

COVID-19 vaccine: spring 2026 programme

Communications toolkit



Introduction

This communications toolkit provides information on the COVID-19 spring vaccination programme for 2026.

It aims to support providers, healthcare professionals and wider stakeholders to explain and promote the vaccination programme to all eligible groups. It contains background information, communications assets, key messages, statistics and links to useful information.

There are a variety of ways that you might be able to help us communicate the importance of eligible people taking up the offer of a vaccine this spring.

- **Share information about the programme with your networks** – we have a wide variety of resources available including leaflets and posters (many available in translated languages), social media assets and suggested copy for cascade to your audiences. The booking link for this year's programme is www.nhs.uk/get-vaccination
- **Contact us if you would like to do something more bespoke** – if you are looking to do something special to promote the vaccine programme on your social media channels or website and need some creative input or suggested text for a blog/article, please get in touch.
- **Get in touch about using our spokespeople** – if you are planning a webinar or briefing for your audiences and would like one of our senior colleagues to speak about the spring programme, please get in touch.
- **Help us find case studies** – We are looking for case studies of people (or their children) hospitalised by COVID-19 and willing to share their experiences to encourage others to take up the vaccine offer. These could be for use in the press or on social media.

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Overview of COVID-19 spring 2026 programme

Eligibility:

COVID-19 can still be very dangerous and even life threatening, particularly for older people and those with a weakened immune system.

Similar to previous spring programmes, [the government has accepted the JCVI's advice](#) to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to those at high risk of serious disease (hospitalisation and/or mortality) and who are therefore most likely to benefit from vaccination.

Those eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in spring 2026 are:

- adults aged 75 years and over (including individuals who turn 75 years old by 30 June 2026)
- residents in a care home for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed (as defined in the 'immunosuppression' sections of tables 3 or 4 in the [COVID-19 chapter of the Green Book](#))

For the full criteria please refer to [the Green Book](#).

Timing for the spring 2026 COVID-19 vaccination programme:

- **7 April** – [National Booking System](#) opens for spring vaccination bookings, offering appointments from 13 April
- **7 April** - Email only national invitations sent out
- **13 April** – Start of vaccinations for all eligible cohorts (priority given to care home residents and those that are housebound)
- **14 April** – National invites sent to immunosuppressed cohort (reminders on 5 May and 26 May)
- **21 April** – National invites sent to age 75-79 cohort (reminders on 12 May and 2 June)
- **28 April** – National invites sent to age 80+ cohort (reminders on 19 May and 9 June)
- **29 June** – Final day to make next day NBS bookings
- **30 June** – The last date for the spring seasonal vaccination.

Key messages

- COVID-19 spreads easily all year round. It can still be very dangerous and even life threatening, particularly for older people and those with a weakened immune system.
- Protection against COVID-19 (either from catching the virus or from a previous vaccination) can fade over time and the circulating strain of the virus can change, so if you are at higher risk of severe illness it is important that you top up your protection.
- The COVID-19 vaccines provide good protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and can protect those most vulnerable from death.
- The vaccine has saved countless lives, prevented thousands from needing to go to hospital and helped us to live with the virus without fear or restrictions.
- UKHSA data from the spring 2025 COVID vaccination) showed that those who received a vaccine were around [50% less likely to be admitted to hospital with COVID-19](#).
- In line with expert advice, the vaccination will be offered to the following groups in spring 2026:
 - adults aged 75 years and over (including individuals who turn 75 years old by 30 June 2026)
 - residents in a care home for older adults
 - those aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system
- Getting your COVID-19 vaccine is very convenient, with thousands of appointments available across the country every day (at GP practices and community pharmacies).
- If you or your child are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine this spring, make sure you come forward for this extra protection between 13 April – 30 June 2026.
- You will be invited to come forward but you do not need to wait for this to book.
- How to get it:
 - Download the NHS App and make an appointment
 - Book online at www.nhs.uk/get-vaccination
 - Visit a walk in site. These can be found at www.nhs.uk/covid-walk-in
 - Call 119 for free if you can't get online (translators are available)
 - You can also use text phone **18001 119** or the NHS British Sign Language service at www.signvideo.co.uk/nhs119.
 - If you get your care at home, ask your GP surgery for a home visit.
- You can find out the latest information about the COVID-19 vaccine at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine
- For information in easy read and other languages and formats, go to www.england.nhs.uk/seasonal-invites.

FAQ

Who is eligible for COVID-19 vaccination?

JCVI advises the following groups to be offered a free COVID-19 vaccine this spring:

- aged 75 years or over (by 30 June 2026)
- a resident in a care home for older adults
- aged 6 months or over and have a weakened immune system (as defined in the 'immunosuppression' sections of tables 3 or 4 in the COVID-19 chapter of the Green Book)

Who has a weakened immune system that may mean they're eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination?

