



**COVID-19 vaccine  
Information for people who have requested  
a non mRNA COVID-19 vaccine**



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The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) has recommended that updated COVID-19 mRNA vaccines are the preferred vaccines for use in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme in autumn/winter 2025/2026. Updated vaccines gives the best available protection against the circulating strains of COVID-19. Updated vaccines are also called the most antigenically updated vaccines.

The **Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine** is the **mRNA vaccine** available in Ireland and is being used in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. This is the most antigenically updated COVID-19 vaccine available.

If you cannot have or do not want to have an mRNA vaccine, NIAC recommend that a protein subunit vaccine can be used as an alternative vaccine. The preferred alternative protein subunit vaccine is the **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine**.

The HSE is now offering an alternative non mRNA Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine called **Novavax JN.1**. The **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine** is the only non mRNA vaccine that that is available in Ireland. However it is not as antigenically up to date as the available mRNA vaccine (**Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine**). This means it has not been updated to provide specific protection against the newest strains of the virus and may provide less protection. However, **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine** is a safe and effective vaccine and it still provides protection against the serious complications of COVID-19 infection, including hospitalisation, intensive care unit (ICU) admission and death.

In the COVID-19 vaccination programme in autumn/winter 2025/2026 you are recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine if you are:

- Aged 60 years and older
- Aged 18 years and older living in a long term care facility for older adults
- Aged 6 months and older with immunocompromise (a weak immune system)
- Aged 6 months and older with a medical condition associated with a higher risk of hospitalisation, severe disease or death due to COVID-19

Additionally, anyone aged 18 years and older who wishes to receive a COVID-19 vaccine this winter can do so, following discussion with a healthcare provider.



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If you are offered a **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1** vaccine this winter you have three options:

1. Get the available **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine now** when it is offered
2. Get an mRNA vaccine, the **Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine** (if you do not have a medical reason why you cannot have an mRNA vaccine)
3. Wait for a more antigenically updated **Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine** to become available in Ireland

The following summary table might be useful to you in being informed about your choices.

<b>Get the Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine now</b>	<b>Get an mRNA vaccine (Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine)</b>	<b>Wait for an antigenically updated Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine</b>
<b>What are the positives of this option?</b>		
<p>This is the currently available non mRNA vaccine in Ireland.</p> <p>If you are unable to have an mRNA vaccine, getting a <b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine</b> will boost your immunity and give you the best available protection against the serious complications of COVID-19.</p> <p>If you are recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine, the HSE, the World Health Organization, and the Department of Health recommend getting a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you are offered one.</p>	<p>The <b>Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine</b> is the COVID-19 vaccine recommended by NIAC. Most people can safely get this vaccine.</p> <p>Getting this antigenically updated vaccine will boost your immunity and may provide better protection than the <b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine</b> against the newer strains of COVID-19 circulating in our community.</p>	<p>Getting an antigenically updated <b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine</b> if/when it is available will boost your immunity and it may provide better protection than a <b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine</b> against the strains of COVID-19 circulating in our community.</p>
<b>Get the Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine now</b>	<b>Get an mRNA vaccine (Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine)</b>	<b>Wait for an antigenically updated Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine</b>
<b>What are the negatives of this option?</b>		
<p><b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1 vaccine</b> is not the most antigenically updated COVID-19 vaccine.</p> <p>There may be less protection provided by this vaccine against the strains of COVID-19 circulating in our community. However, it is expected that getting this vaccine will still provide protection against the serious complications of COVID-19.</p>	<p>You cannot have a <b>Comirnaty LP.8.1 vaccine</b> if you have been told by a doctor that you should not get an mRNA vaccine or you had an allergic reaction to a previous dose of an mRNA vaccine or any of its ingredients.</p>	<p>An antigenically updated <b>Nuvaxovid (Novavax) vaccine</b> is not currently available in Ireland.</p> <p>We do not know if or when this vaccine may be available. It will not be available in autumn/winter 2025/2026.</p>



## COVID-19 vaccine Information for people who have requested a non mRNA COVID-19 vaccine

You should wait at least 3 months since your last COVID-19 infection or vaccine before getting vaccinated. Both mRNA (**Comirnaty LP.8.1**) and protein subunit (**Nuvaxovid (Novavax) JN.1**) vaccines are available free of charge.

### Where to find more information

For more information about the vaccine you are being given, you can read the manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet. This is available for you on the day you get your vaccine, or you can find it here:

<https://www.fda.gov/media/186544/download?attachment>

If you have any questions about the vaccine, you can talk to a health professional, like your vaccinator, Doctor, Pharmacist or healthcare team.

You can also call HSELive on Freephone 1800 700 700. Our team are here to help Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm or Saturdays 9am to 5pm.