

Immunisation Clinical Advice Response Service 27/08/21

For any COVID-19 vaccination related queries or to escalate an incident please contact:
england.swicars@nhs.net

Please note that since Monday 2nd August CARS has now become ICARS and will operate from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

**PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE
VACCINATION PROGRAMME**

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Five Reasons to Get the Covid-19 Vaccine If You're Pregnant

Dr Julie Yates, Screening and Immunisation Lead, Public Health England

The COVID-19 vaccine is available to pregnant women at any point during their pregnancy. To date at least 62,000 women in the UK have received at least one dose. If you're expecting, here are five key reasons why you should get the jab.

1. Getting two doses is the best way to protect you from COVID-19

If you're pregnant, getting both doses of your vaccine is the best way to protect yourself – and those around you – against COVID-19. Although the overall risk from COVID-19 for pregnant women and their unborn babies is low, some women may become seriously unwell and need hospital treatment in later pregnancy. The vast majority of pregnant women who become seriously ill with COVID-19 are unvaccinated.

2. COVID-19 disease can be serious in pregnancy

While overall the risk remains low, pregnant women with COVID-19 have a higher risk of intensive care admission than women of the same age who are not pregnant. Women with COVID-19 disease are also 2 to 3 times more likely to have their babies early than women without COVID-19. Pregnant women with underlying clinical conditions are at even higher risk of suffering serious complications from COVID-19.

3. The COVID-19 vaccines used in the UK are safe and effective for pregnant women

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which advised the UK government that pregnant women should be offered the vaccines, looks at all the available evidence on the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines before making recommendations about who should have them.

The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are recommended for pregnant women in the UK because these vaccines have been given to over 140,000 pregnant women in the US and the data has not raised any safety concerns. At least 62,000 thousand pregnant women in the UK have had at least one dose of the vaccine, also without any immediate safety concerns.

Pregnant women who have already had the AstraZeneca vaccine however are advised to complete with the same vaccine. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to discuss these with a healthcare professional looking after you in your pregnancy.

4. The vaccines might offer your unborn child some protection against COVID-19

Research suggests that protective antibodies in response to the vaccines can be passed from mother to newborn during pregnancy and through breast milk after birth. While it's likely these would help protect newborns from COVID-19, more research is needed to determine how much protection these antibodies would give or how long that protection would last.

5. There is no current evidence of any serious side effects for pregnant women

The Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) thoroughly monitors any suspected side effects involving pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccination.

The current evidence does not show an increased risk of miscarriage or stillbirth following vaccination against COVID-19. There is also no pattern from the reports to suggest that any of the COVID-19 vaccines used in the UK increase the risk of congenital anomalies or birth complications.

The vaccines do not contain living organisms that can multiply in the body, so they cannot infect an unborn baby in the womb.

For further advice, speak to a healthcare professional looking after you in your pregnancy.

You can also find more information below:

- Further resources: The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and Royal College of Midwives (RCM) have a decision guide about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and other helpful information, available [here](#).
- More safety information: The latest information from the MHRA is available [here](#).

Letter and translations to help people without an NHS number access the COVID-19 vaccine and register with a GP

A letter from Dr Nikki Kanani to reassure people without an NHS number, including migrants, about their entitlement to the COVID-19 vaccine **and if they wish to, how to register at a GP practice** has now been translated into 23 languages.

Circulated via the Home Office and local housing, homeless and migrant teams; it explains that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and available to **every adult** living in the UK, free of charge without any immigration checks. The letter also stresses that **people do not need to have to be registered at a GP practice or have an NHS number to get the COVID-19 vaccine and what people need to do in these circumstances**. You can access the letter and the translations [online here](#) and access guidance to help you to support the community on the [COVID-19 vaccine equalities connect and exchange hub](#).

Translations are available in Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Estonian, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Latvian, Polish, Portuguese Brazilian, Punjabi, Romani, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu.

Moderna Vaccine and Use in Children

Colleagues will have seen in the media that [Moderna \(Spikevax®\) covid-19 vaccine](#) has now been approved by the MHRA for use in those aged 12 or over, however we will need to wait for JCVI guidance on use of Moderna in those aged 12-17 before a national recommendation for use of this vaccine in children and young people can be made.



In addition, the National Protocol and PGD will need to be updated, however where there is a clinical need to use Moderna COVID-19 vaccine then it could be given under the direction of a prescriber using a PSD. This would need to be done on a case by case basis, based on a clinical review by the prescriber.

Top Tips for Supporting Children and Young People During Vaccination

Please see poster and guidance below which is also attached for your reference.

Top tips for supporting children and young people during vaccination


Getting vaccinated can be daunting for some people, particularly children and young people. They may be anxious, scared or needle phobic. This resource provides some tips and techniques for supporting them whilst they are receiving their vaccination.



