

## COVID-19 vaccination programme Q&A

Last updated 24 January 2022

### COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years

NHS Scotland is offering the COVID-19 vaccine to children aged 5 to 11 who:

- are at higher risk from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions or
- share living accommodation, on most days, with someone who has a weakened immune system

Eligible children will be invited by from late January 2022.

Parents/carers will receive an invitation letter with details of how to book an appointment.

The second dose will be offered from 8 weeks after the first dose.

For more information visit [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinechildren](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinechildren).

### COVID-19 vaccine for children and young people aged 12 to 15 years

Children and young people aged 12 to 15 years are eligible for 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. The second dose will be offered from 12 weeks after the first dose.

Children and young people in the following groups will be offered a second dose from 8 weeks:

- those who are at higher risk from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions
- those who live with someone with a weakened immune system.

Some children and young people aged 12 to 15 years at higher risk of COVID-19 are also eligible for a booster dose. This includes those:

- with a severely weakened immune system who have had a third primary dose
- who are at higher risk from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions
- who share living accommodation, on most days, with someone who has a weakened immune system

Children and young people aged 12 to 15 years at higher risk of COVID-19 will be able to have their booster dose from 12 weeks after their second dose.

NHS Scotland will contact children and young people aged 12 to 15 years (and their parents or carers) who are eligible for a booster dose.

For more information about how children and young people can get the vaccine visit [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineyoungpeople](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineyoungpeople).

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### COVID-19 vaccine for young people aged 16 or 17 years

Young people aged 16 or 17 years are eligible for 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, followed by a booster dose. The second dose will be offered from 12 weeks after the first dose. The booster dose will be offered from 12 weeks after the second dose.

Children and young people in the following groups will be offered a second dose from 8 weeks:

- those who are at higher risk from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions
- who share living accommodation, on most days, with someone who has a weakened immune system
- those aged 16 or 17 years who are an unpaid carer or a frontline health or social care worker.

Young people aged 16 or 17 years will be able to get a booster dose from February, for a date at least 12 weeks since their second dose. Drop-in clinics may be available in some areas.

For more information about how young people can get the vaccine visit [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineyoungpeople](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineyoungpeople).

### COVID-19 vaccine for adults aged 18 years or over

All adults aged 18 years and over are eligible for 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, followed by a booster dose. The second dose will be offered from 8 weeks after the first dose. People can have their COVID-19 booster from 12 weeks after their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

#### First and second doses

People can receive a first and second dose by:

- Attending a [drop-in clinic](#)
- Calling 0800 030 8013 (open 8am – 8pm, 7 days a week) to book an appointment
- Registering to receive their first dose at [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccineregistration](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccineregistration)

#### Booster doses

People can receive a booster dose by:

- Attending a [drop-in clinic](#)
- Booking an appointment at [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking)
- Calling 0800 030 8013 (open 8am – 8pm, 7 days a week) to book an appointment

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Depending on the local area drop-in clinics may be available. Local Health Boards will promote their drop-in services on their website and social media. Visit [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinedropinclinics](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinedropinclinics) for more information about drop-in clinics.

A video explaining how to book using the online system is available at [https://youtu.be/PiEd6-r\\_dKU](https://youtu.be/PiEd6-r_dKU).

For more information visit [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine).

### **What is the ‘third primary dose’ for people with a severely weakened immune system?**

A third primary dose is an extra ‘top-up’ dose to help increase the level of protection for people who may not have generated a full immune response to the first two doses and might be less protected than the wider population. A third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is available for people aged 5 years and over with a severely weakened immune system given ideally 8 weeks after their second dose.

A third primary dose is different to a booster dose. A booster dose is an additional dose to extend the protection from the primary course of vaccinations.

People aged 12 years and over who have received a third dose can also receive a booster dose from 12 weeks after their third dose.

Information on eligibility for a third dose is available at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinethirddose](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinethirddose).

### **Guidance for people who have previously had COVID-19**

Even if people have already had COVID-19, they could still get it again. The vaccine will reduce the risk of getting COVID-19. If people do get it again the vaccine can reduce how serious the symptoms will be.

If someone has recently tested positive for COVID-19 - even if they have no symptoms - they should wait 4 weeks after the date they were tested to get any dose of the vaccine if they are:

- aged 18 years or over
- aged 12 to 17 years and are at higher risk from COVID-19
- aged 12 to 17 years and live with someone who is immunosuppressed
- aged 5 to 11 years.

All other children and young people aged 12 to 17 years should wait 12 weeks from the date they were tested before getting the vaccine.

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### Will people be offered a flu vaccine at the same time as a COVID-19 booster dose?

Due to the Omicron variant, low-risk groups for flu will no longer be offered flu vaccine this season. This includes:

- teachers, nursery teachers and pupil facing support staff (in both local authority and independent settings)
- prison officers and support staff who deliver direct detention services
- those aged 50 to 64 years old without underlying risk factors.

