



COVID-19 Vaccinations: Your Top 5 Questions Answered



1. What is the COVID-19 vaccination?

[Vaccines](#) reduce the risks of getting a disease or being affected by it. They work by encouraging your body's natural defences (immune system) to build protection.

They can be delivered in different ways. The COVID-19 vaccination involves receiving two separate injections several weeks apart.

Three COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use and you can find details of how they work here: [Pfizer/BioNTech](#), [Oxford/AstraZeneca](#) and [Moderna](#).

These have met the required standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set by the independent [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#) (MHRA) which regulates medicines in the UK.

This [video](#) explains how the COVID-19 vaccines were assessed and approved by the MHRA.

2. Who will be vaccinated?

COVID-19 vaccinations will be made available to every adult in the UK. A decision is awaited on whether those under 18 require or will receive vaccinations.

Each person may accept or decline an invitation to be vaccinated. Those who decline will be able to change their mind but may experience a delay as a result.

The [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#), an independent expert group, has recommended that the NHS offers vaccinations first to those at highest risk of catching the infection and of suffering serious complications if they catch it.

The groups that will be first to be offered COVID-19 vaccinations include:

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
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

Each person will be prioritised based on their age, medical history, vocation and vulnerability. Do not worry if you have not yet been contacted, even if you know others who have. Delivery of vaccinations may vary slightly between different areas or groups.

Some people who are at risk of COVID-19 may not be able to receive a vaccination. This includes:

- People who have severe allergies - further information on this is [available here](#).
- Those who are sick or currently unwell [until they have recovered]
- Anyone with underlying health issues - further information on this is [available here](#).

Anyone with concerns should consult their GP, a pharmacist or a nurse before having the vaccine. Individual circumstances will differ, so it is important that advice is sought.

People will also be asked about their wellbeing and any medication at vaccination sites to check health conditions and allergies.

Women of childbearing age, those who are pregnant or breastfeeding should read the [detailed information available on NHS.UK](#).

3. Why do I need a vaccination?

The COVID-19 vaccination offers you protection against the Coronavirus disease. The [symptoms](#) can affect anyone.

If you are an older adult and/or have a long-term health condition, COVID-19 is more likely to be very serious and, in some cases, fatal. It can also affect those in other age groups.

High rates of COVID-19 infection may mean more people are hospitalised, and the NHS can struggle to treat everyone, including those with urgent non-COVID-19 conditions.

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of you suffering symptoms from the virus. It may take a week or two for your body to build up some protection from the first dose of vaccine. Some people may also experience side-effects.

Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective - some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.

Once vaccinated you may still be able to pass the virus on to others and will need to continue to comply with any social distancing and lockdown restrictions.

4. When will I get a vaccination?

The NHS will let you know when it's your turn to have the vaccine. You may get a text, phone call or a letter - usually up to 72 hours before your vaccination.

Once it is your turn, you will be contacted by the first NHS service able to offer you a vaccination. This may be your GP, a hospital hub, or another NHS service. If you work in health and social care, you may hear directly from your employer.

Be vigilant for fraud and scams. The NHS will only seek your name and date-of-birth and never seek any payments. Any contact seeking NHS or National Insurance numbers or other details should be reported to [Action Fraud](#) on 0300 123 2040.

Please **do not** contact your GP or visit a delivery location to seek a vaccination before the NHS contacts you. No-one will miss out.

If you miss your invitation or appointment to be vaccinated, the vaccine team will attempt to rebook you, contacting you either by telephone, by letter, or both methods if necessary.

The [government has published a plan](#) for:

- the first vaccine dose to be given to all people in the top 4 priority groups by 15th February 2021.
- vaccination of all care homes residents by mid-February 2021, with residents over 65 years old scheduled for vaccination by the end of January.
- all adults to be offered a vaccine by the autumn.

If you have not yet been approached about having the Covid-19 vaccination, please read the information: [why you are being asked to wait](#).

5. How will I be vaccinated?

Vaccinations will be delivered by the NHS at a dedicated venue where people will receive an injection into their upper arm.

Under the [national lockdown guidance](#), it is permissible to travel to get a vaccine during lockdown.

Anyone requiring support with transport to a vaccination appointment can find details of public, community and non-emergency transport on the [East Sussex County Council website](#) or can call their local [Community Hub](#) for assistance.

A range of locations in East Sussex are being used to deliver vaccinations, including:

- Hospitals
- GP Surgeries and Pharmacies
- Community venues (Village Halls, Community Centres etc.)
- Mass vaccinations sites (Leisure Centre, Stadiums etc.)
- Care Home residents will receive vaccinations on-site.

Details of the vaccination sites in East Sussex are available [here](#).

Each person will receive two vaccinations several weeks apart. Which COVID-19 vaccine you receive may vary depending on where you are vaccinated.

At or after the first of the two injections, you will be provided with details of the date and time for your second appointment.

Further COVID-19 vaccinations may be required to maintain protection, such as an annual booster injection. Further information on this will be released in due course.

The Government's [Lockdown guidance](#) makes clear that you can leave your home to attend a medical appointment such as a COVID-19 vaccination.

Where can I get more information?

A wide range of information on COVID-19 and vaccinations is available. We recommend that only reliable and approved sources are used.

- NHS information on the vaccine and national vaccination process is available [here](#).
- The vaccine rollout in Sussex is being organised by the [Sussex Health & Care Partnership](#).
- [Healthwatch East Sussex](#) has a set-up a [COVID-19 Vaccination Hub](#) to share key information.
- The Government has extensive information related to COVID-19 restrictions as well as the support available on its [website](#).
- East Sussex County Council provide updates for [Adult Social Care and Health Providers](#).

Tell Us Your Experience of Vaccinations

We are particularly keen to hear people's experiences of the vaccination process, which can be provided by leaving a review on our [Feedback Centre](#), via our [Website contact form](#) or the details below:

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