

The  
**COVID-19**  
vaccine

# What to expect after the COVID-19 vaccine

This leaflet tells you what to expect after the COVID-19 vaccine that you were given today.

If you have any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit **[nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](https://nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine)** or call **0800 030 8013** (available 8am–8pm, 7 days a week).

This information is a guide only. Always get medical advice from **NHS24** free on **111** if you're worried about your health.

For more information on potential side effects and vaccine ingredients, visit **[nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](https://nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine)** for links to the patient information leaflets, or call **0800 030 8013**.

# You will be advised when to return for your second dose

The COVID-19 vaccine will be given in two doses. You will be advised when to return for your second dose. The second dose can be given between 3 and 12 weeks after the first dose. COVID-19 vaccination offers good protection within two to three weeks of the first dose. The second dose completes the course and is likely to be important for longer-term protection. It is important to get both doses to protect yourself against COVID-19.

**Don't forget your second dose.**



2nd dose due:

\_\_/\_\_/\_\_

# Common side effects

Some people may experience side effects after the vaccine. These are usually mild and may include:

- tenderness, swelling and/or redness at the injection site
- headache, muscle ache
- feeling tired
- fever (temperature above 37.8°C).

A less common side effect is swelling of the glands. This starts a few days after the vaccine and may last for up to two weeks. This is to be expected and is a sign of the immune system responding to the vaccine.

If you feel uncomfortable, take paracetamol. Make sure you take paracetamol as directed on the label or leaflet.

These common side effects are much less serious than developing COVID-19 or complications associated with COVID-19, and they usually go away within a few days.

# Fever after the vaccine

It's quite common to develop a fever after a vaccination. This normally happens within 48 hours of the vaccination and usually goes away within 48 hours.

You do not need to self-isolate or book a COVID-19 test unless you have other COVID-19 symptoms or:

- you have been told by NHS Test and Protect, or your occupational health team, that you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
- you live with someone who has recently tested positive for COVID-19
- you live with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19.

If the fever starts more than 48 hours after the vaccination or lasts longer than 48 hours, you should self-isolate and book a COVID-19 test. This can be done at **[nhsinform.scot/testing](https://nhsinform.scot/testing)**

# Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realise you have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment. For more information on COVID-19, visit **[nhsinform.scot/covid19](https://nhsinform.scot/covid19)**

## Reporting side effects

As with all vaccines, you can report suspected side effects through the Yellow Card Scheme. You can report side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines online at:



**[coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk](https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk)**

Information correct at time of publication.

Please visit

**[nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](https://nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine)**

for the most up-to-date information.

# Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

It is not known whether having the vaccine stops you spreading the virus to others so it's important that we all continue to follow the latest government advice.

After you get the vaccine, it's still important to follow **FACTS**:



**FACE  
COVERINGS**



**AVOID  
CROWDS**



**CLEAN  
HANDS**



**TWO  
METRES**



**SELF-  
ISOLATE**

**Stopping the spread starts with all of us.**

**Thank you for protecting yourself,  
others and the NHS.**



Translations



Easy read



BSL



Audio



Large print



Braille

For more information, including other formats and translation support:



**[nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](https://nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine)**



**0800 030 8013**



**[phs.otherformats@phs.scot](mailto:phs.otherformats@phs.scot)**

Published by Public Health Scotland  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh EH12 9EB  
© Public Health Scotland 2021  
All rights reserved.

Established on 1 April 2020,  
Public Health Scotland is Scotland's  
national public agency for  
improving and protecting the health  
and wellbeing of Scotland's people.

Corporate member of  
Plain English Campaign  
Committed to clearer  
communication

**489**

