

Flu and COVID-19 vaccines when you are pregnant

Winter vaccines



Easy read







In this booklet, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

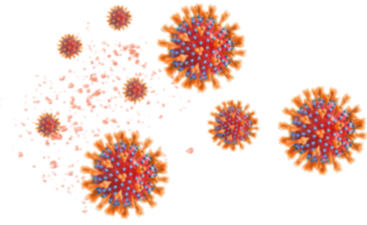


You might need to ask someone to help you read this booklet.

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Flu and COVID-19



Flu and COVID-19 are **viruses** that spread easily and can be very serious.

Viruses are germs that makes you ill.



The flu and COVID-19 viruses spread

- through the air when people cough or sneeze
- or when you touch places where the virus has landed then touch your eyes, nose or mouth.



Even healthy people can get seriously ill from catching the flu.

The symptoms of Flu and COVID-19

Symptoms is the word we use to describe how an illness makes people feel.

Flu and COVID-19 symptoms include



- a cough



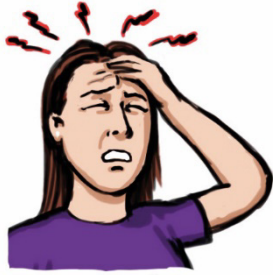
- sneezing



- stuffy or runny nose



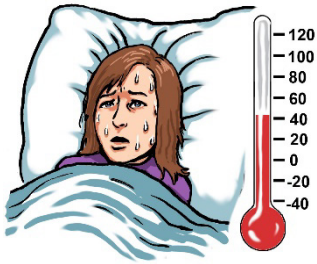
- a sore throat



- headache



- sore muscles and joints



- fever, a temperature above 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher



- feeling unwell



- you cannot smell or taste like normal



- **chills**

Chills are when your body feels cold and you shiver.



For more information go to this website
www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines



Or phone **0800 030 8013**

Flu and COVID-19

Flu and COVID-19 viruses can cause



- you to become very ill and need to go to hospital



- your baby to be born early



- your baby to have a low birth weight



- a stillbirth.

Pregnant women are more likely to get very bad flu or COVID-19 infection if they



- have a health condition



- are overweight



- are of Black and Asian minority ethnic background

**35 years
old +**

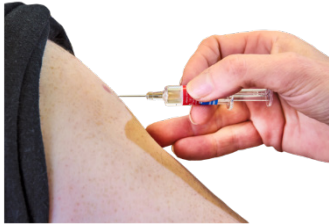
- are 35 years old or older.



Ask your midwife about getting your vaccines.

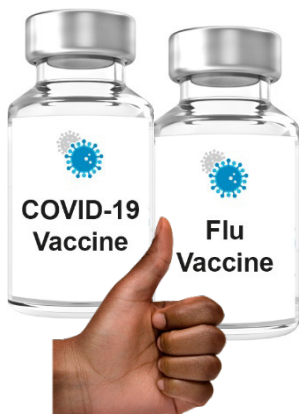
Flu and COVID-19 vaccines

when you are pregnant

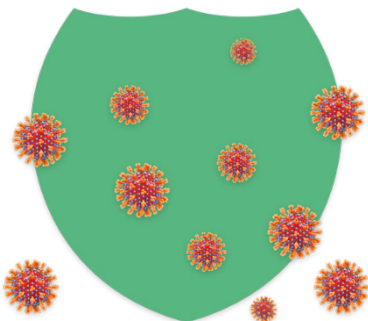


A **vaccine** is a medicine that helps keep people safe and well.

You might hear people talk about a vaccine as a jab or an injection.



The vaccines are the best way to protect you from flu and COVID-19.



The vaccines help build up your **immunity**.

Immunity means your body can protect itself and your symptoms will not be as bad.

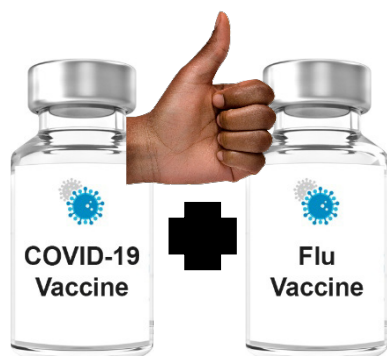
Getting your vaccines



You can get your vaccines between September and March.



You can get vaccines at any stage of your pregnancy.



If it is possible, you will get the flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time.

This is a safe and quick way to help protect you from flu and COVID-19 this winter.

