

NHS Stockport Clinical Commissioning Group

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

v1.3 - January 2021 (The information contained in this document is correct at the time of issue and will be refreshed continuously as new guidance is issued).

The Vaccine

What vaccine for Covid-19 is currently available?

The Covid-19 vaccines currently available are the Pfizer/BioNTech and the AstraZeneca vaccine. They have been shown to be safe and offer up to 95% effectiveness against the virus and have been given regulatory approval by the MHRA. There are other vaccines due to be approved in the future.

How does the vaccine work?

The vaccine helps the body to produce antibodies against the virus so that you do not suffer from the symptoms that the virus can cause. However you can still transmit the virus to others so it is important that you continue to maintain social distancing, wear a mask and wash your hands as per the current government guidelines.

What, if any, are the side effects of the vaccines?

These are important details which the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) always consider when assessing candidate vaccines for use. For this vaccine, like lots of others, some people might feel slightly unwell, and get a headache but no significant side effects have been observed in the over 43,000 people involved in trials. All patients will be provided with information on the vaccine they have received, how to look out for any side effects, and what to do if they do occur, including reporting them to the MHRA. More information on possible side effects can be found at [NHS UK Coronavirus Conditions](#).

What are the ingredients of the vaccine?

A detailed review of the Pfizer vaccine and its ingredients has been provided by the MHRA and can be found here: [Pfizer BioNTech Vaccine](#).

Ingredients for the AstraZeneca vaccine can be found here: [Astrazeneca](#).

The British Islamic Medical Association has produced a helpful guide for the Muslim community which can be found at [British Islamic Medical Association - Covid-19 Vaccination Guide](#).

I have an allergy to medicines and other vaccines. Can I have the Covid-19 vaccine?

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) information on vaccination says that an allergy to medicines, food, or other vaccines will not stop you from having the Covid-19 vaccination. There will be opportunity for you to speak about any concerns with healthcare professional when you attend for your appointment.

Which of the Covid-19 vaccines are live as I cannot have a live vaccine?

None of the 2 vaccines that are currently available are live vaccines.

How many doses of the vaccine will I have to have?

You will need to have 2 doses the second dose will be given up to 12 weeks after the first

dose following current guidance from the Government.

Will the Vaccine work against the new strain of the Virus?

There is no evidence currently that the new strain will be resistant to the vaccine we have, so we are continuing to vaccinate people as normal. Scientists are looking now in detail at the characteristics of the virus in relation to the vaccine. Viruses, such as the winter flu virus, often branch into different strains but these small variations rarely render vaccines ineffective.

Should people who have already had Covid-19 get vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated is just as important for those who have already had Covid-19 as it is for those who haven't. You should have the vaccine if you are in one of the national priority groups.

How much do the vaccines cost?

The Government is securing the vaccine stocks so they will not directly cost the NHS anything.

My vaccination appointment

What are the priority groups for the Covid-19 Vaccinations?

Group 1: Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers

Group 2: All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers

Group 3: All those 75 years of age and over

Group 4: All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals

Group 5: All those 65 years of age and over

Group 6: All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality

Group 7: All those 60 years of age and over

Group 8: All those 55 years of age and over

Group 9: All those 50 years of age and over

I have a long term health condition, which priority group am I in and when will I receive the vaccination?

The priority groups (also listed above) have been devised by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) the most recent list can be found at [Vaccination Priority Groups](#). When you are eligible to receive the vaccination you will be notified as soon as possible either by a letter from the NHS or you will be contacted by your GP practice.

Can I choose which vaccine I will receive?

The vaccination centre will use whichever vaccine has been delivered to them. However when you are having the second of your two vaccinations, arrangements will have been made for you to be given the same one you had for your first vaccination.

When will I get my vaccination and how will I be notified?

When you are eligible to receive the vaccination you will be notified as soon as possible either by a letter from the NHS or you will be contacted by your GP practice. The NHS letter is from the National Booking Centre, where you can book your appointment at one of the regional North West vaccination centre(s) using the details in the letter.

I have had a letter telling me about the vaccine but I haven't received any more information about an appointment what should I do?

The vaccination program is rolling out at a fast pace, you can imagine everyone is very busy but don't worry your GP practice will be in touch with you to make arrangements for you to attend for your Covid-19 vaccination as soon as they can.

I have received 2 letters about getting my Covid -19 Vaccination, one from the NHS and other from my GP, which one should I follow?

You are free to follow the advice of either of the letters, whichever is your preferred choice. The NHS letter is from the National Booking Centre, where you can book your appointment at one of the regional North West vaccination centre(s), using the details in the letter. However, if that is not convenient, you can choose to follow the instructions in the invitation letter from your GP.

Why have some people received their second vaccination whilst others in the same priority group have not received their first?

