

Covid-19 booster and seasonal flu vaccination programmes

Frequently asked questions

This year, the covid-19 booster and seasonal flu vaccination programmes are being delivered together. Where possible, people who are eligible for both vaccinations will receive one appointment – so they don't need to attend two appointments within a short period of time.

Generally speaking, people who are eligible for a covid booster will also be eligible for the flu vaccine.

As with the initial covid-19 vaccination programme, we are asking people to be patient as they will be contacted directly when it is their turn for either or both vaccines. You do not need to do anything in the meantime. We hope this document will answer most of the questions you may have. It also contains information on the flu vaccination programme for children and young people.

To allow GP practices to continue to provide their vital services to patients, they are not involved in delivering these vaccination programmes. Please do not contact your GP practice about the covid booster or flu vaccinations as they will not be able to help.

Instead, people who are eligible will be invited to attend an appointment in one of our seven vaccination centres, located across Lanarkshire. These are:

- Airdrie Town Hall, Airdrie
- Ballerup Hall, East Kilbride
- Banqueting Hall, South Lanarkshire Council Headquarters, Hamilton
- Braidfute Retail Park, Lanark (with satellite clinics at Abington, Biggar and Stonehouse)
- Fernhill Community Centre, Rutherglen
- Link Community Centre, Cumbernauld
- Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell

Who is eligible for the flu vaccine?

- all those aged 50 years of age and over
- those over 6 months of age with a medical condition which puts them in an 'at risk' group such as asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, heart and lung diseases, or autoimmune disorders
- healthcare workers
- social care workers who deliver direct personal care
- unpaid and young carers
- pregnant women (including those with at risk conditions)
- children aged 2-5 years old (not yet at school)
- primary school children

- secondary school pupils
- NHS independent contractors including GP, dental and optometry practices, community pharmacists and laboratory staff working on COVID-19 testing
- teachers, nursery teachers and support staff in close contact with pupils (in both a local authority and independent setting)
- prison staff and support staff in close contact with the prison population (delivering direct detention services)
- those in the prison population

More information is available at www.nhsinform.scot/flu-vaccine

Who is eligible for the covid booster?

Vaccination will be offered to the same groups who were prioritised in winter and spring 2020/21. These are Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) cohorts 1 to 9:

- Patient-facing health and social care workers.
- Adults aged 70 years or over and adults aged 16 years and over who are on the highest risk list (previously known as the shielding list).
- All those aged 16 to 49 years with underlying health conditions, adult carers, unpaid and young carers, adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals and all adults over 50.

More information is available at www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/the-vaccines/coronavirus-covid-19-booster-vaccination

Who is eligible for a third dose of the covid vaccine?

People on the highest risk list who were severely immunosuppressed at the time of their last covid-19 vaccination will be offered a third primary dose instead of a booster. There needs to be at least 8 weeks between your second dose and your third dose.

People in this group will be contacted directly by letter, with appointments from 29 September.

How long do I need to wait before I receive my covid booster?

The JCVI has advised that there should be at least 6 months between your second dose of the covid-19 vaccine and the booster.

There does not need to be a gap between the flu and covid booster vaccinations. Where possible, these vaccines will be given at the same appointment. If given at the same appointment, they will be given into separate upper arms.

What vaccines will be used?

People will receive the flu vaccine that is most appropriate for their age group (under and over 65s).

Everyone eligible for a third dose and a booster will receive the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine – regardless of what vaccine they received previously. The Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine may be given as your booster dose if you have medical reasons that mean you cannot have Pfizer/BioNTech. This will be discussed at your appointment.

How and when will I be contacted about my appointment?

- Eligible health and social care staff can book their own appointments online from 21 September 2021.
- Adults aged 70 years or over and adults aged 16 years and over who are on the highest risk list (previously known as the shielding list), will start to receive letters from the end of September for appointments starting on 6 October.
- The details for other eligible groups will be publicised once they are confirmed. These groups include all those aged 16 to 49 years with underlying health conditions, adult carers, unpaid and young carers, adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals and all adults over 50.
- There may be an option to book online, this will be confirmed nationally.

Where will my appointment be?

Your appointment will be in the vaccination centre closest to you. Details of centres are listed above.

