

The
COVID-19
vaccine

What to expect after the COVID-19 vaccine

This leaflet tells you what to expect after the COVID-19 vaccine that you were given today. **Please read the product information leaflet for more details on your vaccine.**

If you have any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit **nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine** or call **0800 030 8013** (available 8am–8pm, 7 days a week).

This information is a guide only. Always get medical advice from **NHS24** free on **111** if you're worried about your health.

For the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 vaccine (including ingredients and potential side effects) visit **nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine** or call **0800 030 8013**.

It's important to get all your recommended doses of the COVID-19 vaccine

Having all the recommended doses of the vaccine is important for longer-term protection against COVID-19.

It reduces your chance of catching COVID-19. If you do get COVID-19, symptoms may be less severe, and the illness shorter, than if you did not get all your recommended doses.

Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

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.

For more information on COVID-19, visit **nhsinform.scot/covid19**

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. Even if you do have side effects after the first dose, you still need to have all your recommended doses. Although you may get some protection from the first dose, having the full recommended course will give you the best protection against the virus.

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
- nausea.

You may also have flu-like symptoms with episodes of shivering and shaking for a day or two. These common side effects are much less serious than developing COVID-19 or complications associated with COVID-19, and they usually go away within a few days.

You can rest and take the normal dose of paracetamol (follow the advice in the packaging) to help make yourself 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 breast screening (a mammogram) in the few weeks after the vaccine, then you should mention that when you attend.

Fever after the vaccine

It's quite common to develop a fever (temperature above 37.8°C) after vaccination. This normally happens within 48 hours of the vaccination and usually goes away within 48 hours.

You do not need to self-isolate or book a COVID-19 test unless you have other COVID-19 symptoms or if you have been advised to by:

- NHS Test and Protect
- your Occupational Health team
- a Public Health Protection team.

If the fever starts more than 48 hours after the vaccination or lasts longer than 48 hours, you should self-isolate and book a COVID-19 test. This can be done at **nhsinform.scot/testing**

What should I do if I am concerned about my side effects?

These side effects normally last less than a week. If your side effects seem to get worse or if you are concerned, call NHS24 free on 111. 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. Visit coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

Are the side effects different for each dose?

Not all COVID-19 vaccines are the same. Some tend to cause more side effects at the first dose, while others cause more side effects at a following dose. The very common side effects are the same and should still only last a day or two.

Are there other more serious side effects?

AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and rare blood clots

Recently there have been reports of an extremely rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after vaccination with the AstraZeneca (AZ) COVID-19 vaccine. This is being carefully reviewed but the risk factors for this condition are not yet clear. Because of the high risk of complications and death from COVID-19, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the World Health Organization and the European Medicines Agency have concluded that the balance is very much in favour of vaccination.

If you receive the AZ COVID-19 vaccine and experience any of the following from around 4 days to 4 weeks after vaccination, you should seek medical advice urgently.

- 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.

Heart inflammation

Worldwide, there have also been recent, rare cases of inflammation of the heart called myocarditis or pericarditis reported after COVID-19 vaccines, although it is not yet clear that these are caused by the vaccines.

These cases have been seen mostly in younger men within several days of 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.

Reporting side effects

As with all vaccines, you can report suspected side effects through the Yellow Card Scheme. You can report side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines online at:

 coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

After the vaccine

After you've had your vaccine, it's important that you continue to follow the latest government guidance to help reduce the spread of the virus. It is not yet known whether having the vaccine completely stops you spreading the virus to others.

Information correct at time of publication.



Translations



Easy read



BSL



Audio



Large print



Braille

For more information, including other formats and translation support:



nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine



0800 030 8013



phs.otherformats@phs.scot

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