Pre-Vaccination

There are things you can do to prevent this anxiety from building up whilst they are waiting for their turn to be vaccinated. For example:

- **Explain how vaccines work** to protect them and their friends and families. Use the same language that is in the information leaflets for their particular age group and provide these for them to read whilst waiting.
- **Use distraction techniques** such as chatting to them, suggesting they play a game on their phone, or having a TV on in the waiting area.
- **Be observant to non-verbal for signs of anxiety** such as being really quiet, talking loudly, biting their nails, looking at the exit or struggling to engage.
- **Consider taking particularly anxious people aside** for additional support or fast-tracking them.
- **If they are feeling anxious**, encourage them to take deep breaths. Provide them with a glass of water and a small snack (if you have one).
- **Use the 5 senses grounding technique to calm them down.** Ask them to identify one thing they can see, hear, touch, taste and smell.



During Vaccination

There are things you can do to help them to feel comfortable during the vaccination and make the experience a positive one.

Ensure you have a positive and calming demeanour:

- **Build a relationship** with them and their accompanying adult (if they have one). Introduce yourself and ask them some questions about themselves.
- **Consider your body language.** Be relaxed and open.
- **Show empathy.** Be sensitive to their anxiety and be patient.
- **Try making them laugh and remember to smile!**
- **Use a calming voice.** Remember, if you seem stressed it will make them stressed.


Techniques for managing anxiety during vaccination:

- **Break the process down into steps** so they don't feel overwhelmed and are aware of what is going to happen next.
- **Be honest with them.** Tell them they will feel it, but it will be over very quickly.
- **Ask them to think of a safe and relaxing place** in their mind.
- **Direct their attention away from the needle.**
- **If they feel faint**, use the applied tension technique to get their blood pressure back to normal. Ask them to tense the muscles in their arms and legs for 15 seconds, release, wait 30 seconds and then tense again. Repeat 5 times.

Post-Vaccination

Provide support and reassurance after they have received their vaccination:

- **Reassure them** that it is done and give them one of the 'I've had my COVID vaccination' stickers.
- **Express that they have done an important thing** and have helped prevent their family and friends from getting sick.
- **If they feel faint**, encourage them to take deep breaths. Provide them with a glass of water and a small snack (if you have one).



Remember

- ✓ Ensure you have a calming demeanour.
- ✓ Be honest and make sure they understand what is happening at every stage.
- ✓ Offer water if they feel faint.
- ✓ Engage with their parents or guardians if they are accompanied by them. They will be able to provide help if needed.
- ✓ Use distraction techniques.
- ✓ Remind them of the benefits of having the vaccine to protect themselves and others.

Further resources

Derbyshire Community Health Services: Fear of needles (needle phobia) – and how to deal with it!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRjL8OEaoRw>

Guys' and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust: Overcoming your needle phobia (fear of needles).
<https://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/resources/patient-information/all-patients/overcoming-your-fear-of-needles.pdf>

NHS England: Fainting. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fainting/>

NHS England: How to put someone into the recovery position. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRQePNmR66w>

NHS England: Supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people to get the COVID-19 vaccination.
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/03/COVID-19-vaccination-training-for-clinicians-feb-2021.pdf>

POEMS for Children (charity). <https://www.poemsforchildren.co.uk/>

Public Health England: What to expect after your COVID-19 vaccination. Advice for children and young people.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008090/PHE_12073_COVID-19_What_to_expect_CYP_leaflet.pdf

Public Health England: COVID-19 vaccination for children and young people aged 12 to 15 years.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008730/PHE_12124_COVID-19_vaccination_for_at_risk_CYP_simple_text_leaflet.pdf

St John Ambulance: Fainting. <https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/unresponsive-casualty/fainting/>

Final Weeks: Funding Support to Help You Access Additional Staff

Funding support to access additional workforce via the National Workforce Support Offer is available to all PCNs and Communities Pharmacies and is available until end of August. The National Workforce Support Offer provides sites with added flexibility to access additional capacity, over and above local staffing, and helps with local workforce resilience. Workforce include additional trained (clinical and non-clinical) staff and volunteers ready and available to be deployed across the country from NHS Professionals, NHS Volunteer Responders, St John Ambulance as well as rapid deployment from the Vaccine Operational Support Teams (VOST). The VOST teams replicate the rapid deployment support that the military provided to Local Vaccination Services and are suitably qualified and comprise three registered healthcare professionals and three unregistered staff who can cover identified gaps or provide additional capacity, where required. See below for availability in your region for next week.

Please contact your [lead employer](#) for more details in your area and access to both clinical and non-clinical staff and volunteers, as well as more details about the funding support.

You can also access more detail in the [National Workforce Support Offer Toolkit](#) as well as [LVS Workforce](#) and you can contact the national workforce team direct via PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

Having a Vaccine for Coronavirus – Wordless Story

[Having a Vaccine for Coronavirus](#) – from Books Beyond Words

This wordless story is designed to help people think about the coronavirus vaccine and what having the vaccine will mean.

The pictures can help people to ask questions and talk through their feelings and concerns with a supporter so that they feel prepared when they receive their invitation.

[Having+a+Vaccine+for+Coronavirus.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

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