



COVID-19 vaccination

A guide for young people

What is COVID-19 or coronavirus?

COVID-19 is a very infectious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Very few children and young people with COVID-19 infection go on to have severe disease.

There is no cure for COVID-19 although some newly tested treatments do help to reduce the risk of complications.

Are you at risk from COVID-19 infection?

For most young people, COVID-19 is usually a milder illness that rarely leads to complications. For a very few the symptoms may last for longer than the usual 2 to 3 weeks. The vaccination will help to protect you against COVID-19.

Currently the vaccine licensed for children and young people is the Pfizer vaccine. This is what you will be offered.

Will the vaccine protect me?

The vaccine will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. It may take a few weeks for your body to build up some protection from the vaccine. You should get good protection from the first dose.

Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe. Further information is available on symptoms on [gov.uk/symptoms](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/nhs.uk/about/nhs.uk/symptoms).

The vaccines do not contain organisms that grow in the body, and so are safe for children and young people with disorders of the immune system. These people may not respond so well to the vaccine but it should offer them protection against severe disease.

What about giving consent?

You should share information about the vaccine with your parents and discuss it together.

Should you decide to get vaccinated, you will be given the vaccine at the Vaccine Centre at Fort Regent.

We have created a specialist area where young people will receive their vaccine, with a friendly and experienced team.

You would go to the Vaccine Centre with your parent or carer who

would give their consent for you to be vaccinated before you get your vaccine. This parental consent process is the same as any other childhood vaccination

Common side effects

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. Side effects are less common with only one dose.

Very common side effects include:



Your arm feeling heavy or sore where you had the injection



Feeling tired



Having a headache



Feeling achy or like you've got the flu

You can rest and take paracetamol (follow the dose advice in the packaging) to help make you feel better. Although feeling feverish is not uncommon for 2 to 3 days, a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19 or another infection. Symptoms following vaccination normally last less than a week.

If you are unsure about your symptoms, contact your GP or book an online PCR test.

Less common side effects

Recently, cases of inflammation of the heart (called myocarditis or pericarditis) have been reported very rarely after COVID-19 vaccines.

Most of these cases have been in younger men and usually a few days after the second vaccination. This is almost always mild. The vast majority of people recovered with simple rest and symptomatic treatment.

You should seek medical advice urgently if you experience:

- chest pain
- shortness of breath
- feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart

Keep your card safe with details of your vaccination.



Can you catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine. It is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment.

What to do next?

UK health authorities will determine if and when second vaccine doses for universal vaccination of 12 to 15 year olds are needed.

If you are not well when your appointment is due

You should not attend a vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating, waiting for a COVID-19 test or within 4 weeks of having a positive COVID-19 test.

About the vaccine



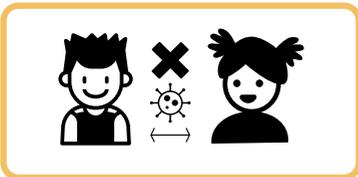
Young people aged 12 to 15 years old are currently only being offered one dose of the vaccine. The experts have said advice on when to offer the second vaccine dose for 12 to 15 year olds will come later.



The vaccine has been tested to make sure it is safe and effective, and the needle is very small.



Having the vaccine makes you less likely to get very ill from COVID-19.



It will help to stop you from catching and passing on the virus.

Getting the vaccine is likely to reduce the chances of further disruption in schools, keeping you in school and protecting your physical and mental health.

Further Information

You can report suspected side effects on the Yellow Card website or by downloading the Yellow Card app: coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/productinformation

Further information is available from: gov.uk/vaccine