



UK Health
Security
Agency

COVID-19 spring vaccine

Briefing pack for UKHSA stakeholders



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Introduction

This briefing pack provides information on the COVID-19 spring vaccination programme (formerly known as the spring booster) for 2024.

It aims to support stakeholders to explain and promote the vaccination programme to eligible groups. It contains background information, statistics, key messages, suggested social media copy, social media assets and links to useful information.

For further information about our national campaign and communications please contact: externalaffairs@ukhsa.gov.uk

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COVID-19 spring vaccination programme

The COVID-19 spring vaccination programme protects those who are at the highest risk of serious disease, hospitalisations and deaths.

Eligibility for the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign is similar to the spring 2022 and spring 2023 campaigns – targeted towards the most vulnerable in the population at higher risk of severe COVID-19. Older persons, residents in care homes for older adults, and those who are immunosuppressed continue to be at highest risk of severe COVID-19, but this year the criteria for the immunosuppressed group has lowered include those 6 months and over.

People will be offered an appointment between April and June, with those at highest risk being called in first. You can get your seasonal COVID-19 vaccine three months after your last COVID-19 vaccine. If you are turning 75 years of age between April and June, you do not have to wait until your birthday, you can attend when you are called for vaccination.

If eligible, you can get protection from a spring COVID-19 vaccination even if you have not taken up a COVID-19 vaccine offer in the past. Most people do not need extra vaccinations to make up for any they have missed, but your doctor may advise a further dose if you have a severely weakened immune system.

How stakeholders can help us increase vaccine uptake

There are a variety of ways that you might be able to help us communicate the importance of eligible people taking up the offer of a vaccine this spring.

- **Share information about the campaign with your networks** – we have a wide variety of resources available including leaflets and posters (many available in accessible and translated materials), social media assets and suggested copy for cascade to your audiences.
- **Contact us if you would like to do something more bespoke** – if you are looking to do something special to promote the vaccine programme on your social media channels or website and need some creative input or suggested text for a blog/article, please email us.
- **Get in touch about using our spokespeople** – if you are planning a webinar or briefing for your audiences and would like one of our senior colleagues to speak about the spring programme or campaign, please get in touch.
- **Help us find case studies** – We are looking for case studies of people (or their children) hospitalised by COVID-19 and willing to share their experiences to encourage others to take up the vaccine offer. These could be for use in the press or on social media.

To discuss any of the above or any other suggestions you may have, please email externalaffairs@ukhsa.gov.uk.

Eligibility for COVID-19 spring vaccine

Similar to previous spring and autumn campaigns, the [JCVI's advice](#) is to offer the vaccine to those at high risk of serious disease and who are therefore most likely to benefit from vaccination.

Specifically, JCVI advises the following groups to be offered a free COVID-19 vaccine this spring:

- Adults aged 75 years and over (this includes those who turn 75 years old by 30 June 2024).ⁱ
- Residents in care homes for older adults (people who are admitted to an older adult care home or become immunosuppressed by 30 June are also eligible).ⁱⁱ
- Individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed as defined by [the Green Book](#), this includes:
 - Individuals with primary or acquired immunodeficiency states at the time of vaccination due to certain conditions

- Individuals on immunosuppressive or immunomodulating therapy at the time of vaccination
- Individuals with chronic immune-mediated inflammatory disease who were receiving or had received immunosuppressive therapy prior to vaccination
- Individuals who had received high dose steroids for any reason in the month before vaccination

For the full criteria please refer to [the Green Book](#). The criteria for additional doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in those aged 12 years and above can be found in Box 1, while criteria for additional doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in children aged 6 months to 11 years can be found in Box 2.

Eligible individuals will be given a vaccine made by Pfizer or Moderna and approved in the UK.

These vaccines have been updated since the original vaccines and target a different COVID-19 variant. These updated vaccines boost protection well and give slightly higher levels of antibody against the more recent strains of COVID-19 (Omicron).

The [advice was accepted](#) by Minister Caulfield 7 February.

The [National Booking System](#) for eligible cohorts will open on 15 April 2024 with vaccinations commencing from 22 April 2024.

If you know you are eligible you do not have to wait to be invited, you can book on the National Booking System once it is open.

Residents in older adult care homes and eligible housebound individuals will start to receive their vaccinations from Monday 15 April.

You will be invited to have your booster around 6 months after your last dose, but you can have it as soon as 3 months.

The vaccination programme will end on 30 June 2024.

Key messages

- The COVID-19 spring programme will continue to focus on those at greatest risk of getting seriously ill, who will benefit the most from a further vaccine dose.
- It is important that everyone who is eligible takes up the offer this spring. Current vaccines provide good protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and can protect those most vulnerable from death which includes:
 - Adults aged 75 years and over (this includes those who turn 75 years old by 30 June 2024).ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Residents in care homes for older adults (people who are admitted to an older adult care home or become immunosuppressed by 30 June are also eligible).^{iv}

- Individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed as defined by [the Green Book](#), this includes:
 - Individuals with primary or acquired immunodeficiency states at the time of vaccination due to certain conditions
 - Individuals on immunosuppressive or immunomodulating therapy at the time of vaccination
 - Individuals with chronic immune-mediated inflammatory disease who were receiving or had received immunosuppressive therapy prior to vaccination
 - Individuals who had received high dose steroids for any reason in the month before vaccination
- The advice on eligibility is similar to [last spring](#), but with the age of individuals who are immunosuppressed now eligible from aged 6 months and over – compared with 5 years and over in 2023. This follows [updated advice](#) last April on COVID-19 vaccination of children aged 6 months to 4 years in a clinical risk group.
- You can check your eligibility and book online at nhs.uk/get-vaccine. You do not need to be invited to book your COVID spring vaccine.

Statistics

- UKHSA surveillance data on last spring's programme showed that those who received a vaccine were around 50% less likely to be admitted to hospital with COVID-19 from two weeks following vaccination, compared to those who did not receive one.^v
- Vaccine uptake for last year's spring programme for those aged 75 years and over was 67.5%.^{vi}



Communication assets




We have produced some social media assets to support the COVID-19 spring vaccines programme, encouraging those who are currently eligible for vaccination to come forward.




These resources are available on [Google Drive](#).




NHS England have also created a variety of communications assets to help encourage those eligible to book a spring COVID-19 vaccination. This includes posters, digital screens, social media assets, business cards, videos and translated assets. You can download these to use with your networks at the [Campaign Resource Centre](#).



Social media assets and copy


Target audience	Social media asset	Suggested Copy	Suggested Alt Text
<p>All eligible groups</p>	 <p><u>(Download here)</u></p>	<p>Top up your protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>Getting your COVID-19 vaccine means your symptoms will be milder & you'll recover faster if you catch COVID-19 this spring. 🦠</p> <p>More info: <u>nhs.uk/get-vaccine</u></p>	<p>Graphic stating the criteria for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>The criteria includes adults 75 years and over, people aged 6 months to 74 years with a weakened immune system, and residents in care homes.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
	 <p><u>(Watch and download here)</u></p>	<p>Are you eligible to top up your protection this spring? Watch to find out.</p> <p>Getting your COVID-19 vaccine means your symptoms will be milder & you'll recover faster if you catch COVID-19 this spring. 🦠</p> <p>More info: <u>nhs.uk/get-vaccine</u></p>	

<p>Adults aged over 75</p>	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>If you're 75 and over, top up your protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>Getting the COVID-19 vaccine means milder symptoms and a quicker recovery if you catch the virus. 🦠</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that adults 75 years and over are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
<p>Care home residents</p>	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Residents in care homes for older adults can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>Getting the COVID-19 vaccine this spring means milder symptoms and a faster recovery if you catch COVID-19. 🦠</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that residents in care homes are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
<p>Immuno-suppressed groups</p>	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>If you're immunosuppressed you might be eligible for the spring COVID-19 vaccine! ⚡</p> <p>Find out if you're eligible and book here: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those who are immunosuppressed might be eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>

<p>Specific Immuno-suppressed groups</p> <p>Please only use these assets if you're targeting that specific audience. If not please use the wider assets.</p>	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Children who are about to receive planned immunosuppressive therapy can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines can help reduce the risk of serious illness if someone has an underlying health condition. 📍</p>	<p>Graphic stating that children who are about to receive planned immunosuppressive therapy are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>

		<p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those with genetic disorders affecting the immune system can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those with genetic disorders affecting the immune system are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those with a history of haematological malignancy can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those with with a history of haematological malignancy including leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
		<p>Those living with HIV can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those living with HIV are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>

	<p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those who are receiving immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 🖱️</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those who are receiving immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those who require long-term treatment for immunosuppression can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 🖱️</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that those who require long-term treatment for immunosuppression are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>

	 <p>(Download here)</p>	<p>Those being treated with systemic steroids for more than a month can top up their protection this spring! ⚡</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines reduce your risk of serious illness if you have an underlying health condition. 📍</p> <p>Book now: nhs.uk/get-vaccine</p>	<p>Graphic stating that being treated with systemic steroids for more than a month are eligible for the COVID-19 spring vaccine.</p> <p>Please wait to be contacted by the NHS if you're eligible.</p>
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Blogs

We have published a series of public-facing blogs providing further information about COVID-19.

- **UKHSA blog:** (To be added when published)

Press releases

- **UKHSA:** [JCVI advises on eligible groups for 2024 spring COVID-19 vaccine](#)

COVID-19 resources

Free paper copies of many COVID-19 resources are available to order for free (please register/login using your work email address) at www.healthpublications.gov.uk or call 0300 123 1002 to place orders. You can find all COVID-19 resources by clicking 'View Campaigns' and then 'COVID-19' from the drop down menu at the top of the page.

A number of our key public-facing publications are available in community languages including: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Brazilian Portuguese, Bulgarian, Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Estonian, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Romany, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Yiddish and Yoruba.

Many are also available in braille, British sign language video, audio and large print versions.

For the COVID spring vaccine programme, there is new material available for order and download:

- [COVID-19 Vaccination Spring 2024 leaflet](#)
- [A guide to the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign- translations](#)
- [Guide to the COVID-19 Spring 2024 campaign - English audio](#)

Useful links

- [Green Book: COVID-19 chapter](#)
- [COVID-19 variants identified in the UK – latest updates](#)
- [Monitoring reports of the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination](#)
- [UKHSA data dashboard](#)
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All resources can be found here:

- [COVID-19 vaccination: spring 2024 campaign resources](#)
- [COVID-19 system letter](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination programme](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination training slide set](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination e-learning programme](#)

Q&A

Who is eligible for COVID-19 vaccination?

JCVI advises the following groups to be offered a free COVID-19 vaccine this spring:

- Adults aged 75 years and over (this includes those who turn 75 years old by 30 June 2024).^{vii}
- Residents in care homes for older adults (people who are admitted to an older adult care home or become immunosuppressed by 30 June are also eligible).^{viii}
- Individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed, this includes:
 - Individuals with primary or acquired immunodeficiency states at the time of vaccination due to certain conditions
 - Individuals on immunosuppressive or immunomodulating therapy at the time of vaccination
 - Individuals with chronic immune-mediated inflammatory disease who were receiving or had received immunosuppressive therapy prior to vaccination
 - Individuals who had received high dose steroids for any reason in the month before vaccination

For the full criteria please refer to [the Green Book](#). The criteria for additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine in those aged 12 years and above can be found in Box 1, while criteria

for additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine in children aged 6 months to 11 years can be found in Box 2.

Our future blog on criteria should also help you further understand who is eligible for the spring COVID-19 vaccine.

Why does the eligibility criteria differ from the autumn vaccination campaign?

The primary aim of the COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to be the prevention of severe disease (hospitalisation and mortality) arising from COVID-19. Eligibility for the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign is the same as it was for the spring 2022 and spring 2023 campaigns.

Infection with the Omicron variant is far less serious than earlier strains, including for pregnant women. So far, only the autumn vaccine campaigns have covered a larger group of people (including pregnant women) as over winter, the threat of COVID-19 is at its greatest.

Older persons (75+), residents in care homes for older adults, and those who are immunosuppressed continue to be at highest risk of severe COVID-19. To protect the most vulnerable in the population against becoming seriously unwell with COVID-19, JCVI's view is that the provision of a spring vaccination dose for these people is a proportionate response this year.

Are household contacts of eligible people eligible for the vaccine as well?

As with the Spring COVID-19 vaccine campaign in both 2022 and 2023, household contacts are not eligible.

Infection with the Omicron variant is far less likely to lead to serious complications than earlier strains, and the current vaccines offer modest, short-term protection against mild disease. This means that the vaccines cannot help much to reduce the spread of infection.

For the spring 2024 vaccine, JCVI is prioritising groups most vulnerable to serious outcomes from COVID-19 including those aged 75 or over, living in care homes, and those who are immunosuppressed. These individuals are at highest risk of severe COVID-19, and as time passes, their protection derived from vaccination in autumn 2023 will wane substantially before autumn 2024.

Can you get a COVID-19 vaccine privately?

No, the COVID-19 vaccine is not currently available to buy privately in the UK. The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to target those at higher risk of serious illness in line with JCVI advice, as those groups are most likely to benefit from vaccination at this time.

I've heard that the COVID-19 vaccine given may change?

All COVID-19 vaccinations offered by the NHS have been advised for use this spring by the experts in the Joint Committee for Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI). The vaccines have all been tested in line with rigorous standards and have been found to give good protection against the virus.

The vaccine programme enables those at highest risk to gain further protection against COVID-19 this spring. Everyone eligible will be offered one dose and individuals should take it up as early as possible, irrespective of which vaccine is offered.

Can I get my primary course of vaccines during this campaign?

If eligible, you can get protection from a spring COVID-19 vaccination even if you have not taken up a COVID-19 vaccine offer in the past. Most people do not need extra vaccinations to make up for any they have missed, but your doctor may advise a further dose if you have a severely weakened immune system.

Can I choose which vaccine I have?

COVID-19 vaccines authorised for use by the NHS are effective, provide a strong vaccine response and have good safety record. They have all met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness. Alternatives will be made available where clinically appropriate.

Please accept the vaccination that is offered to you as soon as you are able to – you will be offered the right vaccine for you at the right time.

Will I need the same type of COVID-19 vaccine as I had before?

No, as we are offering slightly different vaccines to ones you have previously been offered. All COVID-19 vaccines authorised for use by the NHS are effective.

Can you still catch COVID-19 after having the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine will reduce the chance of you becoming severely unwell. It may take a few days for your body to build up some extra protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but any infection should be less severe.

Who cannot take up the offer of a spring vaccine?

There are very few eligible people who should not have a dose this spring. If you have had a severe reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine you should discuss this with your doctor.

Endnotes

COVID-19 spring vaccine: Briefing pack for UKHSA stakeholders

- i [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)
- ii [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)
- iii [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)
- iv [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)
- v [JCVI advises on eligible groups for 2024 spring COVID-19 vaccine - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- vi [JCVI advises on eligible groups for 2024 spring COVID-19 vaccine - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- vii [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)
- viii [NHS England » Preparing for a successful spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign](#)

About the UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

[UKHSA](#) is an executive agency, sponsored by the [Department of Health and Social Care](#).

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency

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