

Groundswell

Out of homelessness



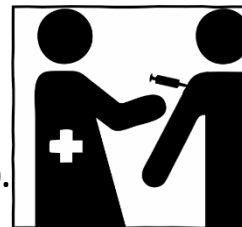
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

About the vaccine

(February 2021)

How does the vaccine work?

The vaccine is **injected into a muscle in your upper arm**. The vaccine **reduces your chance of getting seriously ill from COVID-19**.



The vaccine stimulates the body's immune system to produce its own protection (antibodies) against the COVID-19 virus.

The vaccine is administered in **two doses**. Your second dose will be 3-12 weeks after your first, **it is important to have both doses to get the best protection**. You will be given details of your second dose after your first vaccine. If you are unwell you should re-schedule your vaccine appointment.

Do I need the vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?

Yes. The antibodies will start to decline a few months after you had the infections. If you have had COVID-19 the vaccination will strengthen your immunity and make it long lasting. **It is safe to have the vaccine if you have had COVID-19**.

Will the current vaccines protect me against the new variants of COVID-19?

Yes, the vaccines that have been developed and approved **work against the new variants of COVID-19**.

How many times in my life will I have to have the vaccine? Will it be annual due to the COVID strains mutating, a bit like the current flu vaccine?

It is likely that it will be like the flu vaccine where there is an annual vaccination cycle as the vaccine is tweaked depending on the strains of the virus circulating.

There are more vaccines being trialled. Why don't they use one if they know it works?

The **world needs a range of vaccines** that have different characteristics, are suitable for people of all ages and ethnic groups – including people with underlying health conditions, and able to be distributed and used in all settings around the globe. Billions of doses need to be available. One or two vaccines won't be able to achieve this, and so **we must continue to develop multiple vaccines using multiple scientific approaches to be able to control the pandemic**.

How was the COVID-19 vaccine tested?

There are **3 vaccines approved for use in the UK** (Pfizer/BioNTech, Oxford/AstraZeneca and Moderna).

Every COVID-19 vaccine went through the same amount of **testing, analysis and regulatory process** as all other vaccines before they are approved for use. Each vaccine was tested across tens of thousands of people across a wide range of groups and demographics. No corners have been cut. **The approval process for use in the UK is the same for every vaccine, regardless of who created it**.

Has a vaccine been created this quickly before?

We usually have to wait a long time for enough people to get a disease for research into vaccine development to begin however **the high rates of COVID-19 enabled the acceleration of studies**. Because of the impact and spread of COVID-19 across the world, there was huge financial investment and resource from many groups working on vaccine development. We were able to develop the vaccine quickly by building on learning from the vaccine development for the Ebola virus.

Accessing the COVID-19 vaccine

Can someone get the vaccine without being registered with a GP?

The current vaccine rollout plan requires people to be registered with a GP to be called for the vaccine when it is their time. **There are many groups working hard to ensure this isn't a requirement**, in certain areas of the country the vaccine is being bought to groups such as people in homelessness hostels and hotels, without GP registration. If you're unsure about how to get the vaccine, **contact support staff from your accommodation, outreach team or local support service**

Is there help available if people cannot physically access the vaccine (e.g., if they need money for travel, aren't physically able to travel)?

This will vary depending on where you are located and the different support services and systems in your area. We recommend that you **contact support staff from your accommodation, outreach team or local support service** and let them know your situation.

Is there alcohol/ethanol in the vaccine? Is this suitable for someone recovering from an addiction or Muslims?

Yes, but in very small quantities (0.002mg of alcohol per dose of 0.5ml) – this is **not enough to have effect on your body**. Leaders across all religions have said they believe the vaccine is ok for the people who follow their faith.

Are there any health conditions that would exclude me from getting the vaccine?

People with pre-existing health conditions will benefit more from the protection that the vaccination offers. People who have had severe allergies in the past from vaccines should discuss this with their GP before receiving the vaccine.

Side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine

What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Like all vaccines, there can be some **common side effects including:**

- Tenderness, pain, warmth, redness, swelling or pain where the injection is given in your arm
- feeling feverish, in pain, tired or generally unwell
- headache and nausea

These are all signs the vaccines is working and the immune system is responding. Paracetamol can alleviate these side effects. These side effects should not last longer than a week. If your symptoms get worse or you are concerned call NHS 111 and tell them that you have had the COVID-19 vaccine.

What about long-term effects?

From the millions of people worldwide who have been vaccinated through the rollout or trials, no long-term side effects have been reported. It is true for every medicine and vaccine produced that you can't be certain long-term effects won't develop. **On the whole the risk of long-term side effects are much lower than the risk of COVID-19.**