

4 June 2021

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Fact check: COVID-19 vaccinations



You've probably read a lot of things about the coronavirus online, but not everything you have seen is true.

It is important to protect yourself and your loved ones from false information about the coronavirus and the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Take a look at this [‘fact check’](#) produced by the Sussex Health and Care Partnership which tackles some of the biggest concerns and inaccuracies out there, and sets the record straight with the facts and trusted information.

Fact: vaccinations save lives

- Vaccination is one of the most important things we can do to protect ourselves from ill health. Vaccines prevent up to 3 million deaths worldwide every year. Since they were introduced in the UK, diseases like smallpox, polio and tetanus that used to kill or disable millions of people are either gone or seen very rarely.

Fact: the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and have been thoroughly tested

- The COVID-19 vaccines have gone through the same rigorous safety tests as over 600 clinical trials that take place every year. They have been tested with adults of all ages, people with a range of health conditions from different ethnic backgrounds.

Fact: you will still need to social distance after you've had your COVID-19 vaccination

- Even if you've had the COVID-19 vaccine, you must follow the rules and stay at home to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Fact: You will never be asked to pay for a COVID-19 vaccination

- The COVID-19 vaccination is ONLY available from the NHS and it is free - you will never be asked to pay for it or give your bank details.

Fact: There are no animal products in the COVID-19 vaccines

- All ingredients are published in the healthcare information on the MHRA's website.
 - [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine information](#)
 - [Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine information](#)
 - The UK vaccine rollout is endorsed by the [British Islamic Medical Association](#), [Hindu Council UK](#), and the [Board of Deputies of British Jews](#).

Fact: you do not need an NHS number to get your vaccination

- While the NHS will contact people based on their GP records, this doesn't mean that people that don't have an NHS number or aren't registered with a GP won't be able to get vaccinated.
- It does help to be registered with a GP to help the NHS check for any reasons that someone might not be able to have a vaccine, and ensure there is a record of vaccination. [Information on registering with a GP is available](#).
- Although we would recommend that everyone is registered with a GP practice, if for any reason you do not wish to do so, our [Vaccine Enquiries Team](#) can assist you with getting your vaccine.

Fact: the COVID-19 vaccines will not change your DNA

- The COVID-19 vaccines cannot change your DNA. There is no evidence to suggest that your individual genetic material will undergo an alteration after getting the vaccine.

Fact: There is no material of foetal origin in the COVID-19 vaccines

- All ingredients are published in healthcare information on the MHRA's website.
 - [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine information](#)
 - [Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine information](#)

Fact: refugees and asylum seekers will be able to get the vaccine

- There will be no charges for coronavirus testing, treatment and vaccination.
- Overseas visitors to England, including anyone living in the UK without permission, will not be charged for:
 - testing for COVID-19 (even if the test shows they do not have COVID-19);
 - treatment for COVID-19, including for a related problem called multisystem inflammatory syndrome that affects some children;
 - vaccination against COVID-19.
- No immigration checks are needed for overseas visitors if they are only tested, treated or vaccinated for COVID-19.

Fact: you can have the vaccine during Ramadan / the vaccine will not invalidate fasting

- The [British Islamic Medical Association](#) have issued specific advice urging [Muslims observing Ramadan not to delay getting the vaccine](#), drawing on analysis from Islamic scholars which says that injections for non-nutritional purposes do not invalidate the fast.

Fact: COVID-19 vaccinations will not be made mandatory

- The government has consulted on making it a condition of employment for care workers and other NHS staff to have the vaccine.

Fact: the vaccines do not affect fertility

- There is no evidence that the vaccine affects fertility. The Royal College of Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Midwives issued a statement on 19 January 2021, saying: “There is no evidence to suggest that Covid-19 vaccines will affect fertility. Claims of any effect of Covid-19 vaccination on fertility are speculative and not supported by any data.”
- [The British Society of Immunology](#) has produced a special [COVID-19 vaccine Q&A about fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding with Dr Viki Male](#).

Find out more

- If you're not sure about an article, story or advice that you've seen or been given, there are ways to check it out. The government's [SHARE checklist](#) helps spot misleading news or content. Independent fact-checking organisations such as [Full Fact](#) also challenge and investigate false or misleading claims.
- [Covid Vax Facts](#) details answers from expert, independent doctors and scientists about the most common concerns raised by the public. You can read the answers to [key questions](#) currently in the news or pose your own questions for a response.
- You can also get answers to frequently asked questions [here](#) and check some common myths about the vaccine [here](#).

More information from the British Society of Immunology



Healthwatch is working with [Latest TV](#) and we will be taking part in an upcoming programme with [The British Society of Immunology](#).

We have shared some of your questions concerning vaccine hesitancy with them. The programme should air in April / May time, but we will share any information ahead of this as we receive it.

The British Society of Immunology has shared with us some incredibly useful resources which should help answer many of your questions and queries. Please do take time to read the guides or watch the helpful and clear videos which involve medical experts answering your questions.

[A guide to vaccinations for COVID-19](#) addressing common questions

[What's in a vaccine](#) an infographic and blog explaining in detail the ingredients found in vaccines.

[Types of vaccines for COVID-19](#) - infographics on how the different types of vaccine work.

[COVID-19 vaccine Q&A](#) videos.

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 7 with Dr Matt Taylor from The University of Edinburgh, 21 May 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 6 with Dr Louisa James from Queen Mary University of London, 31 March 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 5 with Dr Ane Ogbe from the University of Oxford, 5 March 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 4 with Dr Donald Palmer from the Royal Veterinary College, 12 February 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 3 with Dr Nigel Francis from Swansea University, 22 January 2021

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 2 with Prof Sheena Cruickshank from the University of Manchester, 11 December 2020

- COVID-19 vaccine Q&A part 1 with Dr Megan MacLeod from the University of Glasgow, 30 October 2020