

COVID-19 vaccination

Information about the COVID-19 vaccination programme - what it is, why COVID-19 vaccination is important, who is eligible and links to a range of useful resources for both public and health professionals.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that spreads through the air when people cough or sneeze. It can also spread when people touch surfaces where the virus has landed and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

COVID-19 can be serious. Those with a weakened immune system or older people are more at risk of complications and need extra protection.

About COVID-19 vaccine and eligibility

The COVID-19 vaccine is usually offered in the spring and winter.

Spring COVID-19 vaccinations have now ended. Winter 2026 planning is currently underway.

The COVID-19 vaccine helps build up immunity to COVID-19 and will reduce the risk of complications or needing treatment in hospital. It can take a few weeks for the body to build up protection after getting the vaccine. [Find out more about the COVID-19 vaccine on nidirect.](#)

Eligible groups

The COVID-19 vaccine is offered in spring and winter to people at an increased risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19. This includes:

- people aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system
- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in care homes for older adults.

Information for health and social care professionals

nidirect provides information for the public about the COVID-19 vaccine, including who is eligible, how to get it and possible side effects. [learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine on N.I Direct](#)

- Supporting Materials

The following resources are available for health professionals to support confident conversations about the COVID-19 vaccination programme. <Insert link to new page for all latest/current patient leaflets and posters regarding COVID-19 programme>

- Training

Please see below the current workforce education and training resources to support health professionals in delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

[NHSE elfh Hub](#)

<Insert PHA training slides for Adult & Children's COVID-19 programme>

- Patient Group Directions

[PGDs/VGDs – Primary Care Intranet](#)

Guidance for Healthcare Professionals

- CMO letter

The Department of Health's CMO letter about the winter COVID-19 vaccination programme was published on 10th July 2026. [HSS\(MD\) 27 2026 - AUTUMN 2026 COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGN.pdf](#)

- Green Book

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Green Book provides information on COVID-19 immunisation. [Green book on Immunisation COVID-19 chapter 14a](#)

Vaccination data

You can view data on vaccination in Northern Ireland in the [Respiratory infections surveillance | HSC Public Health Agency](#).

Last reviewed
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