



**Inspire  
For Health**

@ Redbank Practice

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## **COVID Vaccination Programme** **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Which members of the public are being offered the Covid-19 vaccine at the moment?**

A: The NHS is currently in the process of offering the vaccine to people aged 80 and over, those who live or work in care home, and frontline health and social care staff. When everyone in these groups has had the chance to get their first dose of the vaccine the programme will expand to other people that are at risk either due to their age group or medical condition in line with the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations.

**Q: Will vaccines still be provided/can I still attend my appointment during the national lockdown?**

A: Yes. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine, or any other vaccine, is an important medical appointment and so is within the rules wherever you live. Vaccinations will continue as normal in all areas through the national lockdown and beyond. If you have booked or are offered an appointment, please attend it.

The place that you choose to have your vaccine will keep you safe from COVID-19 through a range of measures including cleaning and disinfecting and having social distancing in waiting areas. Please also wear a face covering to your appointment. You should also take the usual steps to minimise your risk as you travel to your appointment.

**Q: What are the different ways members of the public might be contacted to get their vaccination?**

1. Local hospital services – you might be contacted either to have the vaccine as an inpatient or at an outpatient appointment.
2. Local GP services – practices in your area are working together to contact and offer the vaccine to as many people as possible. This may be at a different surgery than you usually go to, or at a venue we have set up specially to deliver vaccines.
3. Through your care home – GPs and their teams are also arranging to vaccinate care home residents directly, in their homes.
4. A letter from the NHS Covid-19 Vaccination Booking Service to book online or by phone. Booking through this service will give you the option of having the vaccine at a special Vaccination Centre, or potentially a community pharmacy depending on whether these are available locally.

**Q: Can people pick what vaccine they want?**

A: No. Any vaccines that the NHS will provide will have been approved because they pass the MHRA's tests on safety and efficacy, so people should be assured that whatever vaccine they get, it is worth their while.

**Q: Are there any side effects?**

A: These are important details which the MHRA always consider when assessing candidate vaccines for use.

For these vaccines, like lots of others, they have identified that some people might feel slightly unwell, but they report that no significant side effects have been observed in the tens of thousands of people involved in trials.

All patients will be provided with information on the vaccine they have received, how to look out for any side effects, and what to do if they do occur, including reporting them to the MHRA.

More information on possible side effects can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

**Q: I've already had my first jab, how do I get my second?**

A: If you have had your first jab already through a hospital or GP services, the local NHS will contact you about getting your second. If you have received a letter from the national booking service and you have already had your first dose of the vaccination, please ignore the letter. This service will require you to book appointments for both doses of the vaccination at the same time.

**Q: I've contacted the national booking service but I can't travel to one of the locations that are available, what should I do?**

A: More locations will become available in the coming weeks so you could try again later.

Alternatively, you can choose to wait until your local GP service invites you for the vaccine.

If you are housebound and unable to leave the house to travel to any appointment, and cannot arrange for someone to help you, your local NHS services will be in contact with you.

**Q: I have received a letter but I have already booked or attended an appointment at a local GP service. What should I do?**

A: If you already have a vaccination booked through your GP please ignore the letter – there is nothing you need to do.

**Q: I have the letter but don't understand how I book my appointment?**

A: If you have received a letter from the national booking centre inviting you to book your Covid-19 vaccination you can do this online or on the phone using the details on the first page of the letter.

You will need your name, date of birth and NHS number to book.

At the time of booking you will be asked to book your first vaccination and your follow up vaccination for 11 to 12 weeks' time.

**Q: I have received a letter about booking my appointment. Can I contact my GP to do this?**

A: No, please do not contact your GP surgery. We cannot help you to book into the Vaccination Centre.

Please use the details in the letter to book your appointment directly.

**Q: I have received invites to get vaccinated from both a local GP service and the national system, but haven't booked with either yet. Can I choose where to go?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Will people who have had their vaccination through a hospital, GP or care home still receive a letter to book through nhs.uk or by ringing 119?**

A: This may happen in a small number of cases.

If people have had their first vaccination through a hospital or GP service, or if they are in a care home, this information will flow through to the national NHS system.

If this is recorded on the national system before the national booking letter is printed then it will flag not to send that person the national booking letter. There are likely to be cases where the letter is printed to be sent and then person subsequently has their vaccination recorded and therefore is sent the national booking letter. The booking letter explains this and says that if people have already had their first dose do not book through nhs.uk or 119.

**Q: My neighbours / friends have received a letter from the national vaccination centre to book their jab. Why haven't I received mine?**

A: The NHS is inviting people for vaccinations based on expert advice on who would benefit most. This has been set by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). At the moment we are focusing on people aged 80 and over, people who live or work in care homes, and health and social care staff. If you are in one of these groups you will be invited to book your vaccine soon.

A vaccination programme of this size and scale will still take some time to roll out in full. Please be assured that everyone who needs the vaccine will be offered it.

The NHS will be in touch with you when it is your turn to be vaccinated. Please don't call us before you are invited.

**Q: What will the opening hours of vaccination centres be?**

A: Standard opening times for vaccination centres will be 8am – 8pm, seven days a week.

**Q: What are the operating hours of the telephone booking system?**

A: The telephone booking service will be open 16 hours a day (from 7am until 11pm), seven days a week. People will also be able to book online 24/7.

**Q: What if I can't get to the Vaccination Centre?**

A: People who are housebound will be contacted by their GP services about alternative ways to get vaccinated. People can also wait until more locations closer to where they live become available. The NHS will follow up with people that haven't booked their appointment, as a reminder.

**Q: What staff and volunteers will be working in Vaccination Centres?**

A: The centres will be staffed by vaccinators and clinical supervisors, as well as administrative staff and stewards to ensure the effective and safe operation of the service.

These will largely be new and existing paid NHS staff, but volunteers – including from St John Ambulance or the NHS Volunteer Responder programme - will also play an important role.

**Q: I've received a letter but someone I live who is the same age hasn't yet. Can we get vaccinated together?**

A: The NHS is inviting eligible people in a phased basis as supplies of the vaccine allow. It is important that you wait for your letter from the NHS, and you will not be able to book without one.

If you have received a letter and live with someone who is also eligible but has not received a letter, it is likely that theirs will follow shortly. If you like you can wait and book at the same time.

**Q: What should people do if they can't get through to the phone line straight away?**

A: At times, due to high demand, the phone line will get very busy, which may mean waiting on the line for a while or calling back later. You can alternatively book online. If you need help to do this, please ask someone in your support bubble.

**Q: Does this service work for people who don't understand English well or are deaf?**

A: The phone line will have interpreters and a BSL facility available on request to help you book your appointments.