



Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau
Vaccination saves lives



COVID-19 **vaccination**

**A guide for young people
aged 16 to 17 years**

November 2021



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This leaflet explains the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine for young people aged 16 to 17 years.

What is COVID-19 or coronavirus?



COVID-19 is a very infectious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Very few children and young people with COVID-19 infection go on to have severe disease. There is no cure for COVID-19 but some newly tested treatments do help to reduce the risk of complications.

Eligibility for the vaccination

You may have recently had a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have recommended that young people aged 16-17 years who are not at greater risk of serious illness if they catch COVID-19 should now receive 2 doses of vaccine with an interval of at least 12 weeks between doses.

Some young people aged 16 to 17 who are at greater risk of serious illness if they catch COVID-19 will already have been offered 2 doses of vaccine at an interval of at least 8 weeks between doses.

A link to the full list of those groups who are at greater risk of serious illness is available in the **More information** section of this leaflet.

How good is the protection from the first dose?

Studies suggest that even after 1 dose of vaccine your risk of serious complications from COVID-19 infection are greatly reduced. This protection is expected to last for a few months in young people.

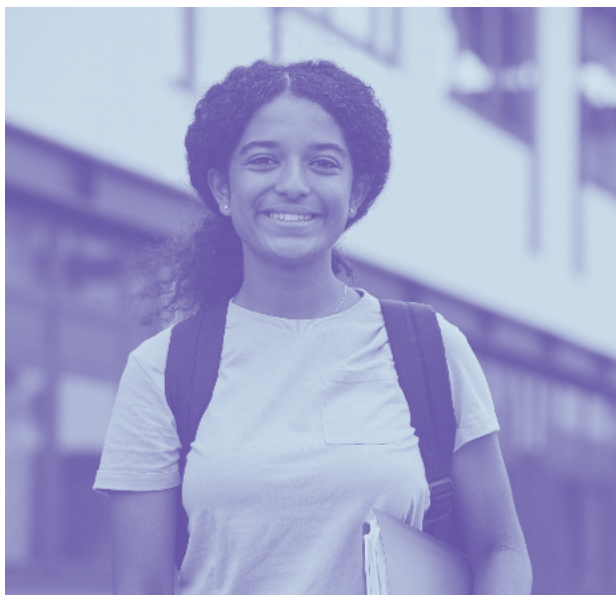
People who have had previous COVID-19 infection who then get 1 dose of the vaccine, and those who get infected after the first dose, make a good immune response –at least as good as people who have had 2 doses. This suggests that young people who get both infection and vaccine will have high levels of protection.

What are the benefits of a second dose?

A second dose helps to improve protection in the longer term. Further studies will help us to know how long protection will last.

What vaccine will I be offered for both doses?

Currently the preferred vaccine for children and young people is the Pfizer vaccine. This is what you will be offered.



Are there any reasons you should not get the vaccine?

There are very few young people who cannot get the COVID-19 vaccine.

The vaccine should not be given to:

- People who have had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to any of the ingredients of the vaccine
- Those who have had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of the same COVID-19 vaccine

People with a history of serious allergic reaction to food, an identified drug or vaccine, or an insect sting can get the COVID-19 vaccine, as long as they are not known to be allergic to any component of the vaccine. It is important that you tell the person giving you your vaccine if you've ever had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).



When should I have the vaccine if I have had COVID-19 infection?

You should:

- wait at least 12 weeks following COVID-19 infection before getting your vaccine if you are not in a group that is at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19; or
- wait at least 4 weeks following COVID-19 infection before vaccination if you are in a group that is at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

Can COVID-19 vaccines be given at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes, COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time as most other vaccines. For the latest advice on COVID-19 vaccines and co-administration please visit: **phw.nhs.wales/covidvaccine**

Common side effects from the Pfizer vaccine

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. With the vaccine we use in under-18s, side effects are more common with the second dose.

Common side effects include:

Having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where you had your injection. This tends to be worst around 1 to 2 days after the vaccine



Feeling tired



Having a headache



General aches, or mild flu like symptoms



You can rest and take paracetamol (follow the dose advice in the packaging) to help make you feel better. Although feeling feverish is not uncommon for 2 to 3 days, a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19 or another infection. Symptoms following vaccination normally last less than a week.

