



MYTH BUSTING – Covid-19 Vaccine

I do not need to get the vaccine because I am young and healthy.

Everyone should get the vaccine regardless of age and health status as it is the best way to protect our communities. The disease can damage the lungs, heart and brain and it may result in long-Covid. There is another reason to consider getting the vaccine: It protects those around you. Even if Covid-19 does not make you very sick, you could pass it on to someone else who might be more severely affected.

I cannot get the vaccine if I have allergies.

There is no evidence to suggest people should not get the vaccine if they have allergies. If the vaccinator has concerns that you have allergies from an unknown origin, they will refer you to an Allergy Specialist.

If I have had Covid-19 do I still need to get the vaccine?

We do not know how long protection remains after Covid-19 infection; therefore, the vaccine is advised even if you have had Covid-19. The current advice is wait 4 weeks after having Covid-19 before getting the vaccine.

I am worried I might catch Covid-19 from the vaccine.

The vaccine teaches our immune systems how to recognise and fight the virus that causes Covid-19. This process usually causes mild side effects, just like the flu vaccine. The current vaccines cannot make you sick with Covid-19.

The reason a vaccine was created so quickly is because it was not put through the same safety testing as other vaccines.

The MHRA, the official UK regulator authorising licensed use of medicines and vaccines by healthcare professionals, has said these vaccines are **safe** and **highly effective**.

The NHS would not offer any Covid-19 vaccinations to the public until it is safe to do so.



Due to the global effects of Coronavirus there was a lot of collaboration between scientists and funding available to create the Covid-19 vaccine. The global effort has allowed scientists to overcome obstacles which would normally slow their work. Clinical trials also managed to recruit people very quickly. The global effort meant thousands of people were willing to volunteer, this is often a sticking point in other vaccine trials.

Can mRNA technology alter your DNA?

The COVID vaccine uses mRNA technology. The mRNA delivered by the vaccine cannot enter the nucleus of your cells, where your DNA is stored, and will degrade naturally within hours. At no point is your DNA interfered with.

Think of the mRNA as an instruction booklet, it teaches our cells to make a protein that triggers a protective immune response. Our immune system then remembers this response and will be able to fight Covid-19 more effectively if it enters our bodies.

I am worried about the long-term impact of the vaccine.

When any vaccine or medicine is approved, it is continuously and closely monitored for safety and effectiveness by the MHRA. Most side effects appear immediately or soon after vaccination, within days or weeks, and are minor and temporary. Long-term side effects appear to be very rare but, to be ultra-careful, the MHRA will continue to monitor all the vaccines. Any suspected side effects are reported by healthcare staff or patients to the MHRA using the yellow card scheme.

I am worried about blood clots from the AstraZeneca vaccine?

There have been a very small number of reports of an extremely rare form of blood clots and unusual bleeding soon after vaccination. There is no research to indicate this risk is great enough to stop the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine. This is being constantly monitored by THE MHRA. There have been no clots linked to the second dose of vaccine. If you have had the 1st dose of Astra Zeneca vaccine with no serious side affects



you should complete the course with the same vaccine. This includes people in the 18-39 age group.

Will the vaccine work against different variants?

There is no evidence currently that the vaccine will not work against the new strains of Covid-19, so we are continuing to vaccinate people as normal. Scientists are looking in detail at how the virus reacts to the vaccines. Viruses, such as the winter flu virus, often branch into different strains but these small variations rarely stop the vaccines working.

Catching Covid-19 after having this vaccine is proof it does not work.

The Covid-19 vaccine will reduce the chances of suffering from the serious complications of infection. No vaccine is 100% effective, so everyone should continue to follow the recommended Scottish Government guidelines to prevent further spread of the virus.

I am worried I am going to be ill after getting the Covid-19 vaccine and need to take time off work.

There can be side effects from the vaccine such as having a temperature or having flu-like symptoms, this is similar to other vaccines such as the Flu jab. If you start to feel poorly, we recommend you take some paracetamol, and this normally passes within 24-48 hours.

I do not normally get the flu vaccine so why should I get the Covid-19 vaccine?

Around 15-20% of people get flu each year. This includes healthy adults. If you do catch flu you can easily pass it on to family, friends, colleagues and importantly people with other health conditions which increases their risk of developing serious complications. Covid-19 can have serious life-threatening complications and there is no way to know how it will affect you. While it is true that the risk of serious complications following covid-19 infection are lower in the younger age groups, the risk of developing long-



covid even when symptoms have been mild is the same across all age groups. Long-covid can lead to the development of other health conditions

Can I choose what vaccine I get?

You will not be able to choose which vaccine you get, however the JVCI has recommended those under the age of 40 do not receive the AstraZeneca vaccine.

I have heard the vaccine affects fertility and I am hoping to become pregnant in the future.

There is no evidence that the Covid-19 vaccine affects fertility.

If I cannot make my original appointment, I have missed my chance to get the vaccine.

If you have missed your appointment, you can call the NHS Grampian helpline to rearrange. The number is free to call and will be printed on your appointment letter.