

Covid-19 Vaccination 12-15 Years

Parent information pack

About the Covid-19 Vaccine

All children aged 12-15 will be offered a single dose of the Pfizer/ BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of your child suffering from COVID-19 disease. It may take a few weeks for their body to build up some protection from the vaccine. They should get good protection from the single 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 NHS.UK.

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.

Side effects

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short-lived, and not everyone gets them. With the vaccine we use in under-18s, side effects are more common with a second dose.

Very common side effects include:

- painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm at injection site
- feeling tired
- headache
- general aches, or mild flu like symptoms.

The above can be safely managed by plenty of fluids, home remedies such as Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen (following the dosing instructions) and moving the arm. They usually resolve within 24-48 hours.

Less common side effects:

Following administration of Pfizer vaccine to protect against Covid 19 there have been very rare reports of the following side effects, these have usually occurred a few days after a second dose:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Feelings of having a fast beating or pounding heart

Most symptoms are short-lived and will resolve spontaneously with some rest and simple treatments. However, should your son/daughter experience any of these symptoms, and you are concerned, please contact your GP or NHS111 and explain that he/she has recently been vaccinated with Pfizer vaccine. More information about the Pfizer vaccination can be found here: [COVID-19 vaccination: a guide for eligible children and young people aged 12 to 17 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-vaccination-a-guide-for-eligible-children-and-young-people-aged-12-to-17)

Covid-19 Vaccine FAQs

Where can I find information on COVID-19 vaccination for children and adults?

The [NHS leaflets](#) provide more information for parents and children on the vaccine, including how it works and what to expect after COVID-19 vaccination. There are accessible versions of the consent form and leaflets available for those with a learning disability or who live with autism. There are braille and British Sign Language (BSL) videos to order or download. Translations will also be available.

[COVID-19 vaccination – A guide for children and young people \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[What to expect after your COVID-19 vaccination – Advice for children and young people \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

When do the vaccinations need to be given?

The COVID-19 vaccinations for children aged 12-15 will commence from 22nd September and will run across all secondary schools for around 6- 8 weeks. You will be provided with the date of your child's planned school session in advance and you will be asked to complete a consent form.

It is important to note that this academic year the school age immunisation team will also be offering the nasal flu vaccine to all students in years 7-11 to help reduce the incidence and transmission of flu. Following national approval where consent has been received for both nasal flu and Covid-19 vaccine, these may be administered at the same session. Further information about the annual childhood flu programme is available here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>

Who will be giving the vaccine to the children?

The programme will be delivered by an NHS commissioned School-aged Immunisation team (SAI) which will include nurses, healthcare support workers, administrative staff, and other associated professionals who specialise in the delivery of school age vaccinations and COVID-19 vaccinations. The team will administer the vaccination according to nationally agreed standards. Staff are appropriately qualified, trained (including in safeguarding) and experienced in vaccinating children and young people. Staff administering the vaccine will be wearing appropriate personal protective equipment and your child will be asked to wear a face covering during the vaccination.

How will the SAIS provider team identify the children to be vaccinated?

The consent form will be either emailed to parents and carers of all eligible students via your school or sent home with your child for you to complete for each individual child who is eligible for vaccination. The form will need to be completed at least 48 hours in advance of your child's school session to allow time for the clinical nursing team to triage and ensure that your child can receive the vaccination safely. If you do not wish for your child to be vaccinated, non-consent can also be provided on the same form.

The team will then have a list of all children for whom consent has been received in advance of the immunisation session.

What about those children turning 12 years of age within the school year, after the date of the vaccination session?

We will offer a vaccination to all children aged 12 years and over on the day of the school visit. A follow-up offer (this may be in school or a clinic appointment) will also be made to any children who miss the first vaccination in their school. This will help to ensure that the following pupils can access the vaccine:

- those turning 12 years after the session
- those who were absent from school on the day
- those who have recently had a COVID-19 infection
- those who subsequently change their minds, or take longer to reach a decision

Where relevant, you will be contacted with further information about this, please do not contact your GP surgery – unless your child is considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) and has not already been offered a Covid vaccination

Handy tips for preparing your son/daughter for COVID-19 vaccination

- Ensure your son/daughter tells us on the day if he/she has had a confirmed positive PCR test since you provided your consent and within 28 days before the planned vaccination.
- Encourage them to have breakfast and drink regularly throughout the school day.
- Ask him/her to wear short-sleeved and loose-fitting shirt to allow us to be able to get to the top of his/her arm. The injection is usually given in the arm they do not write with.
- If he/she is known to suffer with severe needle phobia, or prone to fainting please speak to school as we can arrange for your child to be vaccinated earlier in the day.
- Help them with strategies for staying calm during the vaccination – it's natural to worry but we want your son/daughter's arm to be as relaxed as possible.
- Let your child know what's going to happen in simple language – for example, "you may feel a sharp scratch that will go away very fast".

If you have any questions you can email the following address –

hsiccq.covid.vaccination.enquiries@nhs.net