

## 40–49-year-olds COVID booster FAQs

### What is the COVID-19 booster programme?

The COVID-19 booster programme is the rollout of an additional vaccine dose to people who have previously received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine to ensure continued protection for those most at risk from COVID-19.

### Why is the COVID-19 booster programme needed?

We want to provide the people that are most likely to become seriously ill from COVID-19 and those who care for them with the best possible protection for this winter. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has reviewed available data and provided advice that COVID-19 boosters are first offered to the most vulnerable in order to provide maximum protection during the Winter months.

The flu vaccination programme is now running which protects people from serious complications from getting flu, so we would also encourage people that are eligible for a COVID-19 booster to also get their flu vaccination. More information on the flu vaccination is at [www.nhs.uk/flujab](http://www.nhs.uk/flujab)

### Who is eligible for the COVID-19 booster vaccine?

The following people should be offered a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in the same order as the first part of the vaccination programme:

- those living in residential care homes for older adults
- all adults aged 40 years or over
- frontline health and social care workers
- all those aged 16 to 39 years with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 (as set out in the [green book](#)), and adult carers
- adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals

The JCVI advises that the booster vaccine dose should be offered no earlier than six months after completion of the first course of vaccination, although it can be booked after five months (152 days).

### I am severely immunosuppressed. When will I get my booster?

JCVI have advised that individuals who are severely immunosuppressed get an additional third dose of vaccine as part of their primary course of immunisation. This offer is separate to the booster programme. More information is available here: [JCVI issues advice on third dose vaccination for severely immunosuppressed - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

### Is there anyone that shouldn't have the booster vaccine?

There are very few people in the eligible groups who should not have a booster. If you have had a severe reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine you should discuss this with your doctor.

### **If I'm eligible when and where can I get my vaccination?**

The NHS will let eligible people know to have their booster vaccine when it is their turn.

The JCVI advises that the booster vaccine dose should be offered no earlier than six months after having the second dose of the vaccination. Like your previous doses, the vaccine will be given in your upper arm.

People will be offered the vaccine through a range of services. Primary care teams will vaccinate care home staff and residents. Health and social care staff will be directed to book their appointments through employers and members of the public will be invited to get their booster through a GP-led service and/or be contacted by the NHS to book through the national COVID-19 vaccination booking service to get their vaccination in a designated pharmacy, vaccination centre or GP-led service.

Since Monday 8 November, it has been possible for eligible people to pre-book a booster vaccine five months after their second dose. People will still get this jab six months after their second dose, but this change is speeding up the rate of vaccination as people can book a convenient appointment for the day they become eligible, rather than waiting.

### **Why aren't most younger people being offered a booster?**

The benefits of booster vaccination in this group will be considered at a later time when more information is available. In general, younger, healthy individuals may be expected to generate stronger vaccine-induced immune responses from primary course vaccination compared to older individuals.

### **What type of vaccine will the COVID-19 booster be? What if it's different to the one I have had?**

As with your previous dose the common side effects are the same for all COVID-19 vaccines used in the UK, and include:

- having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection. This tends to be worst around 1 to 2 days after the vaccine
- feeling tired
- headache
- general aches, or mild flu like symptoms

### **Can you still catch COVID-19 after having the vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. It may take a few days for your body to build up some protection from the booster.

The COVID-19 booster and the flu vaccine can be given on the same day and for people that are eligible for both, there may be opportunities to have both together. We would encourage you to get your vaccinations as soon as possible and get fully protected rather than waiting as it may not always be possible to get them together.

**I haven't yet had the COVID-19 vaccination, can I still get my first jabs?**

Everyone that is eligible that hasn't already had their first or second COVID-19 vaccination will still be able to get vaccinated, even when the COVID-19 booster programme begins. This may be through a GP-led service or by booking through the NHS COVID-19 Vaccination national booking service.

Everyone aged 18 and over can book their initial COVID-19 vaccination through the NHS booking service (call 119 free of charge, anytime between 7am and 11pm seven days a week).

**Can I get the booster if I am pregnant?**

If you are pregnant and in one of the groups that the JCVI has recommended for the boosters, you are eligible to receive a booster, no earlier than six months after completion of the first course of vaccination. The NHS will contact you when it is your turn.