You may have a weakened immune system if you:

- have or had blood cancer (leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- had an organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant
- have HIV
- have a genetic disorder affecting your immune system (such as deficiencies of IRAK-4 or NEMO, complement disorder, severe combined immunodeficiency)
- are having or recently had chemotherapy, biological therapy or radiotherapy.
- take steroid medicines, depending on your dosage
- are having immunosuppressive treatment.

This list is a summary and does not cover everything. Speak to your pharmacist, GP surgery or specialist if you are not sure. If your health status has changed and you no longer have a weakened immune system, you may not need the vaccine.

Are household contacts of eligible people with a weakened immune system eligible for the vaccine as well?

Household contacts of people with a weakened immune system are not eligible. People in other clinical risk groups who do not fall into the above categories are also not eligible. For the spring 2026 vaccine, JCVI is prioritising groups most vulnerable to serious outcomes from COVID-19 including those aged 75 or over, living in older adult care homes, and those who are immunosuppressed. These individuals are at highest risk of severe COVID-19.

Why should I have the vaccine?

It's important you top up your protection if you are eligible because it fades over time and viruses can change. If you are at increased risk of getting severe symptoms, having your COVID-19 vaccination helps to:

- reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19
- reduce your risk of needing to go to hospital if you catch COVID-19
- protect against different types (variants) of COVID-19

It may take a few days for your body to build up the extra protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but any infection should be less severe.

How can I get my spring COVID-19 vaccination?

There are different ways to arrange a COVID-19 vaccination:

- Booking online at www.nhs.uk/get-vaccination

- Using the 119 service
- Finding your nearest walk-in site at www.nhs.uk/covid-walk-in – you do not need to make an appointment but check opening times and which age groups they vaccinate before attending
- Through your care home for older adults
- You may be contacted by a local NHS service if they are offering COVID vaccinations, such as your GP surgery

When is my last chance to get a spring vaccination?

You can get your COVID-19 vaccination until 30 June 2026. The last day for next day bookings is 29 June.

Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine even if I have not had any previous doses?

If eligible, you can get protection from a spring COVID-19 vaccination even if you have not taken up a COVID-19 vaccine offer in the past. Most people do not need extra vaccinations to make up for any they have missed, but your healthcare professional may advise a further dose if you have a severely weakened immune system.

Will I need the same type of COVID-19 vaccine as I had before?

All COVID-19 vaccines authorised for use by the NHS are effective and provide a strong booster response. You will be offered a vaccine that is suitable for you. If you have any concerns, you can discuss these with the healthcare professional at your appointment.

Can I choose which vaccine I have?

You cannot choose which vaccine you have. Please accept the vaccination that is offered to you. If you have queries about vaccine types, you can discuss these with the healthcare professional at your appointment. All COVID-19 vaccines in use in the UK have met strict standards of safety and quality and provide an effective immune response.

Who cannot take up the offer of a spring vaccine?

There are very few eligible people who should not have a dose this spring. For the small amount of people that have previously experienced a severe reaction to COVID-19 vaccines, please flag this with your healthcare professional during your appointment so they can refer you to an expert allergist. Following clinical assessment, your allergist will recommend the most appropriate vaccine or alternative care plan tailored for you.

mRNA lines –

“We advise all those eligible to take up the COVID-19 vaccination this spring. All the vaccines being used have been rigorously tested and are the best and safest way to protect yourself if you are more vulnerable.


“For the small amount of people that have previously experienced a severe reaction to COVID-19 vaccines, please flag this with your healthcare professional so they can refer you to an expert allergist. Following clinical assessment, your allergist will recommend the most appropriate vaccine or alternative care plan tailored for you”.

Assets available on the Campaign Resource Centre

NHS England have created a variety of communications assets to help encourage those eligible to book a spring COVID-19 vaccination. This includes posters, digital screens, social media assets and translated assets.

Examples of assets along with post copy can be found below. You can download these to use at the [Campaign Resource Centre](#).

