

COVID-19 VACCINE BULLETIN 41

Welcome to Bulletin 41 from the HSE National Immunisation Office which highlights changes in clinical guidance for the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Recommendations from the National Immunisation Advisory Committee

Updated recommendations on the timing of the additional or booster dose after breakthrough COVID-19 infection

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) recommends that the additional or booster dose should be delayed for **at least three months** after diagnosis of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection. (This updates their prior recommendation to delay additional or booster vaccination for at least six months following infection.)

The reasons for this recommendation are:

- Prior estimation of the duration of immunity following breakthrough infection was based on infection with less immune evasive variants
- As the Omicron variant is spreading rapidly, there is an urgent need to give people booster vaccinations as soon as possible.
- Immunity following the Omicron variant may wane more rapidly than that following previous variants, as demonstrated by significantly higher reinfection rates.
- Whilst natural infection acts as a booster, the duration of this effectiveness against the Omicron variant is uncertain.
- Booster doses of an mRNA vaccine have been shown to significantly increase vaccine effectiveness against the Omicron variant.
- There are no indications of any new safety concerns related to additional or booster vaccination, although data are limited.
- Providing an earlier additional or booster vaccine to those with laboratory-confirmed breakthrough infection more than three months previously may ensure that their protection is optimised during this period of high community transmission.

NIAC will continue to closely monitor relevant safety and effectiveness data and will update this advice as necessary. All other existing recommendations apply.

[Read NIAC guidelines here](#)

Wait 3 months before a booster dose



IF you have had COVID-19 since vaccination

Clinical guidance, medicines protocols and other supporting materials have been updated and training materials are being prepared. Public information to reflect this change has been updated online and printed information will be updated.

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Start of vaccinations of children aged 5-11 years

NIAC strongly recommends that children with underlying medical conditions, or who are living with a younger child with complex medical needs or who are living with an immunocompromised person be offered a COVID-19 vaccine.

Registration to allow parents to consent to vaccination for children in these categories aged 5-11 years will open on 28th December. Parents of other children are being asked to wait to register until January, to allow these vulnerable children and their families to be vaccinated sooner.

Comirnaty for children aged 5-11 which contains the lower 10mcg per dose, is supplied to central vaccination clinics. Children will be vaccinated in these clinics.

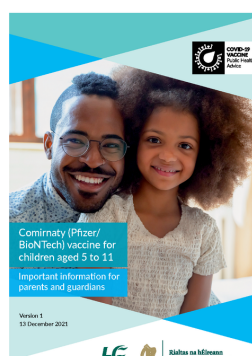
GPs and Pharmacists do not have supplies of Comirnaty vaccine for children aged 5-11 and therefore children of this age group cannot be vaccinated in these settings.

[Read more here](#)



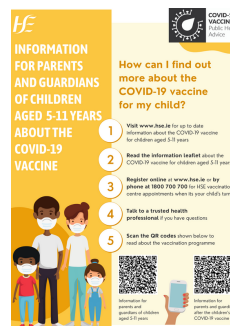
Download Getting My COVID-19 Vaccine cartoon

[Click here](#)



Download information leaflet for children 5 to 11

[Click here](#)



Download poster on information for parents and guardians for GP practices and pharmacies

[Click here](#)



Read FAQs about children 5 to 11 programme

[Click here](#)

[Visit HSE website](#)

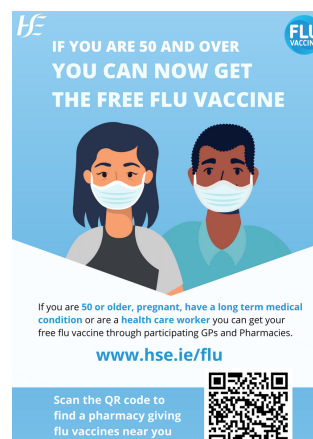
New QR code posters available for CVCs

We have developed posters with QR codes for COVID-19 vaccination clinics to print off and display:



Print posters with QR codes to COVID-19 vaccine information leaflets – Pfizer, Moderna, 12-15s, Children 5-11

[Click here](#)



Print poster for Flu vaccine with QR code to Pharmacy Finder service

[Click here](#)

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COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy

Pregnant women are a priority group for vaccination, including for booster vaccination.

Primary vaccination and booster doses are available to pregnant women through central vaccination clinics, participating pharmacies, GPs and some maternity hospitals.

For the primary vaccination course or the booster dose, the recommended vaccines for pregnant women are:

- Comirnaty® if they are aged less than 30 years,
- Comirnaty® or Spikevax® if they are aged 30 years or older.