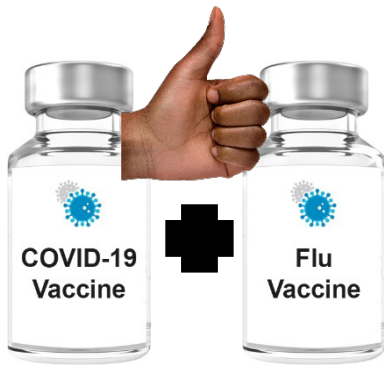


All medicines are tested to make sure they are safe to use.

We will not use a vaccine unless it has been tested and we are sure it is safe.



You can still breastfeed as normal after your vaccinations.



You should still get the vaccines if you have had flu or COVID-19 before.



You should get the vaccines when you are offered them.

On the day of your vaccines



The vaccines are given as an **injection** into the top part of your arm.

An **injection** is when you are given medicine using a special needle.



Wear comfortable clothes and make sure the top of your arm can be reached easily.



Speak to the person giving you the vaccine if you are worried or have any questions.



If you

- cannot leave your home
- want to have your vaccines in a private room
- need extra help or a longer appointment

phone the National Vaccination helpline free on **0800 030 8013**.



If you feel very ill on the day of your vaccines get the vaccines another day.



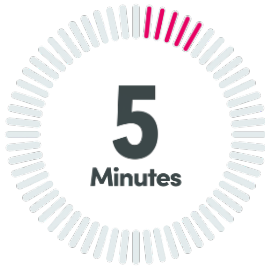
You can make another appointment by going to this website

www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines



or call **0800 030 8013**.

Waiting after your vaccines



You will be asked to wait for 5 minutes after your vaccines.



You should wait for 15 minutes or more before driving after you get your vaccine.

If you



- have any **allergies**
- or had an **allergic reaction** straight after getting your vaccine you had before

you might be asked to stay for a little bit longer after your vaccine.



Allergies or **allergic reaction** is when your body gets ill because of certain things, like a type of food or a medicine.

Reasons not to get the vaccines

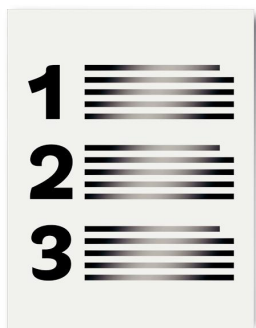


There are some people that will not be able to get the vaccines.



You should not get the flu or COVID-19 vaccines if you have had a very bad allergic reaction called anaphylaxis to

- any of the **ingredients** in the vaccines
- either the flu or COVID-19 vaccines you have had before.



Ingredients are the different things the vaccine is made of.



Some flu vaccines are made using eggs.



The COVID-19 vaccine does not have any animal products or eggs in it.



You should tell the person giving you the vaccine about any allergic reactions you have had.



To find out the ingredients in the vaccines go to this website

www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccineleaflets



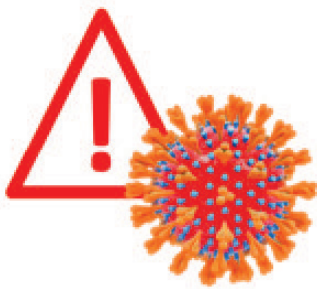
Or phone **0800 030 8013**.

Side effects



It is normal to get **side effects** after you get your flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

Side effects are how a medicine like a vaccine might make you feel after.



The side effects you might get from the vaccines do not make you as ill as getting the flu or COVID-19.



There are **common** side effects of both vaccines.

Common means something that happens to a lot people.

Common side effects

You might get



- a sore or heavy arm where you got the vaccine



- feel tired



- a headache



- sore muscles



- chills



- feel like you have the flu.



The side effects usually go away in 1 or 2 days.



You can take paracetamol to help yourself feel better.

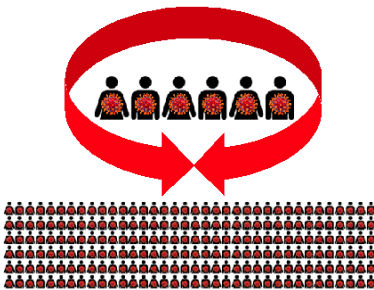


Always read the label on the bottle or packet very carefully.

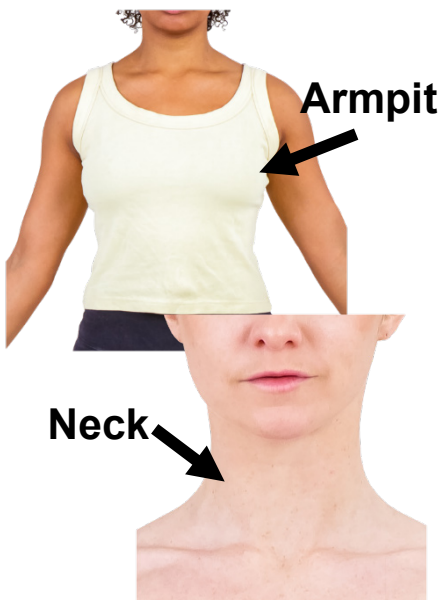


Never give medicines that contain aspirin to children under 16 years old.

Uncommon side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine



Uncommon means something that does not happen to many people.



You might get **swollen glands** in your armpit or neck on the same side of your body as you got your vaccine.

Glands are parts of your body that fight illness.

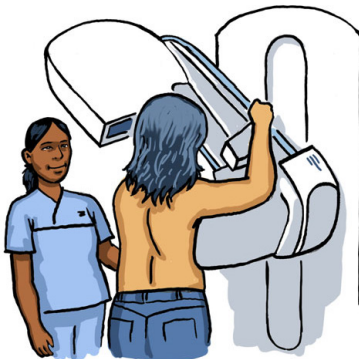
Swollen means your glands are bigger and painful to touch.

Day
10

You might have swollen glands for about 10 days.



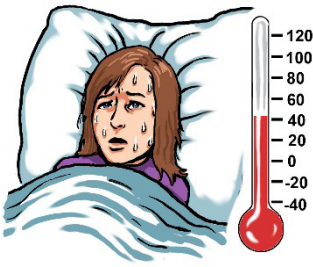
If your swollen glands last for more than 10 days talk to your midwife.



If you will be having a **mammogram** a few weeks after your COVID-19 vaccine tell the person who is giving you the mammogram.

A **mammogram** is a test to check your breasts are healthy.

Fever after the vaccines



You might get a fever after you get your vaccines. A fever is temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher.

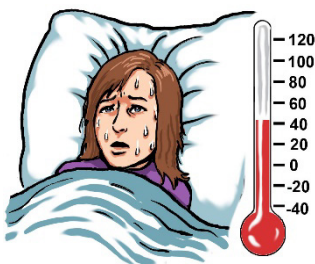


If you get a fever it is normally in the 2 days after you get your vaccines.



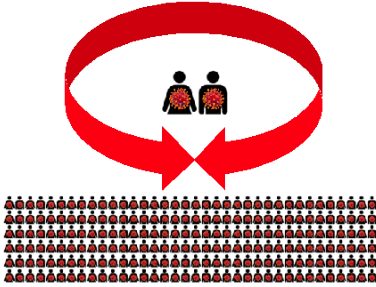
You should talk to your midwife if your fever:

- lasts for more than 2 days
- starts more than 2 days after you get the vaccines.

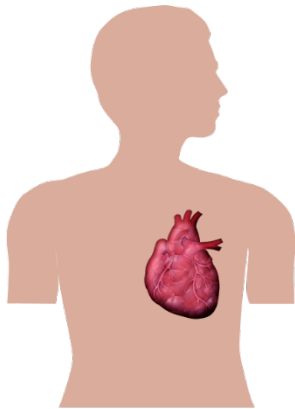


A fever means you might have COVID-19 or another infection.

Very rare side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine



Rare means something that happens to only a few people.



Rare cases of **inflammation** of the heart called myocarditis and pericarditis have been reported after the COVID-19 vaccine.

Inflammation means the heart gets bigger and weaker.



These cases have been very rare and most people got better quickly.



It is very important that you talk to a doctor straight away if you have any of these side effects after your COVID-19 vaccine

- have a pain in your chest
- find it hard to breathe
- it feels like your heart is beating faster.



For more information on side effects go to this website

www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine/sideeffects



Or phone **0800 030 8013**.



Call NHS24 on 111 if you are worried about your side effects.

Reporting side effects

You can report side effects of the vaccines through the Yellow Card scheme.



- go to this website

www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard



- or phone **0800 731 6789**



- or by using the mobile phone app



- or scan this QR code



You have the right to know how your personal information is used.

For more information about your rights or how the NHS uses your personal information go to these websites



www.nhsinform.scot/confidentiality



www.nhsinform.scot/data-protection



**[www.informationgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/
use-of-your-immunisation-data](http://www.informationgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/use-of-your-immunisation-data)**



If you want this booklet in:

- another language
- audio
- BSL
- braille
- large print



email **phs.otherformats@phs.scot**



or visit this website

www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinesinpregnancy



Or phone **0800 030 8013**.



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