

Sussex COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Partner toolkit: AZ vaccine

08 April 2021

Background

Yesterday, 07 April 2021, an update was provided by the Government on the use of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine. As part of the position statement, the national programme set out that in light of recent evidence and a review that is underway, people aged 30 and below should be offered an alternative vaccine when it is their turn to receive the COVID vaccination.

We recognise that there are likely to be an increase in contacts from patients in relation to the Oxford AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, in particular with people raising concerns about receiving it for their second dose.

This toolkit aims to provide information to help cascade the key information and provide reassurance.

Key national information

- Guidance and position statements:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-and-blood-clotting>
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mhra-issues-new-advice-concluding-a-possible-link-between-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca-and-extremely-rare-unlikely-to-occur-blood-clots>
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca/information-for-healthcare-professionals-on-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca>
- Patient materials
 - (LEAFLET for Patients)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/976880/PHE_COVID-19_AZ_vaccination_guide.pdf
 - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

Newsletter/email text/website copy

Short

NHS is urging people to continue to attend vaccination appointments

The NHS in Sussex is calling for people to continue to attend booked vaccination appointments, and book your appointment as soon as it is your turn.

It comes after the Government updated the advice about who should receive the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccination.

As a detailed review takes place into reports of a very rare blood clotting problem affecting a small number of people who have had the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, it has been announced that it is preferable for people under the age of 30 with no underlying health conditions to be offered an alternative vaccine where possible once they are eligible.

People who have already received one vaccination are encouraged to attend their appointment for their second dose, and make sure they receive the full long lasting protection.

The NHS says the benefits of the vaccination, outweighs any risk and everyone should attend their appointment. If you are affected by the updated position, you will have the opportunity to talk through the options for you when it comes to your vaccination appointment.

[Read more about the latest update and what people should do.](#)

Find out more about the Sussex vaccination programme - www.sussexhealthandcare/get-my-jab

Medium

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The condition remains extremely rare; around four people develop this condition for every million doses of the vaccine doses given.

There appears to be a higher risk in people who have had the first dose of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine and that is why the position has been updated.

People who have already received one vaccination are encouraged to attend their appointment for their second dose, and make sure they receive the full long lasting protection.

The problem can also happen in people who have not been vaccinated and it's not yet clear why it affects some people.

The COVID-19 vaccine can help stop you getting seriously ill or dying from coronavirus.

Call 111 immediately if you get any of these symptoms starting from around 4 days to 4 weeks after being vaccinated:

- a severe headache that is not relieved with painkillers or is getting worse
- a headache that feels worse when you lie down or bend over
- a headache that's unusual for you and occurs with blurred vision, feeling or being sick, problems speaking, weakness, drowsiness or seizures (fits)
- a rash that looks like small bruises or bleeding under the skin
- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or persistent abdominal (tummy) pain

The NHS says the benefits of the vaccination, outweighs any risk and everyone should attend their appointment.

[Read more about the latest update and what people should do.](#)

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Longer

NHS is urging people to continue to attend vaccination appointments

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The NHS says the benefits of the vaccination, outweighs any risk and everyone should attend their appointment.

A Government spokesperson said:

“The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is safe, effective and has already saved thousands of lives.

“As the MHRA – the UK’s independent regulator – and the JCVI have said, the benefits of the vaccine far outweigh the risks for the vast majority of adults.

“Everybody who has already had a first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine should receive a second dose of the same brand, irrespective of age, except for the very small number of people who experienced blood clots with low platelet counts from their first vaccination.

“The government will follow today’s updated advice, which sets out that, as a precaution, it is preferable for people under the age of 30 with no underlying health conditions to be offered an alternative vaccine where possible once they are eligible.

“When people are called forward, they should get their jab. Vaccines are the best way out of this pandemic and provide strong protection against Covid-19.”

[Read more about the latest update and what people should do.](#)

Find out more about the Sussex vaccination programme - www.sussexhealthandcare/get-my-jab

Social media

The NHS is urging people to continue to attend vaccination appointments.

We understand that the @MHRAgovuk is carrying out a review of reports of a very rare blood clotting problem in a small number of people who have had the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

The benefits of being vaccinated outweigh any potential risk.

Read more about the latest position and what people should do:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/976880/PHE_COVID-19_AZ_vaccination_guide.pdf

We are encouraging all of our patients to continue to attend your booked appointments for the COVID-19 vaccination.

