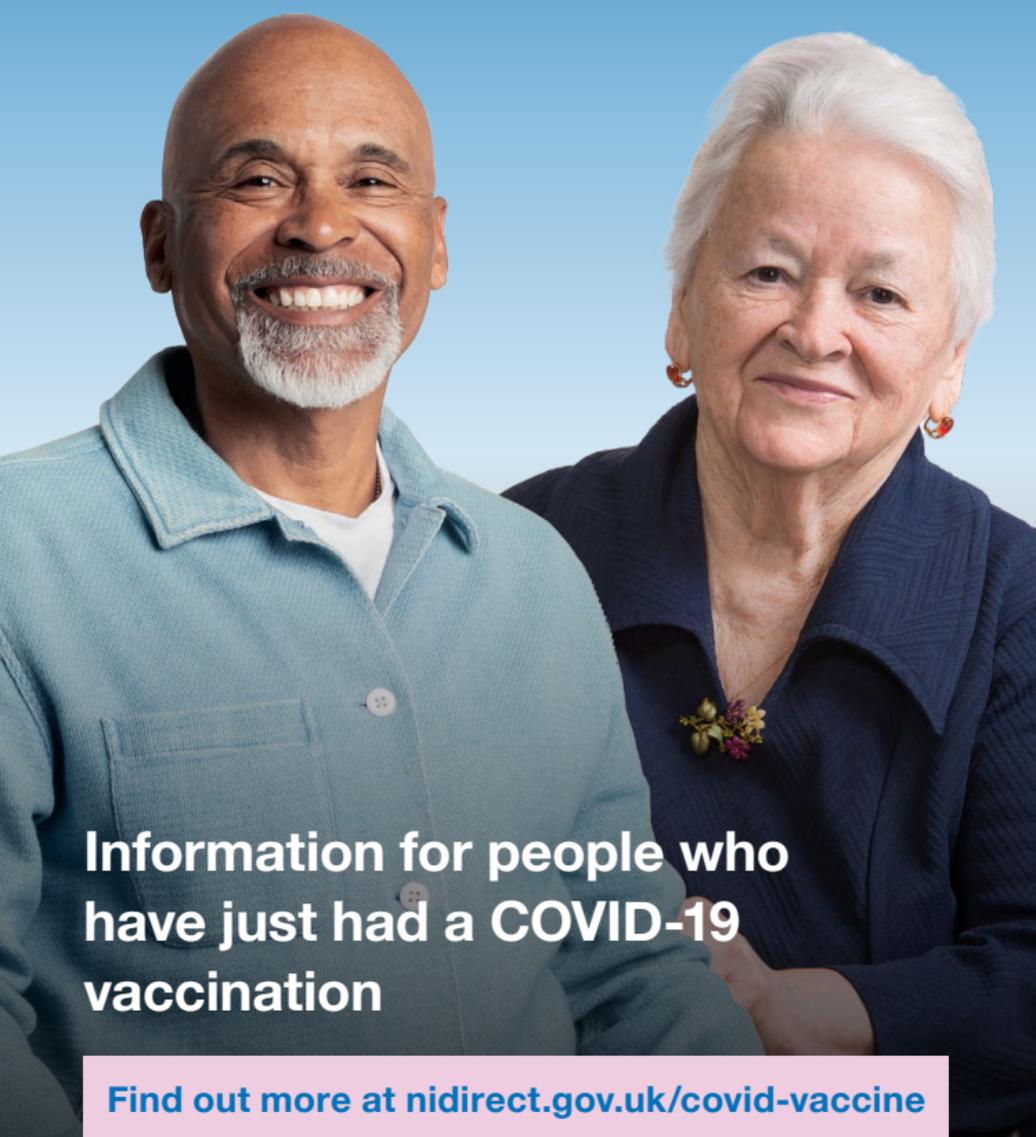




What to expect after your

COVID-19 vaccination



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

Find out more at 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.



www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard

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 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 common side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine start within a day and may last for a few days.

These 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 (see advice on page 4). You can rest and take the normal dose of paracetamol (follow the 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. If you are due for a mammogram (breast screening X-ray) in the few weeks after the vaccine, then you should mention that when you attend.

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

I have heard vaccines can cause irregular periods or unexpected bleeding?

Period problems are extremely common and can be caused by a variety of factors including stress and other short-term illnesses.

Some people may experience heavier than normal periods in the month or so after vaccination. While other changes to periods have been reported by some people after vaccination, there is no evidence that these were due to the vaccine.

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

Side effects 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 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 Yellow Card or by downloading the Yellow Card app (please see page 2).

Are there other more serious side effects?

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 people recovered and felt better following rest and simple treatments.

You should seek medical advice urgently from your GP or Emergency Department if you experience:

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



Should I wait for 15 minutes after my vaccination?

When we first used the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, people stayed behind to be observed for 15 minutes after their vaccination. Due to a very low rate of allergic reactions, only people with a history of serious allergies or those who had a reaction to a previous COVID-19 vaccination need to wait after having their vaccination.

Because of a risk of fainting, however, no-one should drive for at least 15 minutes after the vaccination.

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.

Will the vaccine protect me?

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

It may take a few weeks from the first dose for your body to build up protection. Your body should start to 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 sensible precautions to avoid infection. Some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and a full course will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill.



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



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

Find us on:

