

SPRING BOOSTER

COVID-19 vaccine

A guide to the **SPRING 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign**. People aged 75 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, and those aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system will be offered a dose of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine this spring.



You will be offered an appointment and if you cannot attend call 111 to amend your appointment.

WHO IS BEING OFFERED A SPRING BOOSTER?

COVID-19 is more serious in older people and those with certain underlying health conditions as defined in the [Green Book Chapter 14, tables 3 & 4](#).

For this reason people aged 75 years and over, those in care homes, and those aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system are being offered a spring dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

TIMING OF THE SPRING BOOSTER

You should be offered an appointment between April and June, with those at highest risk being called in first.

You will be invited to have your booster around 6 months after your last dose, but you can have it as soon as 3 months.

If you are turning 75 years of age between April and 30 June 2024, you do not have to wait until your birthday, you can attend when you are called for vaccination.

WHICH VACCINE WILL YOU BE OFFERED?

You will be given a booster dose of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine approved in the UK.

These vaccines have been updated since the original vaccines and target a different COVID-19 variant. These updated vaccines boost protection well, and give slightly higher levels of antibody against the more recent strains of COVID-19 (Omicron).

As we cannot predict which variants of COVID-19 will be circulating this spring and summer, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have concluded that the vaccine used in the later weeks of the autumn 2023 programme should be used.

WHO CANNOT TAKE UP THE OFFER OF A SPRING BOOSTER

There are very few people who should not have this booster.

If you have had a severe reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine you should discuss this with your doctor.

SIDE EFFECTS

Common side effects

As with your previous dose, the common side effects are the same for all COVID-19 vaccines being used this spring and include:

- having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection – this tends to be worst around 1 to 2 days after the vaccine
- feeling tired
- headache
- general aches or mild flu-like symptoms

You can rest and take paracetamol (follow the dose advice in the packaging) to help you feel better.

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

You can also report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines through the Yellow Card scheme.

Serious side effects

Cases of inflammation of the heart (called myocarditis or pericarditis) have been reported very rarely after the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines.

These cases have been seen mostly in younger men and within several days of vaccination. Most of these people recovered and felt better following rest and simple treatments.

You should seek medical advice urgently if, after vaccination, you experience:

- chest pain
- shortness of breath
- feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart

If you had serious side effects after any previous dose you may be advised to avoid or delay further vaccination. You should discuss this with your doctor or specialist.



CAN YOU STILL CATCH COVID-19 AFTER HAVING THE VACCINE?

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

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.

IF YOU HAVE NOT HAD ALL YOUR VACCINATIONS

If you have not yet had either of your first 2 doses of the vaccine (or a third dose for those with a weakened immune system) you should have a dose during the seasonal campaign.

If you are eligible and you have missed an earlier booster, you should have a dose this spring to catch up. Most people do not need extra doses to make up for those you have missed. If you have a severely weakened immune system your doctor may advise an extra dose three months after you have the spring vaccine.

WILL I HAVE TO WAIT AFTER MY VACCINE?

If you have a history of allergies, or if you had a reaction immediately after a previous dose, you may be advised to stay for 15 minutes after the vaccine. Please make sure you tell the vaccinator.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE NOT WELL ON THE DAY OF YOUR APPOINTMENT?

If you are unwell, wait until you have recovered to have your vaccine. You should not attend an appointment if you have a fever or think you might be infectious to others.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit website for more information [covid19.gov.uk/vaccination-information/](https://www.covid19.gov.uk/vaccination-information/)

You can also report suspected side effects on the [coronavirus Yellow Card](#) website.

*Scan QR code
for more information*

