

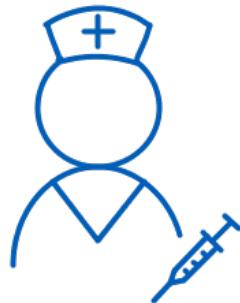
# COVID-19 vaccine

## Your questions answered

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe. It gives you the best protection against the virus.

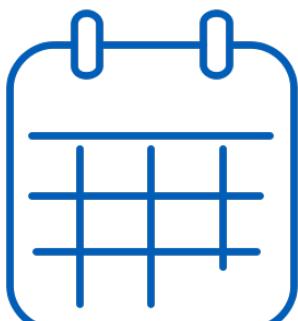


### Who can have the vaccine?



- People aged **40** and over. Younger age groups will follow
- Health and social care workers
- People at high risk of catching COVID
- People with a serious illness in their lungs, heart, liver, kidney or brain
- People with certain types of cancer
- People with diabetes
- People who have had a transplant
- People with Down's syndrome
- People who have a learning disability or severe mental illness

### How can I book my vaccine?



- At [nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](https://nhs.uk/covid-vaccination)
- Call **119** for free. You can speak to a translator if you need to
- You will get a text message or a letter
- You may get a call from an 01904 number
- We will never ask you to pay for your vaccine
- Your appointment might be at a doctor's surgery, hospital, pharmacy or large vaccination centre

# What will happen?



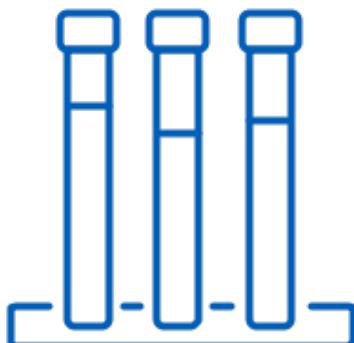
- You will get the vaccine in the top of your arm
- You will get your second dose between 3 weeks and 12 weeks later
- The vaccine will give you good protection against COVID-19
- You may still be able to spread the virus so you will need to keep following the rules about social distancing and masks

## Is it safe?



- Yes. All the vaccines in use in the UK have been carefully tested
- Serious side effects are rare but you may feel tired, get a headache or body aches, a mild fever and your arm may be sore
- You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine
- There have been no deaths directly linked to the vaccine

## What are the three vaccines?



- Pfizer/BioNTech
- Oxford/AstraZeneca
- Moderna
- The three vaccines need to be stored in different ways
- They are all very effective
- The safety and after-effects of all vaccines are constantly checked in the UK
- They do not contain any animal products

# Can the AstraZeneca vaccine give me clots?



- There has been a very small number of people who have experienced an extremely rare event where blood clots developed after the first dose of the vaccine
- These people were mainly under the age of 30 and research is going on to understand if the clots are directly caused by the vaccine
- The Government says that an alternative vaccine should be offered to those under 40 years of age
- The risks of getting clots from COVID far outweigh the risk of clots from the vaccine

# Will the vaccine alter my DNA?



- No, this is not possible
- The vaccine ingredients can not enter the nucleus (the centre) of the cell, which means it cannot affect your DNA

# Could it cause Bell's palsy?



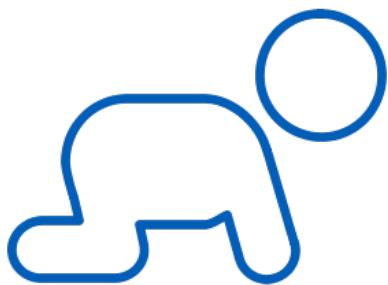
- Bell's palsy is a temporary weakness of the muscles in the face
- We don't know what causes it, but it might be an infection
- Some people taking part in the Pfizer trial developed Bell's palsy. It was a very small number and we do not think the vaccine caused it

