

KNOW THE FACTS

COVID-19 VACCINE IN BLACK COUNTRY AND WEST BIRMINGHAM

MAY 2021

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Gertrude and Clifford Sulumba,
residents of the Black Country
and West Birmingham

What are vaccines?

Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent infectious diseases such as COVID-19. They prevent up to 3 million deaths worldwide every year and are one of the greatest discoveries since the early 1800s when the first vaccine for smallpox was developed.

They work by teaching your immune system how to create antibodies that protect you from diseases. It's much safer for your immune system to learn this through vaccination than by catching the disease itself.



COVID Vaccines safety



In the UK, there are currently three types of COVID-19 vaccines approved for use. All vaccines have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness as set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

They all require two doses in order to provide the best protection and have gone through three stages of clinical trials and safety checks. Although these vaccines have been developed quickly these safety requirements have been assured by the MHRA and the speed reflects how scientists have worked collaboratively and the wealth of funding available.

This is the exact same process that all other licensed medicines go through in order to ensure their safety.

New clinical research trials are started each time a new variant of coronavirus appears, and so far, these trials have shown that the current vaccines in the UK are effective in preventing death and reducing infection rates in the new variants.



The vaccine prevents you from getting seriously ill from COVID-19, but you can still pass the virus to someone else which is why you must still follow the local/national guidelines. You must also take up the offer of the second vaccine when offered.

The good news is that emerging evidence is now showing that not only will the vaccine prevent you from getting seriously ill with COVID-19, but the vaccine may help reduce the transmission of the virus.

Is the vaccine compatible with my religion?



The Catholic Church have said the vaccines are acceptable and can be morally justified.

The British Sikh community supports the vaccine.

The Hindu Council actively encourages members of the community to take the vaccine.

The Church of England says that all vaccinations can be used with a clear conscience.

The British Islamic Medical Association has considered all varieties of the vaccine and recommends that Muslims have the vaccine. The Muslim Council of Britain have confirmed that all the varieties of the vaccine are halal.

Jewish doctors in the UK have signed a letter to confirm that the vaccines do not contain any ingredients that are not kosher. Orthodox Jewish groups have also encouraged their members to get vaccinated.

The vaccines contain approximately 10 ingredients, they do not contain animal products or egg (so they are vegan and halal approved) or alcohol. Find out more from the [GREEN BOOK](#) or [MHRA](#)

How do I book my vaccine?

People who are most at risk of COVID-19 are being offered the vaccination first. **It is important to still get your vaccine even if you have had coronavirus,** as studies have shown that you may not have long-lasting immunity.

If you meet the current priority criteria, you can book your appointment online, or wait to be contacted by your GP.



To find out if it is your turn or to book, visit: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/

You may also receive a text from 'NHSvaccine' inviting you to book your vaccination appointments or a local NHS service such as your local GP may give you a call.

Attending your appointment

You'll need to bring:

- A face covering, unless you cannot wear one for a health or disability reason
- Your booking reference numbers if your appointment is at a vaccination centre
- Your NHS number
www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number/

What happens at the appointment?

- Your appointment should last for around 30 to 45 minutes
- You'll be asked some questions about your medical history. It's important to tell the staff giving you the vaccination if you have ever had a severe allergic reaction or you are pregnant.
- Currently you cannot choose which vaccine you will be given. The good news is that all the vaccines are safe and effective, and studies show that they work well in preventing serious illness.
- Having the vaccine will take a matter of seconds, and although everyone's pain threshold is different, you should only feel a small pinch/scratch. The COVID-19 vaccine is usually given as an injection into your upper arm.

It takes 12-14 days to build an immune response, and you will have even better protection after your second dose.

You should be able to resume activities if you feel well. If your arm is particularly sore, you may find heavy lifting difficult. If you feel unwell or very tired you should rest and avoid operating machinery or driving.



Side Effects

Most side effects are mild, only last 48hrs and not everyone gets them. This is similar to other medication.

Common side effects include:

- Having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection.
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- General aches, or mild flu like symptoms

Feeling feverish is not uncommon although a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19 or another infection. If your symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, call NHS 111. If you do seek advice from a doctor or nurse, make sure you tell them about your vaccination.

Key things to remember

- The COVID vaccines are safe and have gone through the same trials as other medicines and vaccines
- One dose offers you some protection, but your second dose will give you the most protection. It is important to attend your second appointment.
- If you have any concerns about the vaccine, please speak to your local GP who will be able to advise.
- Trials have shown that the current vaccines in the UK are effective in preventing death and reducing infection rates in the new variants.
- Despite emerging evidence showing that the vaccine may help reduce transmission of COVID-19, until we know more, you must still follow the local/national guidelines and practise good hygiene such as wearing a mask and washing your hands.
- Locate your NHS number before your appointment
www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number/



Latest updates

Blood Clotting and AstraZeneca

There have been reports of an extremely rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccination.

This condition can also occur naturally, and clotting problems are a common complication of the COVID-19 infection.



Although this condition remains extremely rare there appears to be an emerging increase in younger people shortly after the first dose of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine.

Therefore in line with JCVI guidance:

- Adults under the age of 40 will receive either the Pfizer or the Moderna vaccine where possible and only where no substantial delay or barrier in access to a vaccine would arise
- Healthy adults under the age of 40 who have already received their first dose of AstraZeneca without suffering this rare side effect, are still eligible to receive their second dose of AstraZeneca.

The UK vaccination programme has been very successful with more than 30 million people vaccinated and more than 6,000 lives already saved.

Risk of Blood Clots

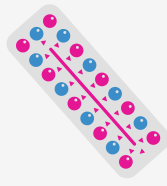
Astra Zeneca Vaccine



4 cases in
1,000,000 vaccines

0.0004%

Birth Control Pill



1200 cases in
1,000,000 women

0.12%

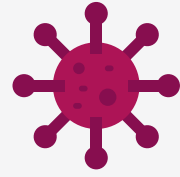
Smoking



1,763 cases in
1,000,000 smokers

0.18%

Covid Infection



165,000 cases in
1,000,000 infected

16.5%

Benefits and risks of the Astra Zeneca vaccination



50+

Benefit of vaccine



More than 80% reduction deaths, hospitalisation, intensive care



More than 95% reduction deaths



Risk of Vaccination

Uncommon – sore arm, feeling tired, headache, general aches, flu like symptoms

Extremely rare – clotting problems

Risk of Covid

Low – catching infection, passing on infection

Moderate – Long COVID

Very high – hospitalisation, intensive care admission, death

30-49

Benefit of vaccine



Between 60% and 70% reduction catching infection, passing on infection



More than 85% reduction catching and passing on infection



Risk of Vaccination

Common – sore arm, feeling tired, headache, general aches, flu like symptoms

Extremely rare – clotting problems

Risk of Covid

Low – hospitalisation, intensive care admission, death

Moderate – Long COVID

High – catching mild infection, passing on infection

18-29

Benefit of vaccine

Risk of Vaccination

Risk of Covid



Between 60% and 70% reduction catching infection, passing on infection

Very common – sore arm, feeling tired, headache, general aches, flu like symptoms

Very low - hospitalisation, intensive care admission, death



More than 85% reduction catching and passing on infection

Extremely rare – clotting problems

Moderate – Long COVID

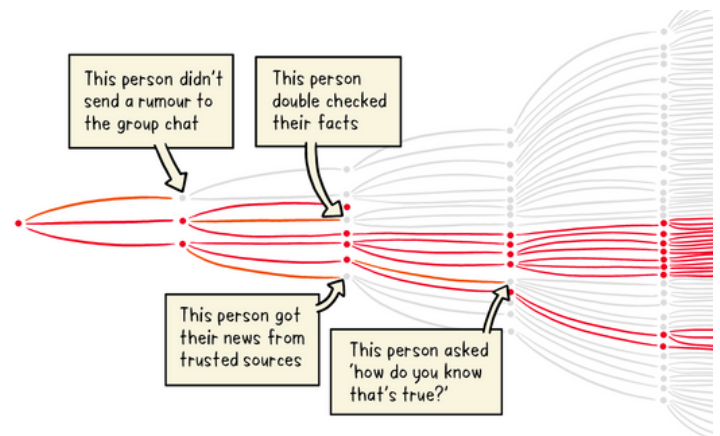


Very high – catching mild infection, passing on infection

Tackling misinformation

There are plenty of people who have concerns, questions and uncertainties around the vaccine. These may not be the same as the people who are not willing to take the vaccine, although both can stem from misinformation.

We all play a part in making sure that misinformation does not spread to others, and this handy graphic on the right demonstrates this. If you would like more information on the infodemic and misinformation, the World Health Organisation have produced an article on [Promoting healthy behaviours and mitigating the harm from misinformation](#).



What can you do?

Not everyone will feel confident about getting the vaccine. Here are some tried and tested techniques to support your conversations about the importance of getting vaccinated.

- **Understand the barriers:** When speaking to people, try and work out if their objections to the vaccine are practical. If so, try and identify what the potential practical barrier might be and if required, refer them to the community support available locally.
- **Challenge misinformation:** If you hear misinformation, in a calm manner, constructively challenge this. Make sure you actively listen to their concerns and ask the individual to refer to reliable sources of information such as the NHS, GOV.uk or their GP.
- **Remind them about safety:** All the vaccines have gone through a rigorous development and testing process. All research has gone through forensic evaluation from an independent regulator to ensure their safety.

Remember to be patient and understanding

NHS



— “ —
Having the vaccine will mean I can relax and I can look forward to the next vaccine dose.

I live on my own and whilst I still get about, this year has been difficult.

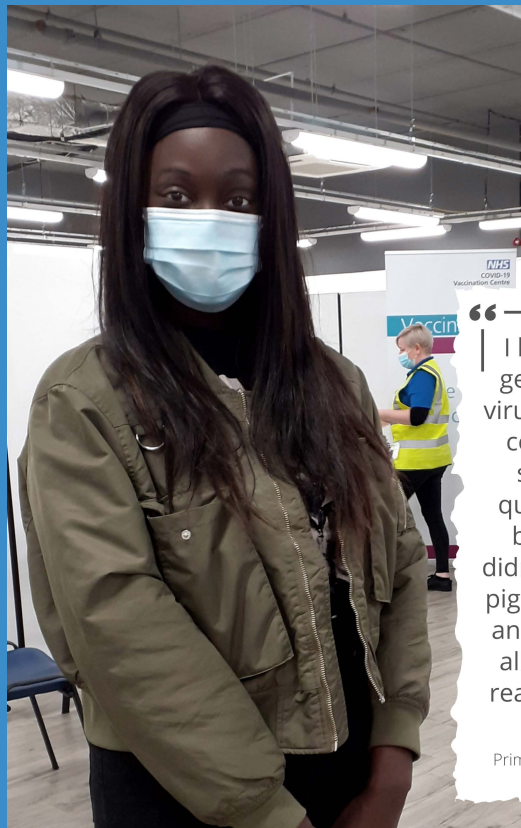
I'd encourage others to get the vaccine so we can all get back to normal.

Stanley Davies, 91

— ” —



NHS



“ —
I have lupus so I could get very ill if I catch the virus, but I still took some convincing. I was a bit sceptical about how quickly the vaccine had been approved and I didn't want to be a guinea pig. My mom, my cousins and my best friend have all had it now, and that reassured me enough to bite the bullet.

Primary school teacher Celina Howell

— ” —





For further information

You can find the latest information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine in the Black Country and West Birmingham on our [COVID Vaccine micro-site](#).

Social Media Channels

Follow useful pages on social media to keep up with the latest news and updates. This is also a great resource for lots of great content to re-share and amplify.

[NHS England](#)

[NHS Black Country and West Birmingham CCG](#)

[Healthier Futures ICS](#)

