



Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau  
Vaccination saves lives

# Waiting after COVID-19 vaccination

## What is changing

Up until now, people receiving the Spikevax® (Moderna) or Comirnaty® (Pfizer- BioNTech) vaccines have been asked to wait for 15 minutes before leaving the vaccine centre. This was because the rate of serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) reported after these 2 vaccines is slightly higher (around 5 to 10 per million doses) than after other vaccines (normally 1 per million). From now on not everyone will have to wait.

## Why is this changing

Due to the Omicron variant, the booster programme for adults is being accelerated. As part of this, and given the very low rate of anaphylaxis, the 15 minute wait has been suspended for some people, as we now have much more experience with giving these vaccines to millions of people. People are not normally observed for 15 minutes after other vaccinations.

## Who is advising this change

The change has been advised by the Chief Medical Officer, and has the support of the Medicines Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

## What should I do when I attend for vaccination

If you have a history of allergies, particularly to other vaccines, or if you had an immediate reaction after your previous doses, you will be advised to stay for the 15 minutes. Please make sure you tell the vaccine centre. Please also tell them if you have previously fainted following vaccination. (A family history of allergies (or even anaphylaxis) is **not** a risk factor).

If you are over 16 and have not received Spikevax® (Moderna) or Comirnaty® (Pfizer-BioNTech) before you will be asked to stay for 5 minutes after your vaccination. Those under 16s, and adults with learning disabilities and reduced capacity may be asked to wait for 15 minutes after vaccination.

Otherwise you will be able to leave the centre straight after your vaccine as long as you feel ok. You must not drive for 15 minutes after the vaccine – this is because of the risk of fainting.

# What happens if I do experience allergic symptoms

Keep this flyer handy. You should look out for the following symptoms:

## Airway:

- Persistent cough
- Vocal changes (hoarse voice)
- Swollen tongue causing difficulty swallowing



## Breathing:

- Difficult or noisy breathing
- Wheezing (like an asthma attack)



## Consciousness:

- Feeling lightheaded or faint
- Clammy skin
- Confusion
- Unresponsive/unconscious



The following symptoms are **NOT Anaphylaxis**, but imply a more mild reaction:

- Swollen lips, face or eyes
- Itchy skin rash e.g. "hives"; urticaria

If any of these symptoms occur and you need advice contact your health professional. Call NHS 111 Wales on **111**. If 111 is not available in your area, call **0845 46 47**. Calls to NHS 111 Wales are free from landlines and mobiles. Calls to 0845 46 47 cost 2p per minute plus your telephone provider's usual access charge.

## Simple faints are much more common after vaccination.

If you do faint, stay flat on your back with your legs raised. If this doesn't make you feel better, then call for help.

## Further information

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

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