# Should I have the vaccine if I am pregnant or breast-feeding?



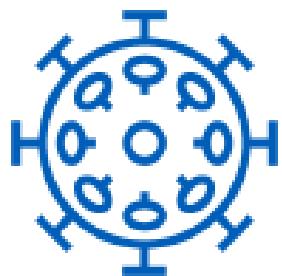
- If you are pregnant, you will be offered the vaccine when it is time for your age group
- Please speak to your doctor or midwife to make sure they are happy for you to have the vaccine
- The vaccine can not give you or your baby COVID-19
- In later pregnancy, some women could become seriously ill if they have COVID-19
- Pregnant women with COVID-19 are more likely to have to go into intensive care in hospital
- Pregnant women with COVID-19 are more likely to have their babies early
- Pregnant women are more at risk from COVID-19 if they have immune problems, diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma
- Pregnant women are more at risk from COVID-19 if they are overweight, older than 35, more than 28 weeks into their pregnancy, or are of black or Asian ethnic minority background
- There have been no safety concerns for the 90,000 pregnant women who have had the vaccine in the USA
- It is safe to have the vaccine if you are breastfeeding

# Will the vaccine affect my fertility?



- There is no evidence that the vaccine will affect your chances of becoming pregnant
- **There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine will make you infertile. This is backed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Association of Reproductive and Clinical Scientists, and the British Fertility Society**
- The British Fertility Society says if you are trying for a baby or thinking about having a baby in future, you should have your COVID-19 vaccine when it is your turn
- **You can have the vaccine if you are having fertility treatment.** Your medical team will be able to advise you about the best time to have the vaccination during your treatment to avoid having any side effects at the same time as procedures such as egg collection.
- The only reason to delay your fertility treatment until after you have had the vaccine is if you want to be protected from COVID-19 before you become pregnant. Delays can affect your chances of success once you are older than 37

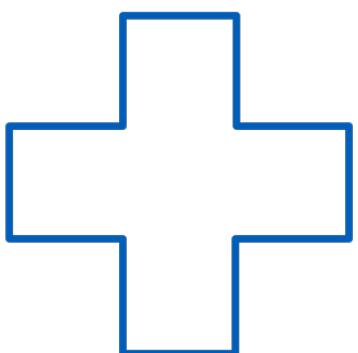
# If I've already had COVID-19, why do I need the vaccine?



- If you have been confirmed to have had COVID-19, wait for 4 weeks after you had symptoms before having the vaccine
- If you did not have symptoms, wait for 4 weeks after your positive test
- You may not have developed a natural protection against the virus and you could get it again
- **Flu vaccines do not protect you against COVID-19. You should have both vaccines if you are eligible, but leave at least a week between injections**

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# What if I feel unwell before my vaccine?



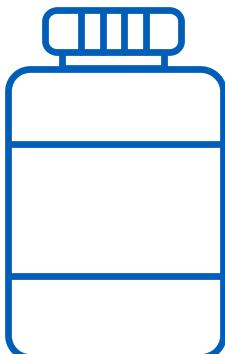
- You should try to have your vaccine as soon as possible
- You should not go to your vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating, waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test or if you have symptoms like a high temperature, a new lasting cough or a loss of taste or smell.
- If you have symptoms, please get a test

# Can my child have the COVID-19 vaccine?



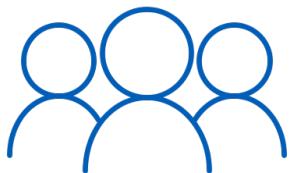
- Trials are taking place for the vaccine in children younger than 12
- **Children have a very low risk of COVID-19 infection**
- Vaccines for children with underlying health conditions will be considered when everyone in the older age groups has been offered a vaccine

## What if I have allergies?



- The vaccines do not contain common allergens like eggs, shellfish and penicillin
- **If you have a history of severe allergies resulting in anaphylaxis you should talk to your doctor or vaccination team**
- Some people with allergies may be advised to have a different COVID-19 vaccine or asked to go to a special place where they can be looked after if they have a reaction

# Will the COVID-19 testing continue?



- Testing will continue to keep our communities and care settings safe
- **Even if you have been vaccinated, you can carry the virus on your body and clothes**
- It is important to continue to follow all the national guidance around COVID-19 safety after you have had your vaccine
- **This means washing your hands, wearing a mask where necessary and practising social distancing**

## Thank you.

## Online information

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