<p>Bulletin copy for providers</p>	<p>From 7 April 2026, those eligible for the spring COVID-19 vaccine can start booking their vaccine appointments (first appointments from 13 April). Please support those eligible to come forward through invitations, opportunistic conversations and by utilising the communications assets available on the Campaign Resource Centre.</p>
<p>Bulletin copy for stakeholders</p>	<p>Top up your protection against COVID-19 by getting vaccinated this spring if you are eligible. Those at increased risk from severe illness can get the vaccine, including those aged 75 or over (by 30 June 2025), people with a weakened immune system or who live in an older adult care home. Those eligible will be able book from 7 April, for appointments from 13 April.</p> <p>If eligible, you do not need to wait for an invitation to book your vaccine. To book, please visit the NHS App, the NHS website (www.nhs.uk/get-vaccination) or call 119 for free. You may also be able to visit a walk-in site which does not require a booking (www.nhs.uk/covid-walk-in).</p> <p>Don't get caught out. If you or your child are eligible, make sure you get any extra protection you need this spring. Get vaccinated against COVID-19.</p>
<p>Spokesperson script</p>	<p>“COVID-19 is not just a winter illness and previous immunity can wane over time, so it is important to top-up your protection.</p> <p>“The virus continues to be dangerous for those most at-risk, particularly older people and those with weakened immune systems, so we are encouraging all those who</p>

	<p>are eligible to come forward as soon as possible to get protected.</p> <p>“You do not need to wait for an invite to book – just visit the NHS website, use the NHS App or call 119 to get an appointment in your diary.”</p>
<p>Social media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 75s suggested caption: Even as we go into spring, COVID-19 can be very dangerous for older adults. Book to top up your protection at www.nhs.uk/book-covid • Weakened immune system suggested caption: Even as we go into spring, COVID-19 can be very dangerous for people with a weakened immune system. Book to top up your protection at www.nhs.uk/book-covid • Children suggested caption: To protect your child if they have a weakened immune system this spring, book their COVID-19 vaccine appointment at www.nhs.uk/book-covid Children aged 6 months to 4 years will be invited by their GP surgery or other local NHS services. 	 <p data-bbox="639 1010 1217 1243">If you have a weakened immune system you can get extra protection against COVID-19 this spring.</p>

Posters

- General adult eligibility
- Immunosuppressed children eligibility
- Care home eligibility




The poster features a photograph of an elderly man and woman sitting together and smiling. The NHS logo is in the top right corner. The main text reads: "Free NHS COVID-19 vaccinations are now available to protect you this spring". Below this, it lists eligibility criteria: "Get your free vaccine if you're: • 75 or over • Have a weakened immune system (as a result of certain health conditions or treatments)". It also provides instructions on how to get the vaccine: "How to get it: • Book online at nhs.uk/get-vaccination • Call 119". A QR code is located in the bottom right corner. A note at the bottom states: "Adult care home residents will be offered it through their care home."

Editable posters

- For 75 and overs
- For those immunosuppressed
- For immunosuppressed children



The poster features a photograph of several elderly people sitting in a care home setting. The NHS logo is in the top right corner. The main text reads: "Our residents can get a free NHS COVID-19 spring vaccine. It helps protect against serious illness." Below this is a large blue rectangular box with the text "Insert your own details here". At the bottom, it says "Find out more: nhs.uk/covid-vaccine".

<p>Digital screens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 75 and overs • For those immunosuppressed • For immunosuppressed children 	 <p>Your child may be eligible due to their health condition or treatment.</p> <p>Find out more and how to book at nhs.uk/covid-vaccine</p> <p>Children aged 6 months to 4 years will be invited by their GP surgery or other local NHS services.</p> <p>NHS spring COVID-19 vaccinations are now available to protect children aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system</p>
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UKHSA resources

Health publications

Paper copies of many posters, leaflets and other resources aimed at eligible people are available to order for free (please register/login using your work email address) at www.healthpublications.gov.uk

Resources can be ordered or downloaded, with delivery in 3 to 5 working days. These will be uploaded in due course.

Further resources, including fully translated and accessible resources will be available on the Campaign Resource Centre.

<p>Spring COVID-19 leaflet: A guide to the spring 2026 COVID-19 vaccination programme - English</p>	<p>Guide/leaflet</p> <p>Guide to the COVID-19 spring 2026 vaccination for those eligible. It contains the rationale for the programme, who is eligible and what to expect during your vaccine appointment</p>	<p>This leaflet can be ordered using product code: 13114579EN001</p>
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COVID-19 vaccination document collection

The COVID-19 vaccination document collection is available on GOV.UK: [COVID-19 vaccination programme - GOV.UK](#)

This includes updates to the Green Book, new resources for healthcare professionals, leaflets and posters.

Data and statistics

UKHSA publishes data on people who have tested positive for COVID-19, and hospital admission rates. This can be found on the [weekly respiratory virus surveillance report](https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/respiratory-viruses) (<https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/respiratory-viruses>).

About the UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

UKHSA is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency

About NHS England

NHS England provides national leadership and oversight for the health service - supporting and overseeing the commissioning of health services; allocating the budget to different parts of the NHS; commissioning certain services directly; and with specific oversight of providers of NHS services.