

FAQs - Spring Booster vaccination update, May 2022

Q: Why are some people being invited for a spring booster?

COVID-19 is more serious in older people and those with a weakened immune system. Protection from the vaccine may be lower and may decline more quickly in these people. For this reason, people aged 75 years and over, those in care homes and those aged 12 years and over with a weakened immune system are being offered the spring booster.

Q: When will people be able to book their spring booster?

JCVI's advice is that people should wait until around six months since their last dose for maximum effectiveness, and people are asked to wait until they are invited by the NHS to book. People should wait to be contacted by the NHS. The NHS began inviting people in March and will offer a top-up dose to all who are eligible in early Summer.

Q: How do I get my booster dose of the COVID vaccine?

For boosters, you should wait until the NHS contacts you. For an initial booster dose (the first dose following your primary course), you can visit www.nhs.uk/covid-booster to find your nearest walk in option or book an appointment. You can also call 119 free of charge which also offers translators on request.

Q: What happens if someone who has yet to be called forward for a booster had their last jab more than three months ago turns up at a vaccine centre – will they be turned away? If so, why?

The JCVI advice is that people should wait until around six months since their last dose for maximum effectiveness, and people are asked to wait until they are invited by the NHS to book. However, provided they are in one of the eligible groups and they attend a site that accepts walk-ins for booster doses, they will not be turned away if it has been more than three months since their previous dose and they have not had COVID recently (see next answer).

Q: I have recently recovered from COVID-19, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes. You still need to get a booster dose of the vaccine for extra protection, even if you have recently recovered from COVID-19.

If you have recently recovered from the virus, you will need to wait before getting any dose of the vaccine. People will need to wait:

- 4 weeks (28 days) if they are aged 18 years old or over, or aged 5 to 17 years old and at greater risk from COVID (as defined in UKHSA's Green Book – see table 3 and table 4 [here](#))
- 12 weeks (84 days) if they are aged 12 to 17 years old and not at greater risk from COVID (as defined in UKHSA's Green Book – see table 3 and table 4 [here](#))

Q: Why should I still get the vaccine now that restrictions have been lifted?

Vaccines have enabled the gradual and safe removal of restrictions on everyday life over the past year.

Thanks to the COVID-19 vaccine, we are able to get back to doing the things we love. However, COVID-19 is still out there and there are still people in hospital unwell with the virus.

Make sure you stay up to date with your vaccines for the best possible protection and for extra reassurance that you're keeping yourself and others safe.

Q: Will I get side-effects from a booster dose?

You may experience some mild side effects from the booster dose, regardless of how you reacted to previous COVID-19 vaccines. Side effects are very mild, do not last for very long and not everybody will get them. Side effects can include a sore arm, feeling tired, a headache, feeling achy, and feeling or being sick. If you do get these, a pain killer such as paracetamol is recommended.

Q: Will I be expected to get more doses of the COVID vaccine in the future?

The NHS will be delivering a Spring Booster in England to those who are most vulnerable from COVID-19, including people aged 75 and over. The NHS is also preparing to deliver an autumn dose of the vaccine, but whether this happens will depend on future recommendations from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

Q: Can I still come forward for a first or second dose if I've not yet done so?

It's never too late to come forward for your first, second or (if you were immunosuppressed at the time of one of these) a third dose of the vaccine. You do not need to be registered with a GP and can find a walk-in option, book an appointment or more information at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine or by calling 119 (translators are available into different languages on request).

Q: Why are no other groups of people being invited to come forward for a booster?

The NHS vaccinates people in line with recommendations on who is eligible from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), as accepted by government.

Resources

5-11 Video for info: [\(582\) What to expect at your COVID-19 vaccination appointment - for 5-11 year olds - YouTube](#)

Press release requesting those to come forward for vaccines: [Thousands of people eligible for a spring booster have not yet come forward - Sussex Health & Care Partnership \(sussexhealthandcare.uk\)](#)