



## INFORMATION SHEET

### Covid-19 Vaccinations and Boosters

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19. Anyone who gets COVID-19 can become seriously ill or have long-term effects (long COVID). The COVID-19 vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and others.

Research has shown the vaccines help:

- reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19
- reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19
- protect against COVID-19 variants

**The 1st dose should give you some protection from 3 or 4 weeks after you've had it. But you need 2 doses for stronger and longer-lasting protection.** For more information on having your first or second dose of the vaccine go to: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccines - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus/covid-19/vaccines)

For some people, a 3<sup>rd</sup> vaccine is available (see below), and following the emergence of the Omicron variant at the end of 2021, the Government now recommends a booster vaccination to enhance protection.

Government guidance about vaccinations can change according to the current situation. Check here ([COVID-19 vaccination programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/covid-19/vaccination-programme)) for updated guidance.

This guidance has been developed from Government guidance available in early January 2022.

#### Vaccinations for Children:

**Children aged 12 and over** can now get their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the vaccine from 12 weeks after they had their first dose. Children aged 12-15 can get the vaccine at school, via a walk-in site or book an appointment online (see the 'Booking a Vaccine' section below for more details). For more information on vaccinations for children 12 and over go to: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine for children aged 12 to 15 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus/covid-19/vaccine-for-children-aged-12-to-15)

New guidance released on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 states that children aged 5-11 who are in a clinical risk group (this includes children with severe learning disabilities) or who are in a household of someone who is immunosuppressed are now eligible for the vaccine. Children aged 5-11:

All our information sheets are available to download free of charge.

If you can [please support us](#) or donate £3 by texting CBF to 70450 to help us continue our work.

Is this resource helpful? Please spend a few minutes giving us some feedback: [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cbfresources](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cbfresources)



- should be offered two 10 micrograms doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty®) with an interval of 8 weeks between the first and second doses. The minimum interval between any vaccine dose and recent COVID-19 infection should be 4 weeks.

Vaccines for 5-11 year olds cannot be booked online yet, ask your GP for more information if you think your child is eligible and you have not been contacted. For further information on vaccinations for children aged 5-11 go to: [JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children and young people: 22 December 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people-22-december-2021)

For more information on reasonable adjustments and advice on supporting individuals with learning disabilities go to: [Covid-19 vaccine - accessibility and reasonable adjustments for individuals with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges \(challengingbehaviour.org.uk\)](https://challengingbehaviour.org.uk/covid-19-vaccine-accessibility-and-reasonable-adjustments-for-individuals-with-severe-learning-disabilities-whose-behaviour-challenges)

### **Covid-19 Vaccine 3<sup>rd</sup> Dose:**

People with a weakened immune system are being offered a 3rd dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine. This is also known as a 3rd primary dose.

If you had a weakened immune system when you had your first 2 doses, the vaccine may not have given you as much protection as it can for people who do not have a weakened immune system.

A 3rd dose may help give you better protection.

A 3rd dose of a COVID-19 vaccine is being offered to people aged 12 and over who had a weakened immune system when they had their first 2 doses.

This includes people who had or have:

- a blood cancer (such as leukaemia or lymphoma)
- a weakened immune system due to a treatment (such as steroid medicine, biological therapy, chemotherapy, or radiotherapy)
- an organ or bone marrow transplant
- a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections
- a condition or treatment your specialist advises makes you eligible for a 3rd dose

For more information on a third dose go to: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine 3rd dose - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/vaccine-3rd-dose/)



## **Covid-19 Vaccine Booster dose:**

The coronavirus (Covid-19) booster vaccine helps improve immunity and protection for people who have had the first two doses of the vaccine. It helps give an individual longer-term protection against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

Booster vaccine doses are now available from the NHS for everyone over 18 who has had their second dose of a vaccine three months or more ago. For more information on the Covid-19 booster go to: [Booster dose of the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

## **Capacity and Best Interests:**

In order to decide whether vaccination is right for you or your relative, you are entitled to accessible information or resources on what the vaccination process involves. For more general information on COVID-19 designed for individuals with learning disabilities, see also [Beyond Words](#) and more by [Mencap](#).

