



# COVID-19 vaccination

## Information for adults receiving the vaccine

### What is COVID-19 or Coronavirus?

**COVID-19 is caused by a new coronavirus, known as SARS-Cov-2. It was first identified in late 2019. It is very infectious and can lead to severe respiratory disease.**

Many people who are infected may not have any symptoms or only have mild symptoms. These commonly start with cough, fever, headache and loss of taste or smell.

Some people will feel very tired, have aching muscles, sore throat, diarrhoea and vomiting, fever and confusion.

A small number of people then go on to have severe disease which may require hospitalisation or admission to intensive care.

**Overall fewer than 1 in 100 people who are infected will die from COVID-19, but in those over 75 years of age this rises to 1 in 10.**

There is not yet a cure for COVID-19 although some newly tested treatments do help to reduce the risk of complications.

### About the types of vaccine

In the UK, there are several types of COVID-19 vaccine that have been approved for use. They require two doses to provide the best protection. The vaccines have been shown to be safe and effective in clinical trials. In Jersey, we will be aligning our vaccination programme roll-out with the UK. All the vaccines have been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MRHA) and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

### Who should have the COVID-19 vaccines?

The JCVI, an independent expert group, has recommended that we offer these vaccines first to those at highest risk of catching the infection and of suffering serious complications if they catch the infection.

This includes older adults, front-line health and social care workers, care home residents and staff, and those with certain clinical conditions. When more vaccine becomes available, the vaccines will be offered to other people at risk as soon as possible.

## Am I at increased risk from COVID-19 infection?

COVID-19 can affect anyone. If you are an older adult and have a long-term health condition, COVID-19 can be very serious and in some cases fatal.

**You should have the COVID-19 vaccine if you are:**

- an adult living or working in a care home for the elderly
- a frontline health care worker
- a frontline social care worker
- a carer working in domiciliary care looking after older adults
- aged 65 years and over
- in the high risk group (clinically extremely vulnerable)

**All people who are in the high risk 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 will have advised if you are eligible via a letter in summer 2020. If you are concerned that you are at higher risk regarding COVID-19, please contact your GP.**

**Those who are high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable) include:**

- solid organ transplant recipients
- people with specific cancers or receiving certain cancer treatments:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- people with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- people with rare diseases that significantly

increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell)

- people on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
- adults with Down's Syndrome
- adults with kidney dialysis or stage 5 kidney disease

## Who can't have the vaccine?

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.

Women of childbearing age, those who are pregnant or breastfeeding should read the detailed information on [nhs.uk/covidvaccination](https://www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination).

## Will the vaccine protect me?

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. It may take a few weeks for your body to build up protection from the vaccine.

**The vaccine has been shown to be effective and no safety concerns were seen in studies of more than 20,000 people.**

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.

## Will the vaccine have side effects?

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. Although you may get some protection from the first dose, having the second dose will give you the best protection against the virus.

**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

Although feeling feverish is not uncommon for two to three days, a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19 or another infection.

You can take the normal dose of paracetamol (follow the advice in the packaging) and rest to help you feel better. Do not exceed the normal dose.

Symptoms following vaccination normally last less than a week. If your symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, call your GP or healthcare professional.

**If you do seek advice from a doctor or nurse, make sure you tell them about your vaccination (show them the vaccination card if possible) so that they can assess you properly.**

**You can also report suspected side effects to vaccines and medicines through the Yellow Card scheme. Please read the product information leaflet for more details on your vaccine, including possible side effects, by searching Coronavirus Yellow Card or visit: [coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/](https://www.coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/) The Yellow Card scheme is the UK system for collecting information on suspected adverse drug reactions to medicines.**

## How was the COVID-19 vaccine developed so fast?

The technological approaches to making vaccines have been getting better and better with time. From the beginning of the global pandemic, governments have put in support including funding, research processes and manufacturing in place to expedite vaccine creation and production. However the stringent safety and efficacy testing remains exactly the same as with all other vaccines including those not produced in response to a pandemic.

## Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realise you have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment.

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

If you have the symptoms above, you should isolate at home and call the Coronavirus helpline on **01534 445566** to arrange a test.

For more information on symptoms visit [gov.uk/symptoms](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nhs.uk/services/coronavirus-symptoms)

## How do I book my appointment?

When it is your turn for an appointment, you should visit the online booking portal which can be accessed at [gov.uk/vaccine](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nhs.uk/services/coronavirus-appointments)

You will be asked to answer some questions to determine if you are eligible. You will need to provide your personal details and select a date for your vaccination appointment. After your booking is completed, you will receive a confirmation email or SMS with your appointment details.

You can also book your appointment by calling the Coronavirus helpline on **01534 445566**.

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

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

## What do I do next?

After you have had the first dose you must plan to attend your second appointment in 3-12 weeks' time. You will receive an SMS or email confirmation of when your second dose is due, two weeks before your second appointment.

It is important to have both doses of the vaccine to give you the best protection.

Keep your card safe with details of your vaccination.



## What should I do if I am not well for my next appointment?

If you are unwell, it is better to wait until you have recovered to have your vaccine, but you should have it as soon as possible.

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 unable to attend your appointment, you need to contact the Coronavirus helpline on **01534 445566** to arrange a new appointment time.

Not attending appointments will result in vaccine wastage, which puts other people's lives at risk.

## Can I give COVID-19 to anyone, after I have had the vaccine?

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and two doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. We do not yet know whether it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus. So, it is important to continue to follow the public health guidance to protect yourself and others.

## Protect yourself, your family, friends and colleagues

Even after receiving your vaccine, you will still need to follow public health guidance to protect yourself and others.

It takes a few weeks for your body to build up protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

Some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but the risk of developing serious illness will be reduced.

COVID-19 is spread through droplets breathed out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

### You must continue to:

- practice physical distancing
- wear a face mask
- wash your hands carefully and frequently
- follow the current guidance: [gov.je/coronavirus](https://www.gov.je/coronavirus)