

# Protect yourself and the people you care for

Updated 10 January 2022

This winter we are facing a bad flu season alongside rising numbers of COVID-19 infections. If you fall ill with both flu and Covid - or “Flurona” as you may have heard it called in the press - you are more likely to seriously ill. That is why getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 is so important.

Vaccines are the best protection from these deadly viruses for you and for those you care for. See below for information on how to book yours.



Here are some common questions and concerns about the flu and COVID-19 vaccines. Find the answers to these on the following pages.

*How can I book the flu vaccine?*

*How can I book the COVID-19 vaccine or booster?*

*Why do I need vaccinating against COVID-19 AND flu?*

*4 jabs is a lot!*

*Do I even need a flu jab and COVID booster after having both my vaccines?*

*Flu isn't a big deal compared with COVID-19.*

*I'm not in a vulnerable group so I don't need the flu vaccine.*

*I'm concerned about the effects of the COVID-19 vaccine on my fertility and baby's health.*

*Lots of people I know don't trust the vaccines.*

*I'm concerned about the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine.*

## How can I book the flu vaccine?

The local NHS is seeing high demand for the flu vaccine this year and the supply of flu vaccine stocks in GP surgeries and community pharmacies fluctuates week by week.

There is enough flu vaccine for everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated, and appointments to get the flu jab are available to book.

If you've tried previously and not been able to get an appointment, please do keep trying as more appointments will become available as vaccine supplies are restocked.

You can book a flu vaccination by either:

- Contacting your GP practice and booking an appointment at one of their scheduled flu clinics
- Attending a local community pharmacy that offers flu vaccinations.

## [Click here to find a local pharmacy that offers the NHS flu vaccine](#)

Please remember to bring your care worker ID/ payslip for proof of employment.

## How can I book the COVID-19 vaccine or booster?

You can book an appointment for a first, second or booster vaccination by:

- [NHS national booking service online at nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](https://nhs.uk/covid-vaccination)
- Telephone 119 (free), between 7am and 11pm seven days a week

Or you can attend an available walk-in site.

A list of sites can be found at <https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/WalkIn/>. These sites are updated regularly so please keep checking back for more locations.

If you are 18+ you are eligible to receive a booster vaccine three months after your second dose.

Click [here](#) for the latest guidance on the Covid booster programme.

Please do not contact your GP practice to request a Covid vaccination.

## Is it safe for my booster vaccine to be different than my first and second dose?

Most people will be offered a booster dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine or Moderna vaccine.

This means your booster dose may be different from the vaccines you had for your 1st and 2nd doses. **There is no difference in the safety or effectiveness of the booster if it is a different vaccine than the one you had for your first or second doses.**

Some people may be offered a booster dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine if they cannot have the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.



## **Why do I need vaccinating against COVID-19 AND Flu? 4 jabs is a lot!**

Flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses, so a vaccination for one will not protect you against the other. It is important to have both your flu vaccine and to get your COVID-19 vaccine and booster.

Whilst there is a great deal of focus currently on COVID-19, do not underestimate how dangerous the flu virus is.

Flu can cause severe illness and even death among vulnerable groups. It can lead to complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia. In an average year over 11,000 people in England die from flu.

And if you get flu and COVID-19 at the same time, you're more likely to become seriously ill and require hospitalisation.

Even if you don't think you are high risk of getting ill yourself, you can easily catch and spread these viruses to others who are at risk.

While 4 jabs may feel like a lot, it's important to have the right number of jabs at the right time to provide the protection you need from these viruses.

The first 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are essential in providing protection from the virus. The 3rd Covid booster is being offered now to prolong the protection you get from the vaccine

to help prevent a more serious outbreak of Covid this winter.

New flu vaccines are produced every year to protect against the strains most likely to be in circulation, which is why you need to get vaccinated every year.

## **Do I even need a flu jab and COVID booster after having both my vaccines?**

Even if you've had both your first and second doses of the Covid-19 vaccine, the booster is important as it improves the protection from your first two doses. This is important to protect you, your colleagues, and the people you care for.

This winter we are expecting a bad flu season alongside rising cases of COVID-19 due to the Omicron variant. This is because fewer people will have built up natural immunity to flu during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You can have flu and Covid and be asymptomatic, which means you show no symptoms. But you could still pass either virus to colleagues and those you care for, so it's important to get your flu jab and Covid booster.

## **Flu isn't a big deal compared with COVID-19.**

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has been deadly, it's important not to underestimate how dangerous the flu virus is.

Flu can cause severe illness and even death among vulnerable groups, as well as complications like bronchitis and pneumonia.

In an average year over 11,000 people in England die from flu, and many more are hospitalised.

**Watch this moving video about 2 nurses from the Norwich area talking about their 29-year old brother's experience with flu: [The impact of flu: Ashley's story - YouTube](#)**



## *I'm not in a vulnerable group so I don't need the flu vaccine.*

Even if you are fit and healthy you can still catch the flu virus and pass it on to others who are vulnerable, and your colleagues.

Flu vaccination for all staff that are directly working with people who are clinically vulnerable to flu is especially important.

Flu can cause lots of sickness among staff groups, which impacts on the health and wellbeing of those who are sick, and also the colleagues and residents that they work with.

This year more than ever it's clear: getting vaccinated helps to protect you, your family, those you care for, and your colleagues.

## *I'm concerned about the effects of the winter vaccines on my fertility and /or my baby's health.*

If you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, it's natural to be cautious about what you put into your body.

Catching COVID-19 or Flu during pregnancy can cause serious complications for mum and baby, especially in the last few months of pregnancy.

The vaccines for both diseases are safe in pregnancy and offer pregnant women the best protection against becoming seriously ill.

### **There is no evidence that vaccines for either illness impact on fertility.**

Find out more about vaccines and pregnancy / fertility at [www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/](http://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/)

The DHSC has published this moving video, which highlights the seriousness of having Covid during pregnancy: [Unvaccinated mothers urge pregnant women to get jabbed.](#)

## *Lots of people I know don't trust the vaccines.*

Most of us talk to other people about the vaccines. However, when you are making decisions about health and medicines, always use information from reliable sources.

The best health advice in England is on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/why-vaccination-is-safe-and-important/>

**Still not sure about being vaccinated?**

**Get to know your #VAXFACTS and then get jabbed.**

Norfolk and Waveney CCG has launched a #VAXFACTS campaign to help dispel myths and layout the science so people can make a well-informed decision about their own health. [Click here to read about some of the common misconceptions.](#)

## *I'm concerned about the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine.*

The Covid-19 vaccines have been tested on tens of thousands of people and assessed by experts.

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects, but not everyone gets them. Most side effects are mild and don't last long, including:

- a sore arm where the needle went in
- feeling tired
- a headache
- feeling achy

You can take painkillers, such as paracetamol, to prevent and relieve any symptoms. If your symptoms get worse or you are worried, visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or call 111.

Serious side effects are very rare.