Parents can give consent for children under 16 years old. If you or anybody else acts as a Health or Welfare Deputy for someone aged over 16, then you/the person authorised can consent on their behalf. If there is no such Deputy, then a 'best-interests' decision must be made by relevant professionals and involving the people who know the person well in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005:

- A best interests decision can be made when whoever is administering the vaccine is in a position to say that they reasonably believe that a person lacks capacity to consent, and that they are acting in the person's best interests by making the medical decision on their behalf.
- A best interests decision should usually be made in agreement with everyone interested in the person's welfare, meaning that you as a family member, support worker or friend should be consulted about the person's wishes, feelings, beliefs and values before a decision is taken to vaccinate.
- A best interests decision should always avoid discriminating based on a person's condition, or making assumptions and blanket decisions.

For more info on the Mental Capacity Act, 'best-interests' and the COVID-19 vaccine, see these resources by Essex Chambers:

- [Mental-Capacity-Guidance-Note-COVID-19-vaccination-and-capacity-v5.pdf \(netdna-ssl.com\)](#)
- [Mental-Capacity-Guidance-Note-Capacity-Assessment-November-2021.pdf \(netdna-ssl.com\)](#)



## How to get a vaccine:

If you or your relative is eligible for their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or booster dose of the vaccine, you can access it by:

- Booking a vaccination appointment online.
- Going to a walk-in vaccination site.
- Waiting to be contacted by your local NHS service such as a GP surgery or contacting the GP surgery yourself.

If you cannot book appointments online, you can call 119 free of charge. You can speak to a translator if you need to.

If you have difficulties communicating or hearing or are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can use textphone 18001 119 or the [NHS 119 BSL interpreter service](#).

The CBF has produced an information sheet about preparing for vaccinations including reasonable adjustments which is available here [Covid-19 vaccine - accessibility and reasonable adjustments for individuals with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges \(challengingbehaviour.org.uk\)](#)

## Booking a vaccine:

You can book a COVID-19 vaccine (2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> dose) online if it has been **8 weeks** since your last dose. You can book a booster online if it's been two **months** (61 days) since you had your 2<sup>nd</sup> dose and you are:

- **aged 18 and over**
- **aged 16 and over with a health condition that means you are in the “high risk” category.**

You will be offered appointment dates from **three months** after the date of your second dose.

Book here: [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

### Walk in Vaccination:

You can find a walk-in centre here: [Find a walk-in coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination site - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)



Walk in vaccination centres may not be equipped and prepared for making reasonable adjustments so you might need to check this if adjustments will be needed. We recommend contacting the walk-in centre in advance.

**Via your GP:**

You can contact your relatives GP, or your relatives GP may contact them/you via text, letter or calls to invite you to book a vaccine appointment. GP's can make reasonable adjustments. We advise contacting your GP to discuss this.

For further information on reasonable adjustments see our information sheet: [Covid-19 vaccine - accessibility and reasonable adjustments for individuals with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges \(challengingbehaviour.org.uk\)](https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/information-sheet/covid-19-vaccine-accessibility-and-reasonable-adjustments-for-individuals-with-severe-learning-disabilities-whose-behaviour-challenges)



## **Further information is available here:**

Covid-19 Vaccine:

[Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccines - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Covid-19 Boosters:

[Booster dose of the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[COVID-19 vaccination: booster dose resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[COVID-19 vaccination: a guide to booster vaccination for individuals aged 18 years and over and those aged 16 years and over who are at risk - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Reasonable Adjustments:

[PowerPoint Presentation \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk) - Supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people to get the COVID-19 vaccination

[Covid-19 vaccine - accessibility and reasonable adjustments for individuals with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges \(challengingbehaviour.org.uk\)](https://challengingbehaviour.org.uk)

**The Covid-19 guidance is frequently changing so we advise to keep checking the guidance for any updates.**

Reviewed 4/1/2022 © The Challenging Behaviour Foundation.



### **The Challenging Behaviour Foundation**

We are a registered UK charity specifically focussed on the needs of children, young people and adults with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges, and their families. We will make a difference to the lives of people with severe learning disabilities, whose behaviour challenges, and their families by:

- Championing their rights
- Ensuring timely information and support
- Raising awareness and understanding
- Promoting and sharing best practice

To access our information and support, call 01634 838739, email [info@thecbf.org.uk](mailto:info@thecbf.org.uk) or visit our website: <https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk>