



COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

| Question | Answer |
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| Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe? | <p>Yes, the vaccines have been rigorously tested and approved as safe and effective by the expert Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the UK, EU regulators and Food and Drug Administration regulators in the USA.</p> <p>Vaccines and medicines are highly regulated products and the UK has some of the highest safety standards in the world.</p> |
| Why should I get the vaccine? | <p>The vaccine is safe and effective and gives you the best protection against serious illness and death from COVID-19.</p> <p>The more people who have the vaccine, the fewer people will become seriously ill from the virus and we will achieve better protection at the community level, known as 'herd immunity'.</p> |
| Can the vaccine give me COVID-19? | <p>The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 however all vaccines are known to have some side effects that mimic some COVID-19 symptoms. This is a sign that your immune system is responding to the vaccination.</p> |
| When will I be offered the COVID-19 vaccine? | <p>You will be contacted by the NHS when it is your turn to have the COVID-19 vaccine. It is currently being offered to those people most at risk from severe illness and death.</p> <p>The phase 1 priority groups are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers 2. Aged 80 years and over, and frontline health and social care workers 3. Aged 75 years and over 4. Aged 70 years and over, and clinically extremely vulnerable individual 5. Aged 65 years and over 6. Aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality and unpaid care workers 7. Aged 60 years of age and over 8. Aged 55 years of age and over 9. Aged 50 years of age and over <p>There is a national aim to vaccinate all those in the first four groups by mid-February 2021.</p> |
| How do I book a vaccine appointment? | <p>Please wait to be contacted to book your vaccine. You will be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a GP surgery or pharmacy local to you, normally via text or phone.</p> <p>Please do not call your GP surgery to ask when you will be vaccinated, as these calls take staff away from organising the vaccine rollout or supporting routine general practice.</p> <p>You may also receive a letter directly from the Government offering an appointment at a larger vaccination centre outside of Barnet. You do have a choice however to wait for an invitation at a local vaccination centre.</p> |



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| <p>Where will I go to get my vaccine in Barnet?</p> | <p>In Barnet, when you are offered a vaccine, your appointment will be at one of these settings: a local hospital, GP surgery vaccination hubs, pharmacy or large-scale vaccination centre in Barnet (due to be opened in February).</p> |
| <p>Once I have had the COVID-19 vaccine, can I infect other people?</p> | <p>It is not yet known whether the COVID-19 vaccine will stop you from infecting other people once you have been vaccinated. Research is being carried out to ascertain that.</p> <p>In the meantime, it is important to continue to wash your hands, keep 2m from anyone outside your household and wear a face covering in public places. Remember to ventilate your indoor spaces regularly.</p> |
| <p>Which COVID-19 vaccine will I receive?</p> | <p>As vaccine stocks and appointment availability are limited, you will receive the vaccine which is offered to you at the time of your appointment. At present, this could be either Pfizer or Astra Zeneca.</p> |
| <p>Do I still need to get the vaccine if I have already had COVID-19?</p> | <p>Yes, everyone should get the vaccine when they are invited to do so to make sure they are protected.</p> <p>We don't know if having COVID-19 protects you from catching it again and, if it does, for how long.</p> |
| <p>If I currently have COVID-19 or symptoms, should I still go to my vaccine appointment?</p> | <p>No, if you currently have COVID-19 or have symptoms that could be COVID-19, you should get a test and self-isolate.</p> <p>You should not be vaccinated until four weeks after onset of symptoms or four weeks from the confirmed test if you are asymptomatic and you have recovered. If you have a vaccine booked or are offered one during this time, please call your centre to reschedule.</p> |
| <p>Does the vaccine have side effects?</p> | <p>Once you have had the vaccine, you may have some mild side effects including a sore arm, feeling tired, a headache or feeling achy. If you need to, you can take painkillers like paracetamol.</p> <p>So far, millions of people in the UK have been given the vaccine and no serious side effects or complications have been reported (apart from anaphylactic reactions in people who have had a history of severe allergic reactions). Any side effects are recorded as part of on-going monitoring of the vaccine as would happen with any new medication.</p> <p>Guidance will be provided to you during the vaccination process about side effects.</p> |
| <p>Is the COVID-19 vaccine free?</p> | <p>Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is free of charge on the NHS. You will never be asked to pay for your vaccine, and you will not be asked for your bank account details at any point.</p> |



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| <p>When booking my COVID-19 vaccine, what details will I be asked to provide?</p> | <p>When booking your test, you will be asked for your name, date of birth, and NHS number if you know it.</p> <p>The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.</p> |
| <p>If I am housebound, how will I receive the COVID-19 vaccine?</p> | <p>You will be told by your GP practice when they will be coming to your home to give you the vaccine.</p> <p>The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.</p> |
| <p>I am a carer, when will I get the COVID-19 vaccine?</p> | <p>Care workers are vaccinated as priority group 2. Unpaid carers will get vaccinated with priority group 6, if you are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or if you are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.</p> |
| <p>I am pregnant, can I still get the COVID-19 vaccine?</p> | <p>No, the COVID-19 vaccination is not recommended for women who are pregnant.</p> |
| <p>I have had my flu vaccine; do I need the COVID-19 vaccine as well?</p> | <p>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.</p> |
| <p>Will the COVID-19 vaccine protect me from flu?</p> | <p>No, the COVID-19 vaccine will not protect you against the flu. If you have been offered a flu vaccine, please try to have this as soon as possible to help protect you, your family and others from flu this winter.</p> |
| <p>Do some hospitals have spare vaccines that may go to waste?</p> | <p>No, we are not aware of any vaccines going to waste in Barnet. Every vaccine has been used.</p> |
| <p>When will I get the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?</p> | <p>New advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisations (JCVI) is that the second dose of vaccine remains effective when given up to 12 weeks after the first dose. Current advice therefore suggests vaccinating as many people as possible by giving them the first dose followed by the second dose towards the end of the 12-week period.</p> <p>Evidence of immunity is closely monitored to inform future policy set by the JCVI.</p> |
| <p>Will the COVID-19 vaccine work with some mutated strains of the virus?</p> | <p>Current evidence suggests that the COVID-19 vaccine is effective against the new UK variant. More evidence is being collated to establish vaccine effectiveness against any new variants emerging across the world.</p> |



How long does the vaccine take to become effective?

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of your suffering from COVID-19. Initial immunity starts developing 7-10 days after the first dose, with good protection after 12 days. Full protection will be achieved at least 7-12 days after the second dose.

Even after being vaccinated, please continue to follow the social distancing and infection control guidance to protect yourself and others.

Now that the vaccine is being rolled out, can we relax?

There is certainly hope on the horizon however it is unfortunately too early to relax. It will take at least 6-9 months until everyone is vaccinated across the country. We are also still unclear about how effective the vaccine is against reducing the spread of transmission so we must continue to follow all the infection control guidance to control the virus and save lives.