I don't want to travel to a clinic - can I have an appointment at my GP practice?

NHS Lanarkshire has worked closely with North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Councils to identify venues which are easily accessed by the majority of the population. We had to also balance the venues being returned to their normal use with the number of other criteria used to identify the sites.

To allow GPs to continue to provide vital services to their patients, they are not involved in this year's programme.

We are working with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) to provide subsidised direct bus access from Motherwell town centre to Ravenscraig Regional Sports Centre. Details will be available on our website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/covid-19-vaccine

I'm registered with a GP practice in NHS Lanarkshire, but I live in a different health board.

Where will my appointment be?

Appointments are issued for NHS board of residence. Which means you will get an appointment for the NHS board you live in. However, if it is more convenient you can reschedule your appointment to a clinic in NHS Lanarkshire (or any other health board). Details of how to reschedule will be on your appointment letter.

What if my appointment isn't suitable?

If you receive an appointment which isn't suitable, details on how to reschedule it will be on your appointment letter.

I've lost my appointment details – where can I get them?

Call the national helpline on 0800 030 8013.

I'm housebound – when / how will I get my vaccine?

NHS Lanarkshire has a dedicated team of staff to deliver vaccinations to people who are housebound. The team is collating the list and will contact everyone directly. You do not need to do anything in the meantime. These visits are planned to start week beginning 4 October.

A few people may receive a letter with an appointment at a clinic. If you receive an appointment, please call the number on the letter and let the helpline know that you require a home visit. They will pass you through to the local NHS Lanarkshire team to arrange a home visit.

I didn't get an invite for my flu / covid vaccine last year, what if I get missed this year? Can I check I'm on the list?

If you had a previous covid-19 or flu vaccination (even if you didn't receive a direct invite) then your details will be on the system. Please be patient, you will be contacted.

Are flu vaccines available at local community pharmacies?

Similar to GPs, community pharmacies are not involved in this year's covid booster and flu vaccination programmes. This allows pharmacies to continue to provide services to their communities, while not increasing the number of people attending their premises.

I have an allergy – can I receive the vaccines?

When you attend your appointment you will receive a clinical assessment, where you can discuss any allergies with staff. If staff feel you should receive an alternative vaccine, they will make these arrangements for you.

What is the timescale for vaccinations?

We plan to have all flu and covid booster vaccinations completed by mid-December 2021.

Are covid restrictions still in place at vaccination clinics?

Yes, vaccination clinics are the same as any other healthcare appointment. Please ensure you wear a face covering for the entire time you are inside the clinic (unless you are exempt) and follow the hand sanitising and physical distancing instructions from staff.

Information leaflets

A number of leaflets about the covid-19 vaccination are available on NHS inform.

These include leaflets for:

- Adults
- Young people
- Booster dose
- Third dose
- Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and rare blood clots
- Pregnancy advice
- What to expect after your vaccination
- Pfizer BioNTech vaccine
- Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine

For these leaflets and alternative formats, visit www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/leaflets-other-languages-and-accessible-formats/coronavirus-vaccine-leaflets

Additional information on the flu vaccination programme for children and young people

Flu vaccinations for primary and secondary school pupils

All primary and secondary school pupils are eligible for the flu vaccine. This will be delivered through school clinics.

If your child is not at school on the day of the flu vaccinations, they will receive their vaccine at a school mop-up clinic. If you have missed the deadline for returning consent forms, still return the form and your child will be included in the mop-up clinic.

If you have not received a consent form for your child's flu vaccine and you would like your child vaccinated, please contact the School Immunisation Team on 0300 303 3229.

Flu vaccinations for children not yet in school

Children aged 6 months to 2 years in an at-risk category and those aged 2 to 5 not in school are also eligible for the seasonal flu vaccination.

All children in these groups will receive a letter with an appointment for a local clinic, usually within health centres. If the appointment is not suitable, there will be details on the letter for how to reschedule.

These clinics will run until early December 2021 and appointment letters are being sent out in batches by age – starting with the youngest first.

Children aged 6 months to 2 years who have been identified as 'at-risk' will receive their flu vaccine as an injection. Children aged 2 to 5 not in school, will receive the flu vaccine as a nasal spray.

More information about the child flu vaccine is available at www.nhsinform.scot/childflu