Public Health England

NHS

About the coronavirus vaccine.

What to expect after vaccination

The coronavirus vaccine is a medicine that helps to keep people safe from coronavirus. Scientists have tested the vaccines to make sure they are safe and work well.

People who are most likely to get very unwell from coronavirus are getting the vaccine first. This includes many people with a learning disability and those in an at risk group.

You need to get two lots of the vaccine to be as safe as possible. You have just had your first lot of the vaccine. You should make sure you go to your next appointment so that you are as protected as possible from coronavirus.

After you've had the vaccine, you might feel unwell for a short time. This is called having side effects. Side effects don't usually make you feel very poorly, and not everyone gets them.

The main side effects are:

feeling achey or like you have a mild flu

having a headache

you might feel hot for 1 or 2 days

feeling tired

your arm feeling heavy or sore where you got the vaccine for 1 or 2 days

If you get side effects, you can rest and take some paracetamol to help make you feel better.

It will say on the packet how much you should take.

Side effects normally last less than a week. If you feel like you are getting more unwell or if you are worried, call NHS 111. Make sure you tell any health professionals you speak to that you have just had your coronavirus vaccine.

This will help them give you the right care. If you can, show them your coronavirus vaccine card.

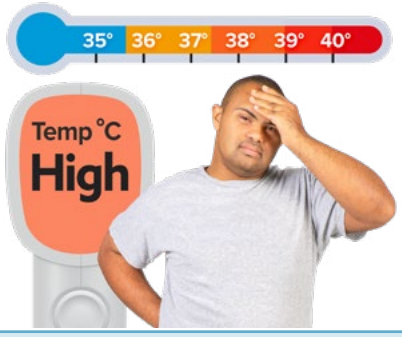
If you do get side effects, you still need to have the second lot of the vaccine. Having the second lot will give you the best protection against coronavirus.

You cannot catch coronavirus from the vaccine. But it is possible to catch coronavirus before your vaccine and not realise you have it until after your vaccine appointment.

The main signs you might have coronavirus are:

a new cough, and you keep coughing

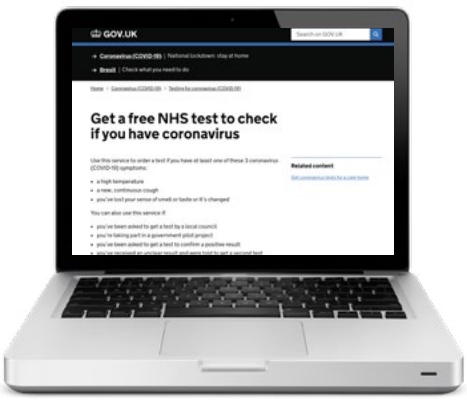
a high temperature



losing your sense of smell or taste or your sense of smell or taste changing

But if you have any other signs of coronavirus, or you have a high temperature for more than 3 days, stay at home and book a test.

You can book a test by phoning 119 or going to the government website www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test



After having the vaccine, you can do things that are normal for you as long as you feel well. If your arm is very sore, you may find it hard to lift up heavy things. If you feel unwell or very tired you should rest, and you shouldn't use any machines or drive.

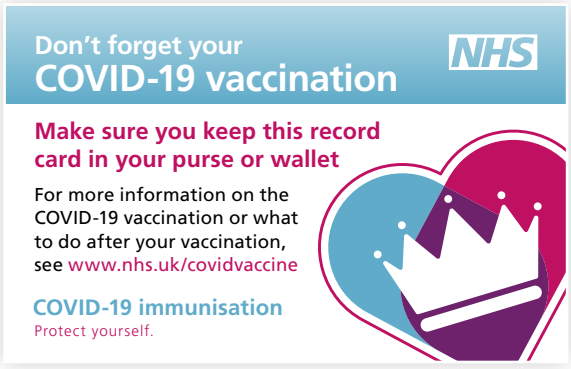
Remember, make a plan for attending your second vaccine appointment.

Your next appointment should be up to 12 weeks after your first one.

It is important to have both lots of the same vaccine to give you the best protection against coronavirus.

You should get a record card at your first appointment – this is a card that says what type of vaccine you had, when you got it, and when your next appointment is.

Keep your record card safe and make sure you go to your second appointment.



If you are unwell, it is better to wait until you are better to have your second appointment. You should try to have your second appointment as soon as possible.

You should not go to a vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating, waiting for a coronavirus test result or if you are not sure if you are well.

If you cannot go to your appointment, you should ring the place where you are getting your vaccine to tell them you can't come, and book another appointment.

The coronavirus vaccine should protect you from coronavirus, but there is still a small chance that you can catch it. If you do still catch coronavirus, it shouldn't make you as poorly as if you hadn't had the vaccine.

You won't be fully protected from coronavirus straight away after you have the first lot of the vaccine. Having both lots of the vaccine will give you the best protection from coronavirus.

You should carry on following the coronavirus guidance even when you have had the vaccine. This includes:

- Staying a safe distance from other people
- Washing your hands often and carefully
- Wearing a face covering if you can

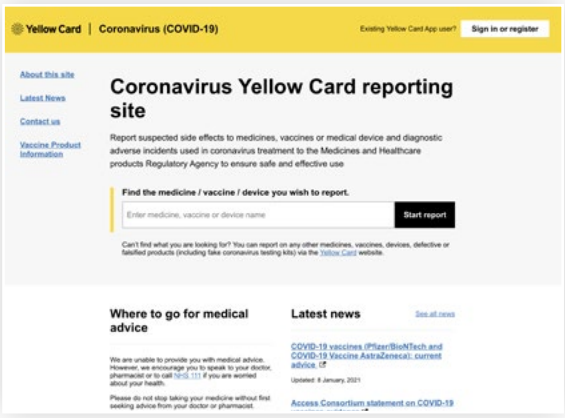
You can find out more about the rules at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

We don't know yet if having the vaccine will stop you from passing coronavirus on to other people.

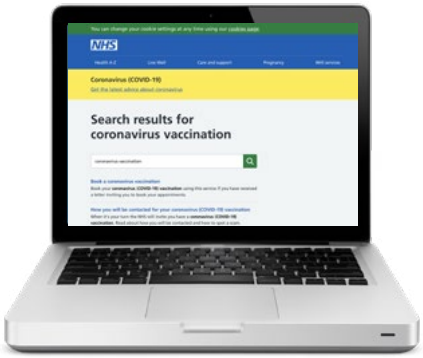
You can find out more about the coronavirus in the easy read guide: 'A guide to your coronavirus vaccination' (https://bit.ly/3asSK9Z)

You can also report side effects on the coronavirus Yellow Card website (https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk) or by downloading the Yellow Card app.

This website is not in easy read so you might want to get someone to help you.



There is also more information on www.NHS.UK



Vaccine, helping to protect those most vulnerable.

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