

COVID-19 Vaccination Factsheet for Healthcare Workers



The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic started to affect the UK in 2020 and those on the frontline, such as the NHS and health and social care workers, saw the full effects of the virus whilst being the most at risk of exposure to infection.

COVID-19 can be serious and lead to long-term complications, especially in people with underlying health problems. People can also have COVID-19 and present with no symptoms, making it harder to identify in people and allowing it to be passed onto others within the community. A new variant of the virus, VOC - 202012/01 was discovered in October 2020 and is known to spread more quickly than SARS-CoV-2. Vaccinations against COVID-19 have now been produced and will support the fight against the transmission of the virus.

Vaccinations began to be rolled out to people, in order of priority, across the UK in December 2020 and will continue until all necessary groups of people have been vaccinated.

How effective is the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccination has been shown to be effective and there have been no safety concerns seen in studies of more than 20,000 people.

Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, and it may take a few weeks for protection to build up within your body. In some cases, people may still get COVID-19 despite being vaccinated but the severity of the infection should be reduced.

Evidence on whether the COVID-19 vaccination reduces the chance of you passing on the virus is not as clear; some vaccinated people may still get mild or asymptomatic infection and be able to pass on the virus. As a result, social distancing measures should still be maintained once you have been vaccinated.

What are the side effects of the vaccine?

As with all vaccines there are side effects, most of which will be mild and short-term and not everyone will suffer from them.

The most common side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine include:

- A painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where the injection was given (this is usually worse 1-2 days after the vaccine)
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- General aches or mild flu-like symptoms

Feeling feverish is not uncommon but a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19. Where symptoms last longer than a week and get worse, or if you are concerned, call NHS 111 or your GP. Inform them of your vaccination so that they can assess you properly.

Can you work after the vaccination?

You can continue to work after having the vaccination if you feel well enough to. Where you feel unwell, you should rest.

Pregnant women and the vaccine

Those who are pregnant have been advised not to have the vaccination until their pregnancy is completed.

Where a person has a first dose and then becomes pregnant before the second dose, it is also recommended to delay having the second dose.



What should I do next?

Vaccination

Once you have had the vaccination, plan ahead to attend your second appointment. You will be given a record card for an appointment, which will usually be 21 or 28 days after the initial vaccination. In some cases, due to the changing vaccine roll out programme in the UK, your appointment for the second dose might be slightly longer; you must follow the record card for your next appointment date and will be advised if this changes. To get the best protection, it is important to have both doses. You should not attend a vaccination appointment if you are self-isolating, unwell or waiting for a COVID-19 test result.



Workplace

Continue to follow workplace guidance in relation to COVID-19. The vaccination will take time to build up within your body and no vaccine is completely effective. Ensure that you continue to:

- Follow social distancing practices
- Wear face masks/coverings
- Wash your hands regularly
- Wear the correct PPE when required