As you can imagine the vaccine programme is developing at a pace. Unfortunately, the delivery of vaccines to the GP vaccination sites varies across the country. However, Stockport CCG is working closely with GP Practices to roll out the vaccine to as many patients as fast as possible. Your GP practice should contact you when you're due for the vaccination as soon as possible. Please await further instructions from your practice.

Do I need to leave a gap between having the flu vaccination and Covid-19 vaccination?

It isn't essential but it is recommended that you leave a gap of at least 7 days.

What happens if I miss my appointment for the vaccination?

Contact your GP practice to arrange another appointment. You can imagine they will be very busy with rolling out the vaccination program so if you are able to email them with your request that would be preferred.

I am shielding and I don't drive how do I get to my vaccination appointment?

You can arrange for a volunteer to help you by calling the NHS National Volunteer Service on 0808 196 4636 between 8am and 8pm 7 days a week. If you are a Stockport resident you can call the Council's Coronavirus Helpline on 0161 217 6046.

I am pregnant can I have the vaccine?

Though there is no evidence to support the use of the vaccine in pregnancy. The advice from the government medical advisers is that you can be vaccinated and should have the vaccine if the benefits outweigh the risk of being protected against Covid-19. There will be an opportunity to discuss this further with a healthcare professional at the time of your appointment.

I am breast feeding can I have the vaccine?

Though there is no evidence to support the use of the vaccine in breast feeding mothers. The advice from the government medical advisers is that you can be vaccinated and should have the vaccine if the benefits outweigh the risk of being protected against Covid-19. There will be an opportunity to discuss this further with a healthcare professional at the time of your appointment. If you are vaccinated you should not become pregnant within 2 months of having the vaccine.

Can I get my vaccine earlier than the government plan?

No. The Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has developed the current prioritisation plan and you will be contacted when you are eligible to receive the vaccination.

Can I get the vaccine privately?

No. Vaccinations will only be available through the NHS for the moment. Anyone who claims to be able to provide you with a vaccine for a fee is likely to be committing a crime and should be reported to the Police and/or Local Trading Standards.

Vaccination Sites

I live in a Tier 4 area. Will vaccines still be provided/should I still attend my appointment?

Yes. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine, or any other vaccine, is an important medical appointment and so is within the rules wherever you live. Vaccinations will continue as normal in all areas regardless of what Tier they are in.

Care Homes

When will Carers in Care Homes, residents and other staff receive their vaccinations?

You are in the first priority group PCNs are working hard to roll out the program to Care Homes as soon as possible. Your GP practice will be in touch to confirm arrangements as soon as they can.

Health and Social Care Workers

As an NHS employed frontline worker when will I get my vaccine?

You will need to ensure that you register your occupation with your GP practice and they will be in touch with you as soon as you are eligible to receive the vaccination. You may also be approached by your place of work.

As a health care professional working in private practice when will I get my vaccination?

Stockport CCG is waiting for specific guidance regarding all frontline workers in health and social care, and these will be issued when received. For now ensure that you register your occupation with your GP practice and you will be contacted as soon as you are eligible to receive the vaccination.

Carers & Family Members

My mother or father are over 80 years of age and have not been contacted to receive the vaccine. What should I do?

As you can imagine the vaccine programme is developing at a pace. Stockport CCG is working closely with GP Practices to roll out the vaccine to as many patients as fast as possible. Your GP practice should contact you when you're due for the vaccination as soon as possible. Please await further instructions from your practice.

As a carer for my relative at home when will I get my vaccine?

Unfortunately, as decided by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) their current prioritisation plan does not include household members of clinically vulnerable people automatically – although in some cases family members may be eligible in their own right. Stockport CCG is working closely with Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership (GMHSCP) to establish the wider programme as soon as possible. The CCG is waiting for specific guidance regarding Carers, and these will be issued when received.

After the vaccination

Will I be able to do things as normal after I have had my vaccination?

No. You will need to have had 2 doses of the vaccine and will obtain the maximum benefit from the vaccine 7 days after your second dose. Between doses and after this 7 day period you should still abide by the guidance issued by the government i.e. maintain social distancing, wear a mask and wash your hands. This is because even with maximum immunity you can still get and transmit the virus to others. The vaccine only stops you suffering from the symptoms that the corona virus can cause.

How soon after having the vaccine will I become immune to Corona Virus?

You will need to have 2 doses the second dose will be given up to 12 weeks after the first dose following current guidance from the Government. You will have the maximum immunity you can have 7 days after receiving your second of the two vaccines. However you can still transmit the virus to others so it is important that you continue to maintain social distancing, wear a mask and wash your hands as per current government guidelines.

I didn't receive a vaccination card after having my first vaccine dose what should I do?

All information is stored electronically so don't worry, your GP will have all the information they need about the vaccine you have had and they will be in touch with you to make arrangements for your second vaccine.

Will I have to have a vaccination every year like I do with the flu vaccination?

Government Scientists are monitoring the performance of the Covid-19 vaccines and as soon as this information is known it will be made available.