We know there have been some concerns raised about the use of the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine but the benefits of being vaccinated outweigh potential risk.

The condition remains extremely rare; around four people develop this condition for every million doses of the vaccine doses given.

Please continue to come to your appointments and receive your protection.

If you have questions or concerns about the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine you can find out more at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

Everyone who has had their first dose is still encouraged to attend their appointment to have their second when it is their turn.

Have concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine – read the latest advice and guidance for you:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/976880/PHE_COVID-19_AZ_vaccination_guide.pdf

Key messages for call handlers

What is the concern?

- We are aware that the MHRA, which regulates vaccines, is carrying out a review of reports of a very rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after vaccination. This is being carefully reviewed but the risk factors for this condition are not yet clear.
- Although this condition remains extremely rare there appears to be a higher risk in people who have had the first dose of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine.
- Around 4 people develop this condition for every million doses of AZ vaccine doses given.
- This is seen slightly more often in younger people and tends to occur between 4 days and 2 weeks following vaccination.
- This condition can also occur naturally, and clotting problems are a common complication of COVID-19 infection.
- An increased risk has not yet been seen after other COVID-19 vaccines but is being carefully monitored.
- If you have had the vaccine in the last 4 weeks, please be aware of any side effects or concerns, as you would with any vaccine, and call 111 if you experience any of the identified side effects.

What to look out for after vaccination

- Although serious side effects are very rare, if you experience any of the following from around 4 days to 4 weeks after vaccination you should seek medical advice urgently:
 - a new, severe headache which is not helped by usual painkillers or is getting worse
 - a headache which seems worse when lying down or bending over
 - an unusual headache that may be accompanied by:
 - blurred vision, nausea and vomiting
 - difficulty with your speech
 - weakness, drowsiness or seizures
 - new, unexplained pinprick bruising or bleeding

- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or persistent abdominal pain

What you should do next:

Over 50 years of age or with underlying medical conditions

- Current advice remains that you should still receive any of the available COVID-19 vaccines.
- The benefits of vaccination in protecting you against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition.
- You should also complete your course with the same vaccine you had for the first dose.
- If your first dose was with AZ vaccine without suffering any serious side effects you should have the second dose on time as you may still be at high risk of the complications of COVID-19.

If you are a healthy person over 30 to 50 years of age

- Current advice is that all adults in this age group should still receive any of the available COVID-19 vaccines.
- The benefits of vaccination in protecting you against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition.
- You should also complete your course with the same vaccine you had for the first dose.

If you are a healthy younger person aged 18 to 39

- The MHRA and the JCVI advises that all adults in this age group should still receive any of the available COVID-19 vaccines.
- The benefits of vaccination in protecting you against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition.
- You should also complete your course with the same vaccine you had for the first dose.
- Currently JCVI has advised that it is preferable for people under 30 to have a vaccine other than AZ.
- If you choose to have another COVID-19 vaccine you may have to wait to be protected.
- You may wish to go ahead with the AZ vaccination after you have considered all the risks and benefits for you.

About the second dose

- If you have already had a first dose of AZ vaccine without suffering any serious side effects you should complete the course.
- This includes people aged 18 to 29 years who are health and social care workers, unpaid carers and family members of those who are immunosuppressed.

Potential questions and suggested responses

I have had the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine for my first dose and I do not want it for my second

At this time, the advice remains clear that if you didn't have any serious side effects with your first dose, even if you are under 30, then you should still have your second dose of AZ when called.

Anyone who has already received the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine and has not had significant side effects, will receive the same vaccine for their second dose.

In all cases, the benefits of being vaccinated outweigh any potential risk.

Do I need the second vaccine?

Yes, the 1st dose of the COVID-19 vaccine should give you some protection from coronavirus from 3 or 4 weeks after you've had it, particularly from severe disease.

But you need to have the 2nd dose of the vaccine to give you higher and longer lasting protection.

How safe is the vaccine?

The vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Any coronavirus vaccine that is approved must go through all the clinical trials and safety checks all other licensed medicines go through. The MHRA follows international standards of safety.

So far, millions of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions or clotting problems, have been very rare.

The UK vaccination programme has been very successful with more than 30 million people vaccinated and more than 6,000 lives already saved.

Materials



COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting

Information about your vaccination

The UK vaccination programme has been very successful with more than 30 million people vaccinated and more than 6,000 lives already saved.

