 50 years of age and over

Q. How will people know when it is their time to get the vaccine?

A. When it is the right time people will receive an invitation to come forward. For most people this will be a letter, either from their GP or the national NHS. This letter will include all the information a person will need to book appointments, including your NHS number.

Please remember it will take time for us to vaccinate everyone who is eligible. Our first priority is the most at risk as determined by the JCVI.

We are asking the public not to contact the NHS to get an appointment until you get this letter. We would be grateful if you would help us to share this message over the coming weeks

You do not need to do anything.

Q. Who should not have the vaccination?

A. The vaccines do not contain living organisms, and so are safe for people with disorders of the immune system. These people may not respond so well to the vaccine. A very small number of people who are at risk of COVID-19 cannot have the vaccine – this includes people who have severe

allergies to a component in the vaccine. Women of childbearing age, those who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding should read the detailed information on www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination.

Q. I have an illness/ long term condition. Should I have the vaccine if offered it?

A. The vaccine will also be offered to adults with conditions such as: • a blood cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma) • diabetes • dementia • a heart problem • a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma • a kidney disease • a liver disease • lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as HIV infection, steroid medication, chemotherapy or radiotherapy) • rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or psoriasis • liver disease • having had an organ transplant • having had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA) • a neurological or muscle wasting condition • a severe or profound learning disability • a problem with your spleen, e.g sickle cell disease, or having had your spleen removed • are seriously overweight (BMI of 40 and above) • are severely mentally ill All people who are in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable group will be eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. Whether you are offered the vaccine may depend on the severity of your condition. Your GP can advise on whether you are eligible.

Q. If I am currently self-isolating, should I go and get vaccinated?

A. You should not attend a vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating, waiting for a COVID-19 test or unsure if you are fit and well. If you are positive, self-isolating, waiting for a COVID-19 test or unsure if you are fit and well you should follow government guidelines.

Q. I'm currently ill with COVID-19, can I get the vaccine?

A. People currently unwell and experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should not receive the COVID-19 vaccine until they have recovered. If you are positive, self-isolating, waiting for a COVID-19 test or unsure if you are fit and well you should follow government guidelines.

Q. If I have had a positive Covid test in the past, am I still entitled to get vaccinated?

A. Yes, however as clinical deterioration can occur up to two weeks after infection, ideally vaccination should be deferred until clinical recovery and at least four weeks after onset of symptoms or four weeks from the first PCR positive specimen in those who are asymptomatic

If you have prolonged COVID-19 symptoms you can still receive your COVID-19 vaccine. However, if you are seriously debilitated, still under active investigation, or have recently suffered deterioration in your condition then deferral of vaccination may need to be considered. If this is the case, you should discuss this with your GP prior to booking a vaccination appointment.

Q. Are people who are under 18 are eligible for the vaccine?

A. Only young people age 16-18 years, who are employed in, studying or in training for health and social care work should be offered vaccination alongside their colleagues if a suitable vaccine is available.

LINCOLNSHIRE'S VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Q. Who will be offered the vaccine at Lincolnshire's hospital hub?

A. The order in which people will receive the vaccine is decided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and they have advised that age is the single greatest risk of mortality from COVID-19. After over eighty year olds, care home staff and priority healthcare staff were amongst the first to be offered the vaccine. We have begun to vaccinate all of these groups in Lincolnshire.

Those in the over 80 age group will be inpatients and outpatients who will already be at Lincoln County Hospital and who we can safely vaccinate in the first instance.

Care home staff from across the county are eligible to be offered the vaccine immediately too.

Those NHS provider staff (ULHT, LPFT, LCHS) across Lincolnshire who are most at risk are also be prioritised.

Not all people in the above groups will be contacted immediately but in accordance with available vaccine and appointment slots

Q. Why is there only one hospital hub? And why is this happening at Lincoln County Hospital only?

- A. The number and location of hospital hubs has been decided by NHSE/I nationally. We are very pleased to be one of the first systems in the Midlands to have a hospital hub.
- Our first hub is based at Lincoln because it is at present the only site with the appropriate storage facilities and licensing for this particular vaccine.
- Staff across the NHS and partner organisations in Lincolnshire have worked incredibly hard together and have successfully responded to the national request regarding the COVID vaccine delivery.

Q. Why are not all over 80 in and out patients at Lincolnshire's hospitals being offered the vaccine?

As we deploy the vaccine, we continue to risk assess patient safety on a case by case basis, alongside the appropriateness and safety of transporting the vaccine. We're continuing our work to ensure we can safely offer as many of this priority group the vaccine as possible, in accordance with availability.

Q. Who will be offered the vaccine through Lincolnshire's primary care programme?

A. The order in which people will receive the vaccine is decided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and they have advised that age is the single greatest risk of mortality from COVID-19.

Our primary care led community model will prioritise those in the over 80 age group.

Q. Why are not all GP surgeries taking part in Lincolnshire's primary care vaccination programme?

Local vaccination centres are not always a 'like for like' with practices, as they are delivered via primary care networks. For example, our vaccination centres at both Louth County Hospital and Grantham Meres Tennis centre are staffed by teams from different local practices coming together to ensure that they are able to get the service in the right place for the local community. Therefore, whilst not 100% of surgeries in the county will deliver vaccinations, 100% of the appropriate population registered with them will be able to access vaccinations by a joined up approach between neighbouring GPs.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR VACCINATION

Q. I have an appointment for my vaccination, what do I need to know/do?

A. Please attend no more than 5 minutes before your appointment time. You will be asked to complete a consent form on arrival which will be used to submit vaccination data.

Please DO NOT ATTEND if you are exhibiting any signs of COVID illness.

Please ensure you wear a face mask at all times whilst in attendance, adhere to social distancing guidelines and use the hand sanitiser available.

You are expected to wait for 15 minutes after your vaccination to ensure you exhibit no immediate complications. Please allow for this in your visit time

Q. Do I need to complete a consent form in advance of my appointment?

A. You will be asked to complete a consent form on arrival at the vaccination hub which will be used to submit vaccination data.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Below are two leaflets produced by Public Health England which will give you additional information. The first is 'Covid-19 Vaccination – A guide for adults' and the second is 'What to expect after your Covid-19 Vaccination'.



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