

COVID-19 vaccination

programme well underway

The local NHS is working hard to deliver the biggest immunisation campaign in history by vaccinating and protecting local residents against Covid-19. Here we answer some of your most commonly asked questions about the vaccine.

Who will get the vaccine first?

The NHS are vaccinating the most at-risk groups, including over-80s and care home residents and workers, first. These groups, otherwise known as a cohorts, are determined by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). The priority list, in order of vaccination, is as follows:

1. Care home residents and staff.
2. Those aged over 80 and frontline health and social care workers.
3. Those aged over 75.
4. Those aged over 70 and adults of all ages who are the most vulnerable – those who have been shielding, including some cancer patients and those with lung and heart conditions.

How can I book an appointment?

If you are registered with a local GP, you will be contacted when it is your turn to book an appointment. Please do not call the hospitals or GP practices, please wait to be invited.

If you are not registered with a local GP, we would recommend you do so as soon as possible to ensure you get invited to book an appointment.

Do I have to travel to a national vaccination centre if invited?

Vaccination centres, such as the site in Stevenage, are an important additional option for people who are eligible. But we want to be clear that this is just another option. If you can't travel or you would rather wait for an appointment closer to home, you can choose to do that, and your local GP-led service will be in touch soon to offer an alternative.

How effective is the vaccine?

The MHRA have said these vaccines are highly effective, but to get full protection people need to come back for the second dose – this is really important.

To ensure as many people are vaccinated as quickly as possible, the Department for Health and Social Care now advise that the second dose of both the OxfordAstraZeneca and the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine should be scheduled up to 12 weeks apart.

How long does it take to work?

It may take a week or two for your body to build up some protection from the first dose of vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection. This is why it's important to keep following social distancing and other guidance, even if you've been vaccinated.

Can I go back to normal life and spend time with family and friends once I've had the vaccine?

It is vital that we all continue to follow the latest Government guidance even after having the vaccination. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

We also don't yet know if the vaccination stops you from passing on Covid-19 from one person to another. Whilst you may have protection, that might not be the case for all of your family and friends.

How can I find out more?

You can find out more about the Covid-19 vaccination programme being rolled out across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including local sites, here: www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk