

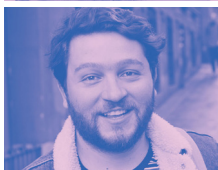
What to expect after your

COVID-19

vaccination



Information for people
who have just had a
COVID-19 vaccination



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

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

You can also report suspected side effects on the same website or by downloading the Yellow Card app.



coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

People who are most at risk from the complications of coronavirus (COVID-19) are being offered the COVID-19 vaccination. This leaflet tells you what to expect after you have had your primary or booster vaccination.

What are the 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 are the same and should still only last a day or two.

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 the normal dose of paracetamol (follow the advice in the packaging) to help make you feel better.

**If you are on chemotherapy and have a high temperature, contact your local cancer care unit.*

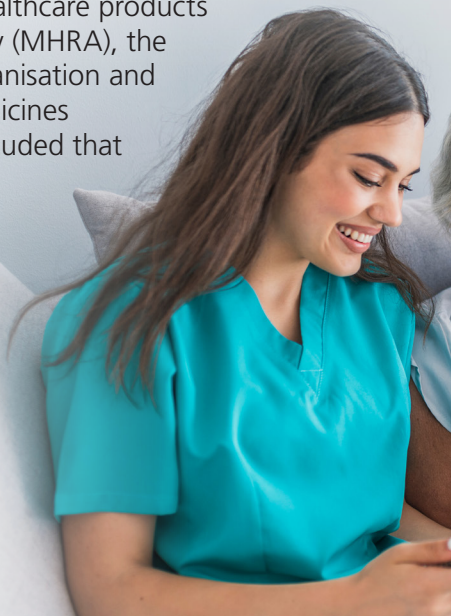
An uncommon side effect is swollen glands in the armpit or neck on the same side as the arm where you had the vaccine. This can last for around 10 days, but if it lasts longer see your doctor. If you are due for a mammogram in the few weeks after the vaccine, then you should mention that when you attend.

What should I do if I am concerned about my symptoms?

These symptoms normally last less than a week. If your symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, call 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 through the Yellow Card scheme. You can do this online by searching Coronavirus Yellow Card or by downloading the Yellow Card app (please see page 2).

Are there other more serious side effects?

There have been reports of an extremely rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after the AstraZeneca and Janssen vaccines. Because of the high risk of complications and death from COVID-19, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the World Health Organisation and the European Medicines Agency have concluded that the balance is very much in favour of vaccination.



If you experience any of the following from more than 4 days and within 28 days after vaccination you should seek medical advice urgently from your GP or Emergency Department.

- a new, severe headache which is not helped by usual painkillers or is getting worse
- an unusual headache which seems worse when lying down or bending over or may be accompanied by
 - blurred vision, nausea and vomiting
 - difficulty with your speech,
 - weakness, drowsiness or seizures
- new, unexplained pinprick bruising or bleeding
- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or persistent abdominal pain



Worldwide, rare cases of inflammation of the heart called myocarditis or pericarditis have been reported after Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines.

These cases have been seen mostly in younger men within several days after vaccination. Most of these people recovered and felt better following rest and simple treatments.

You should seek medical advice urgently if you experience:

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

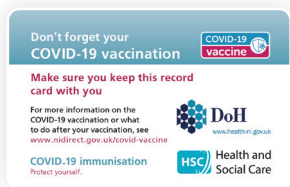
Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccines?

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.

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.

When can I go back to daily activities?

You should be able to resume activities that are normal for you as long as you feel well. If your arm is particularly sore, you may find heavy lifting difficult. If you feel unwell or very tired you should rest and avoid operating machinery or driving.



Keep your card safe.

Will the vaccine protect me?

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

It may take a few weeks from the first dose for your body to build up protection. Your body should respond more quickly (after a few days) after any additional doses. 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 can I do after I have had the vaccine?

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and a full course will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. It will help to reduce the risk of you passing on the virus. So it is important to continue to follow current national guidance.

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

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

Vaccination, helping to protect those most vulnerable.

If you need more information on the **COVID-19 vaccination** please visit:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/covid-vaccine



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

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