

# The COVID-19 Vaccine and Me

## Should I have the COVID-19 Vaccine?



If you are aged 12-17, you are now being offered 1 dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine.

But, how do you decide whether to have the vaccine or not? And what do you need to think about?

### How do I decide if I should have the COVID Vaccine?

It is a very personal choice, and only you and your parents can decide if it is right for you (if you are 12-15 years old you will need permission from your parent or guardian to have the vaccine).

**Here are some things that might help you make your decision:**

- ✓ Recommended by the experts – local and national doctors
- ✓ Reduces the chance you will catch COVID-19
- ✓ Help protect your family and friends, particularly any older family like grandparents
- ✓ Reduces the risk of spending time in hospital with COVID-19
- ✓ Help your schooling to return to normal

- Potential side affects and feeling ill afterwards
- Fear of needles
- Worried about things you have read or heard

**Read the rest of the information, think about it carefully, talk to your parents before making a choice.**

### Is the vaccine safe for people my age?

Millions of young people aged 12 and above have had the vaccine across the world, including in France, Germany, the USA and this country.

For young people aged 12-17, the Pfizer vaccine has been approved as safe for use and you are being offered it to try to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on your education and schooling.

However, no vaccine is completely safe as there may be very rare side effects in a very small number of people.

### I'm young and healthy. Why do I need to be vaccinated?

Getting a vaccine will help to keep the cases of COVID-19 down in schools.

The will mean that schools can return to a more normal routine, with fewer pupils needing to isolate and less disruption to your education. This is so important that the Chief Medical Officer has decided that despite young people being at very little serious risk from COVID-19 itself, they should still be offered the vaccine.



**GOOD NEWS!** The vaccine is completely vegan and there is nothing in it that can affect your fertility.

## What is COVID-19 anyway?

COVID-19 is a very infectious virus that affects how people breath and how well their bodies use oxygen. It causes coughs, high temperatures and many other symptoms. In some people, it can be very serious and mean that they end up in hospital, and sometimes they die. There is no cure for COVID-19, but we are getting better at treating people. Whilst lots of children and young people catch COVID-19, very few of them get seriously ill.

## Why is the COVID-19 vaccine important?

Getting your COVID-19 vaccination as soon as you can, should protect you and may help to protect your family and friends. It is the biggest thing we can do to help us return to a more normal way of life – and keep it that way.

Research has shown the vaccines help to:

- 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



## People still get COVID after the vaccine, so how effective is it really?

People aged 12-17 are currently only being offered one dose of the vaccine. 3-4 weeks after your vaccine, it will give you approximately 55% protection from the Delta variant – the strongest of the COVID-19 infections. This means you will halve your chance of getting COVID-19 by having the one dose.

## Why will I only get 1 dose now?

Your risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 is already very low. So, at this time, one dose is enough to give you that extra boost in immunity and protect you and your family.

## Which vaccine will I have?

You will be offered the Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine, which is the same as everyone else under the age of 40.

## Will I feel ill afterwards?

Everyone will need to stay for 15 minutes after their vaccine to make sure they are well. You can't catch COVID-19 from the vaccine. The vaccine doesn't have any COVID-19 in it. Most people don't suffer any side effects at all, but some people may feel a bit rubbish. The most common side effects are:

- A sore arm from the injection
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- Aches, pains and feeling flu-ey
- Feeling or being sick
- High temperature

If you get any of these side effects, they should only last 1-2 days.



### Heart inflammation

There have been very rare cases of inflammation of the heart reported after vaccination – usually after the second. Most people who had this recovered following rest and simple treatments.

### Blood clots

There is no information to suggest that the Pfizer vaccine causes blood clots. All the information you have seen on the news, is in regards to a different COVID vaccine than the one you are getting.

## How to prepare for your vaccine:

EAT BEFORE &  
AFTER

DRINK PLENTY  
OF WATER

AVOID ALCOHOL  
& DRUGS

GET A GOOD  
NIGHT'S SLEEP

For more information for you and your parents, visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) or [healthierwigan.nhs.uk](https://www.healthierwigan.nhs.uk)