Note that the booster dose of Spikevax is 0.25mls (50mcg) which is half the dose for the primary vaccination course.



[Read more here](#)

Nuvaxovid® vaccine authorised by EMA

EMA has recommended granting a conditional marketing authorisation for Novavax's COVID-19 vaccine Nuvaxovid® (also known as NVX-CoV2373) to prevent COVID-19 in people from 18 years of age.

Nuvaxovid® is the fifth vaccine recommended in the EU for preventing COVID-19. It is a protein-based inactivated vaccine.

Results from two main clinical trials found that Nuvaxovid® was effective at preventing COVID-19 in people from 18 years of age. The studies involved over 45,000 people in total and were carried out in the USA and Mexico, and in the UK.

The results of these two studies show a vaccine efficacy for Nuvaxovid® of around 90%. The original strain of SARS-CoV-2 and some variants of concern such as Alpha and Beta were the most common viral strains circulating when the studies were ongoing. [There is currently limited data on the efficacy of Nuvaxovid® against other variants of concern, including Omicron].

The side effects observed with Nuvaxovid® in the studies were usually mild or moderate and cleared within a couple of days after vaccination. The most common ones were tenderness or pain at the injection site, tiredness, muscle pain, headache, a general feeling of being unwell, joint pain, and nausea or vomiting.

This vaccine is not currently used in the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Ireland.

[Read more here](#)

World Health Organization approves Covovax® vaccine

The World Health Organization has issued an emergency use listing for Covovax® vaccine NVX-CoV2373. This is the same vaccine as Nuvaxovid® which has been authorised by the European Medicines Agency. Covovax® is produced by the Serum Institute of India under licence from Novavax. This vaccine is part of the COVAX facility portfolio, giving a much-needed boost to ongoing efforts to vaccinate more people in lower-income countries.

[Read more here](#)

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Covax Update

New Sodium Chloride FK added to COVAX on 21/12/21 can be used for dilution of vials for both Comirnaty for children 5 to 11 years and Comirnaty® vaccine for 12 years and over.

This is manufactured by Fresenius Kabi. It is:

- Visible on the selection of diluent/sodium chloride at the administer vaccine stage
- Important to log out of trackvax before scanning in the new assets
- Important to make sure each site has a medication management person with new permission set as this will make it easier to scan in large volumes
- SOP for loading new assets on mytrailhead COVAX training



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* Anatomic Site

Left Upper Arm

Regarding the question on prior COVID-19 infection on the medical eligibility assessment: For those receiving the booster, the text in the last 6 months has yet to be updated to in the last 3 months. When asking this question **ask in the last 3 months** and record the answer to this. We will update this on the system in the next sprint.



On behalf of the entire team in the National Immunisation Office we want to wish all our readers and vaccine advocates a very Happy Christmas and the best of wishes for 2022.

We are looking forward to working with you all again next year to continue preventing vaccine preventable diseases.

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Website

Visit our website www.immunisation.ie regularly for the most up to date information to support vaccinators and health professionals responding to queries.

Our dedicated COVID-19 Vaccination section contains

- Information from the National Immunisation Advisory Committee
- Clinical guidelines
- COVID-19 vaccine studies
- IM injection technique reminders
- Dedicated pages for the licensed COVID-19 vaccines

[Visit here](#)

HSeLand COVID-19 Vaccination Training Programme

We have developed a **NEW** HSeLand training programme for the **Children 5-11 COVID-19 vaccination programme**.

You can access updates to the National Immunisation Office COVID-19 Vaccination Training Programme for Children 5 to 11, Pfizer, Moderna, and Janssen vaccine through your HSeLand account.

[Visit HSeLand](#)

We would encourage you to log in and complete the updated content in each programme to refresh your knowledge and ensure you are up to date with your COVID-19 Vaccination Training.

If you have any issues with the platform please contact HSeLand directly.

[Contact HSeLand](#)

Do you have queries?

Clinical queries from healthcare professionals can be directed to our HSE email address.

[Send your query](#)

Should vaccines be exposed to temperatures outside of parameters please contact the National Immunisation Office pharmacists immediately. Contacts include:

- Mariangela Toma: mobile 087 7575679
- Cliona Kiersey: mobile 087 9915452

The National Immunisation Office is not involved in the allocation or delivery of COVID-19 Vaccines.

Queries that are not clinical or technical cannot be answered by the National Immunisation Office

Read about the role of the National Immunisation Office in supporting the COVID-19 vaccination programme on our [website](#).

Recommendations about COVID-19 vaccine are changing as more information becomes available so please visit our [website](#) for the most up to date information.