What is the concern?
Recently there have been reports of a very rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after vaccination. This is being carefully reviewed but the risk factors for this condition are not yet clear. Although this condition remains extremely rare there appears to be a higher risk in people shortly after the first dose of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine. Around 4 people develop this condition for every million doses of AZ vaccine doses given.

This is seen slightly more often in younger people and tends to occur between 4 days and 2 weeks following vaccination. This condition can also occur naturally, and clotting problems are a common complication of COVID-19 infection. An increased risk has not yet been seen after other COVID-19 vaccines but is being carefully monitored.

What are the benefits and risks of the vaccination?

Age	Risk from COVID-19	Benefit of vaccination	Risk of vaccination
Over 50 years of age or with underlying medical conditions	Low - catching infection - passing on infection Very high - hospitalisation - intensive care admission - death Moderate - Long COVID	One dose more than 80% reduction - death - hospitalisation - intensive care Two doses more than 95% reduction - death	Uncommon - sore arm - feeling tired - headache - general aches - flu like symptoms Extremely rare - clotting problems
30 to 49 years of age	High - catching mild infection - passing on infection Low - hospitalisation - intensive care admission - death Moderate - Long COVID	One dose between 60% and 70% reduction - catching infection - passing on infection Two doses more than 85% reduction - catching and passing on infection	Common - sore arm - feeling tired - headache - general aches - flu like symptoms Extremely rare - clotting problems
18 to 29 years of age	Very high - catching mild infection - passing on infection Very low - hospitalisation - intensive care admission - death Moderate - Long COVID	One dose between 50% and 70% reduction - catching infection - passing on infection Two doses more than 85% reduction - catching and passing on infection	Very common - sore arm - feeling tired - headache - general aches - flu like symptoms Extremely rare - clotting problems

COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting

Information about your vaccination

What should I do next?
Over 50 years of age or with underlying medical conditions
All older adults (including health and social care workers over 50 years of age), care home residents, health and social care workers* and adults with certain medical conditions were prioritised in the first phase of the programme because they were at high risk of the complications of COVID-19. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advise that you should still receive any of the available COVID-19 vaccines. The benefits of vaccination in protecting you against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition. You should also complete your course with the same vaccine you had for the first dose. If your first dose was with AZ vaccine without suffering any serious side effects you should have the second dose as soon as you may still be at high risk of the complications of COVID-19. Having the second dose will give you higher and longer lasting protection.

If you are a healthy person over 50 to 59 years of age
The MHRA and the JCVI advise that all adults in this age group (including health and social care workers) should still receive any of the available COVID-19 vaccines. The benefits of vaccination in protecting you against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition. You should also complete your course with the same vaccine you had for the first dose.

If you are a healthy younger person aged 18 to 29
The MHRA and the JCVI continue to monitor the benefits and safety of the AZ vaccine in younger people. You should carefully consider the risk to both you and your family and friends of COVID-19 before making a decision. Currently JCVI has advised that it is preferable for people under 30 to have a vaccine other than AZ. If you choose to have another COVID-19 vaccine you may have to wait to be protected. You may wish to go ahead with the AZ vaccination after you have considered all the risks and benefits for you.

What about the second dose?
If you have already had a first dose of AZ vaccine without suffering any serious side effects you should complete the course. This includes people aged 18 to 29 years who are health and social care workers, unpaid carers and family members of those who are immunosuppressed. It is expected that the first dose of the vaccine will have given you some protection, particularly against severe disease.

*This includes unpaid carers and family members of those who are immunosuppressed. Further information can be found at the following link: nhs.uk/Coronavirus/vaccination

Vaccination, helping to protect those most vulnerable.

What should I look out for after vaccination?
Although serious side effects are very rare, if you experience any of the following from around 4 days to 4 weeks after vaccination you should seek medical advice urgently.

- a new, severe headache which is not helped by usual paracetamol or is getting worse
- a headache which seems worse when lying down or bending over or
- an unusual headache that may be accompanied by:
 - blurred vision, nausea and vomiting
 - difficulty with your speech
 - weakness, drowsiness or seizure
- new, unexplained pinpoint bruising or bleeding
- shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling or persistent abdominal pain

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**Why
should I get
my jab**



**Protect yourself and your loved
ones from false information about
the COVID-19 vaccine**

check the facts



NHS

CORONAVIRUS
**KEEP
SUSSEX
SAFE**

Social media image – more to follow