



What to expect after your

COVID-19 vaccination

Advice for children
and young people



Find out more at
www.nidirect.gov.uk/covid-vaccine



The health service is offering the COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible children and young people.

This leaflet tells you what to expect after you have had your vaccination.

Side effects

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short-term and not everyone gets them. The very common side effects should only last a day or two. The Pfizer vaccine tends to cause more side effects after the second dose than the first dose.

Very common side effects in the first day or two include:

- having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection
- feeling tired
- headache, aches and chills

You may also have flu like symptoms with episodes of shivering and shaking for a day or two. However, a high temperature could also indicate that you have COVID-19 or another infection.

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

An uncommon side effect is swollen glands in the armpit or neck on the same side as the arm where you had the vaccine. This can last for around 10 days, but if it lasts longer see your doctor.

What to do if you are concerned about your side effects

These symptoms normally last less than a week. If your symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, you or your parents can phone your GP or Out of Hours service. If you do seek advice from a doctor or nurse, make sure you tell them about your vaccination (show them the vaccination card) so that they can assess you properly.

You can also report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines online through the Yellow Card scheme or by downloading the Yellow Card app at coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk.



coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

Are there other more serious side effects?

Recently, cases of inflammation of the heart (called myocarditis or pericarditis) have been reported very rarely after COVID-19 vaccines.

These cases have been seen mainly in younger men within a few days after vaccination. Most of these people recovered quickly and felt better following rest and simple treatments. You should seek medical advice from your GP or Emergency Department urgently if you experience:

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

Can you catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realise you have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment. The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Although a fever can occur within a day or two of vaccination, if you have any other COVID-19 symptoms or your fever lasts longer, stay at home and arrange to have a test.

What to do next



After your vaccine, you should be given a record card. You will be offered a second dose after 8 or 12 weeks.

You will be advised on the right timing for your second dose to help give the best and longest lasting protection for you.

Keep your record card safe. If you need a second dose, don't forget to keep your next appointment.

If you are not well for your appointment

If you are unwell, it is better to wait until you have recovered to have your vaccine.

You should not attend a vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating or waiting for a COVID-19 test. You should wait 12 weeks after having a positive COVID-19 test or 4 weeks if you are at higher risk.

Will the vaccine protect you?

The COVID-19 vaccine that you have had has been shown to reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease.

Millions of doses of the vaccine have been given worldwide. The vaccine is highly effective in children and young people.



It may take a few weeks for your body to build up some protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

Some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.

What you can do after you've had the vaccine

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and it will reduce your chance of becoming ill. It is still important to continue to follow current national guidance. You can continue going to school, college or work after you have had the vaccine.

To protect yourself and your family, friends and colleagues, you must still:

- think about social distancing
- wear a face covering where advised
- wash your hands carefully and frequently
- open windows to let fresh air in
- follow the current guidance at www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus



How COVID-19 is spread

COVID-19 is spread through droplets breathed out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

Further information

Please read the product information leaflet for more details on your vaccine, including possible side effects, on the Coronavirus Yellow Card website.

You can also report suspected side effects on the same website or by downloading the Yellow Card app. Further information is available from www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus



Information correct at time of publication. For the latest version of this leaflet and alternative formats visit the PHA website www.publichealth.hscni.net

© Crown copyright 2021

This information was originally developed by UK Health Security Agency and is used under the Open Government Licence v3.0



Public Health Agency
12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.
Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).
www.publichealth.hscni.net

Find us on:

