

Frequently Asked Questions re COVID-19 immunisation for 12-15 year olds

24 September 2021

The questions below have been compiled to answer concerns that parents and children may have around their COVID-19 vaccination.

1. My child has food allergies can they have the covid vaccine?

Food allergies do not prevent your child from having the COVID-19 vaccine. If your child carries an EpiPen we would ask that they ensure they have it on them. The observation time may be extended to 30 minutes from 15 minutes if your child has had a previous anaphylaxis.

2. My child has a cold/ is not feeling well on the day of the vaccine- can they still be vaccinated?

As long as it is a minor illness, without a fever, then your child can still attend for the COVID-19 vaccine

3. My child does not want to have the vaccine at school- where else can we go?

While the majority of vaccinations will be delivered in a school setting, schools and parents will be advised of alternative clinics which may include local community clinics or dedicated sessions in mass vaccination centres. These will be bookable not walk-in.

4. Will there be any repercussions if we do not have my child vaccinated?

The decision to have the vaccination is one for you and your child. There will be no repercussions from a school or NHS perspective although access to travel etc may become restricted as per Government guidance.

5. How will my child feel post vaccine/ side effects?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. Your child may experience some mild symptoms which include a headache, painful muscles/joints and an ache at the injection site. The attached leaflet link advises you of possible post vaccine side effects. Your child will also be given an information leaflet following their vaccine. [COVID-19 vaccination: a guide for eligible children and young people aged 12 to 17 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-a-guide-for-eligible-children-and-young-people-aged-12-to-17)

6. Who should I contact if my child becomes unwell following the vaccine?

Contact 111 or your own General Practitioner (GP). It is acceptable for your child to have Calpol/Paracetamol as per normal dosage guidance. The leaflet given to your child will also provide advice.

7. How long will it take for the vaccine to work?

The vaccine will start to have an effect after approximately two weeks. The vaccine teaches your child's immune system to recognise and fight the virus that causes COVID -19. It does not give your child COVID-19.

8. Is there an alternative to Pfizer?

Currently Pfizer is the vaccine of choice although if your child were allergic to any of the Pfizer components then Moderna or AstraZenica could be considered however this would not be offered in the school clinics.

9. Can my child have two doses rather than one?

The current recommendation from the Joint Commission for Vaccination and Immunisation is that only one dose be given for children up to the age of 17 ¾

10. My child is on antibiotics - can they have the vaccine?

Antibiotics do not affect your child having the vaccine. If, however your child has a fever we would not recommend that they have the vaccine.

11. Are qualified staff delivering the vaccine?

All the staff administering the vaccine are registered nurses, doctors, midwives, paramedics or Allied Health Professionals. They have all previously worked in the Mass Vaccination Centres and have all been extensively trained in respect of COVID-19 vaccinations.

12. My child has had one dose already- can they have their second in school?

No, the current recommendation from the Joint Commission for Vaccination and Immunisation is that only one dose is sufficient in the 12-15 year old age group.

13. What is myocarditis?/ we have a family history of myocarditis - is it still safe to vaccinate?

Myocarditis is inflammation of the heart muscle and pericarditis is inflammation of the outer lining of the heart. This is a very rare complication of the vaccine however if you have a family history of this please mention it on the consent form and one of our doctors can provide further advice.

14. My child is prone to fainting? What system do you have in place to support this?

Our vaccinators are very experienced in managing children who faint or who are needle phobic. Please ensure your child shares this with vaccinator and precautions can be taken to ensure your child is vaccinated lying down etc.

15. My child is recovering from Covid- when can they safely be vaccinated?

Your child can not be vaccinated for 28 days following a positive PCR test.

16. Will my child have a positive lateral flow test after the vaccine?

The vaccine does not give your child COVID-19 so they will not have a positive lateral flow test or PCR test. If your child gets a positive test then it is likely that they do have COVID-19 so the Government advice in place at the time must be followed regarding self-isolation etc.¹

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