If people are in a high-risk group for flu, they can still have flu vaccine this winter season (but not in a COVID-19 vaccination community clinic):

- pregnant women
- those aged 65 years or older
- those with underlying health conditions
- frontline health and social care workers
- adult unpaid carers
- household contacts (aged 16 years or over) of immunosuppressed individuals

If people are in these high-risk groups, they may still have the flu vaccine at an NHS community pharmacy or via their midwife if they are pregnant.

Most children aged 2 to 5 years and primary school pupils have already been offered the flu vaccine this year.

Some areas in Scotland have also completed vaccination of their secondary school pupils. Where they have not been completed, vaccination has been paused.

### Waiting time after COVID-19 vaccination

Given the very low rate of serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis), the 15 minute wait after vaccination has been reduced to 5 minutes, as long as people feel okay. This includes 5 to 11 year olds who are now eligible for the vaccine. This change has been advised by the 4 UK Chief Medical Officers. It's also supported by the Medicines Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

More information is available in the [Waiting after the COVID-19 vaccination](#) leaflet available at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineleaflets](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineleaflets).

### Why should people get the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose?

Levels of protection from COVID-19 vaccines may begin to reduce over time. The COVID-19 vaccine booster dose will help extend the protection people gained from their first two doses and give them longer-term protection. A booster can reduce the risk of symptomatic COVID-19 infection by over 80%. It is vital to maximise continued immunity.

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### **When can people have the COVID-19 booster vaccine?**

People can have their COVID-19 booster from 12 weeks after their previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **How do people find out when their previous dose was?**

People can visit [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking) and log in to find their previous dose appointment date. If people are unable to do this, they can call the national vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013.

### **How can people log in to the online portal?**

People can use the log in details they received from their first or second dose COVID-19 vaccination appointment letters to log in to the online portal at [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking). If people have lost or forgotten their vaccination username or password, they can create new ones.

A video explaining how to book using the online system is available at [https://youtu.be/PiEd6-r\\_dKU](https://youtu.be/PiEd6-r_dKU).

### **What if people don't have a computer or a smart phone?**

People don't need a computer or smart phone to book an appointment. They can book via the national vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013. The helpline will find a suitable appointment for them.

### **Does the national vaccination helpline have access to additional appointments?**

No, the helpline does not have access to additional appointments. If people cannot find an appointment that suits them online, they should check back later to see if additional appointments have been added.

### **Are all Health Boards using the online portal and vaccination helpline?**

NHS Orkney and NHS Western Isles are not using the online portal or the national vaccination helpline to book appointments.

If a person lives in one of these NHS Health Board areas, they will receive an appointment through the post. People can also check local details on their Health Board's website or social media.

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### **Can people reschedule appointments?**

People can [reschedule](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine) appointments online at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine).

If people do not attend their appointment and didn't reschedule it, they will not be able to book a new appointment online. They will need to phone the national vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013.

### **Where can people get their vaccination?**

People can book an appointment or attend a drop-in clinic (if available) at a location of their choice. This can be in another Health Board area if easier.

### **What if people have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in England, but now live in Scotland?**

People should call the national vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013 to create a Community Health Index (CHI) number, in order to create a vaccination record in Scotland so that they can have an appointment booked.

### **What if people have moved from one area of Scotland to another?**

People can book an appointment at [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking](https://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking) or by calling the national vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013.

### **Can pregnant women have the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is strongly recommended in pregnancy. Vaccination is the best way to protect pregnant women and their babies against the known risks of COVID-19 in pregnancy.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that pregnant women of any age should be prioritised as a clinical risk group for COVID-19 vaccination.

It is important that pregnant women get all the recommended doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, including the booster, as soon as possible. The vaccine can be given at any stage during pregnancy.

For more information visit [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinepregnancy](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinepregnancy).

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### How to find out more about the COVID-19 vaccination programme

- Public-facing information is available at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine).
- Information for professionals, including those who support people to take up their offer of vaccination, is available on the Public Health Scotland website at [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covidvaccineresources](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covidvaccineresources).
- Information materials in other languages and formats are available at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineleaflets](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccineleaflets).
- Information is available in other languages at [www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinelanguages](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinelanguages) including information in the following languages:

Arabic - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19arabicleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19arabicleaflets)

Farsi - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19farsileaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19farsileaflets)

Hungarian - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19hungarianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19hungarianleaflets)

Latvia - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19latvianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19latvianleaflets)

Lithuanian - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19lithuanianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19lithuanianleaflets)

Polish - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19polishleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19polishleaflets)

Romanian - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19romanianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19romanianleaflets)

Russian - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19russianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19russianleaflets)

Slovakian - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19slovakianleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19slovakianleaflets)

Simplified Chinese - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19mandarinleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19mandarinleaflets)

Traditional Chinese - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19cantoneseleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19cantoneseleaflets)

Urdu - [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19urduleaflets](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covid19urduleaflets)

- Information for Polish communities is available at [www.publichealthscotland.scot/covidvaccinepolishresources](http://www.publichealthscotland.scot/covidvaccinepolishresources)