

COVID-19 vaccine



A simple guide



Why should I get the vaccine? The COVID-19 vaccine helps protect you from COVID-19.

When will I get the vaccine? It depends on your age, job and any condition/s you have. You will be called when it's your turn. Those most at risk will be prioritised.

Which is the best vaccine? All of the approved vaccines are effective and safe. There is no 'best' vaccine.

Which vaccine will I get? You will get one of a group of approved vaccines as stocks become available.

Can I pick which one I get? No. This is to help get vaccines across the whole population as quickly as possible.

Why do I need two injections? You need both doses for the best protection. The first dose will give you good protection but you need the second to give longer lasting protection.

Why are the two injections up to 12 weeks apart? The latest evidence suggests the first dose of the vaccine provides protection for most people for up to 12 weeks. As a result of this evidence, when you can have the second dose has changed. This is also to make sure as many people can have the vaccine as soon as possible.

Are there any side effects? As with all medicines, side effects can occur after getting a vaccine. However, these are usually very minor and of short duration, such as a sore arm or a mild fever. Tests have been done in thousands of adults to ensure the vaccine is safe.

Can I still spread the virus to others if I am vaccinated? We do not yet know whether it will stop you from passing on the virus. So, it is important to follow the public health guidance to protect those around you. This includes social distancing, face coverings where required and washing your hands carefully and often.

I have a health condition. Is the vaccine safe for me? There are very few people who cannot receive the vaccine. The vaccines currently available do not contain live virus, so are safe for people with problems with their immune system.
People with allergies should discuss this with the vaccinator when they are invited to attend.

What if I'm pregnant, planning to get pregnant or breastfeeding? You should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with a health professional to help you decide. When making your decision, consider the risk of COVID-19 infection, especially if you are at risk of serious complications.

Will other measures (social distancing/face coverings/lockdowns) still apply to me if I've had the vaccine? Yes, you should still act to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the community and stick to the regulations as you may still be able to carry the virus. This includes if you are a household contact of or are advised by Contact Tracing or the STOPCOVID NI App you are a close contact of a case of COVID-19 you need to self-isolate.