If your symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, you or your parents or carer can look at: **111.wales.nhs.uk** online, and if necessary call NHS 111 Wales on **111** or your GP surgery. If 111 is not available in your area, call **0845 46 47**. Calls to 111 are free from landlines and mobiles. Calls to 0845 46 47 cost 2p per minute plus your telephone provider's usual access charge.



Less common side effects

Recently, cases of inflammation of the heart (called myocarditis or pericarditis) have been reported very rarely in the first week after the COVID-19 vaccines. Most of these cases have been in younger men and are more common after the second vaccination.

You should seek medical advice urgently if you experience:

Chest pain



Shortness of breath



Feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart



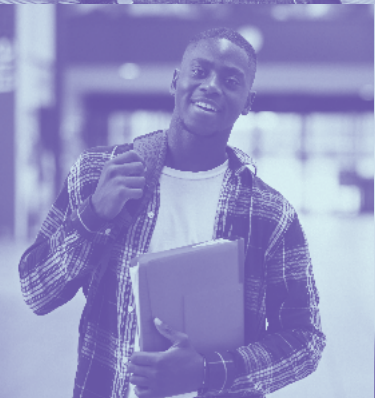
Most people recovered and felt better following rest and simple treatments.

Amongst those who get severe side effects, there may be an even smaller number in whom there are some longer-term effects. Longer-term studies are underway.

If you had myocarditis or pericarditis after the first dose, you should seek medical advice before having a second dose of the vaccine.

You or your parents and carers can report suspected side effects to vaccines and medicines online through the Yellow Card scheme. The Coronavirus Yellow Card system is a website where you can report any side effects from the vaccine.

You may need support to access this website:
coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk



When can I have the second dose?

Whatever you decide now, you will be eligible for a second dose as soon as you become 18 years of age.

But you can have it any time before then, providing you have a 12 week gap between the first and second dose.

Having a 12 week gap may extend the length of time your protection will last after the second dose. This longer gap may also reduce the likelihood of experiencing some of the more serious but rare side effects, like myocarditis, from the vaccine. This precautionary advice comes from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

The JCVI also suggests that if you have had COVID-19 infection as well as the first dose of vaccine, you are likely to already have high levels of protection, and may therefore choose to wait longer before having the second dose.

There may be reasons for you deciding to have the second dose even sooner, after 8 weeks. These reasons include:

- if you are considered to be 'at risk' and have not yet had your second dose
- if you live with someone who is considered 'at risk' and you want to help protect them
- if your circumstances, such as work or essential travel, require a second dose

If you are still unsure, you can discuss your decision with a doctor, or nurse.

What do I need to do?

You will receive information about when and where to get vaccinated.



Talk to your parents or carer about the vaccination and decide what is best for you.



On the day of the appointment, wear loose clothing so it's easy to get to the top of your arm.



Before you have the vaccination don't be afraid to ask any questions you might have.



If you have a fear of needles or feel anxious, let the person giving your vaccine know. They will be understanding and support you.



Consent

You and your parents, or carer, should discuss the information in this leaflet before the vaccination, however young people can consent or agree to vaccination if they understand what is involved.

Can you catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment. The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

If you have the symptoms above, stay at home and arrange to have a test by phoning 119 (calls are free) or online at: **gov.wales/get-tested-coronavirus-covid-19**

If you are not well when your appointment is due

You should not attend a vaccine appointment if you are self-isolating or waiting for a COVID-19 test or result.



How COVID-19 is spread

COVID-19 is spread through droplets breathed out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

You MUST still follow any national or local restrictions and:

- when advised wear a face mask
- get tested and self-isolate if you have symptoms
- keep your distance when you can
- wash your hands regularly
- open windows to let fresh air in
- follow the current guidance at **gov.wales/coronavirus**.

More information

You can find out more information about COVID-19 vaccines, including their contents and possible side effects at: **coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/productinformation**

You can report suspected side effects online at: **coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk** or by downloading the Yellow Card app.

For more information on the list of conditions go to: **phw.nhs.wales/topics/immunisation-and-vaccines/covid-19-vaccination-information/eligibility-for-the-vaccine**.

To find out how the NHS uses your information, visit: **111.wales.nhs.uk/AboutUs/Yourinformation**

For other formats of this leaflet visit:
publichealthwales.org/HealthInformationResources



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