

# COVID-19 VACCINATION: YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

All GP practices across Worcestershire are now offering the COVID-19 vaccine to their patients in priority order and we also have three vaccination centres in the county offering the vaccine to the most vulnerable. When it is your turn to be vaccinated you will be contacted by your GP or the national booking system. You may be nervous about the vaccine or unsure whether you should accept it, these common questions answered by Dr Ian Tait, Chair of Herefordshire & Worcestershire NHS, may help.

## Which vaccine is better/more effective and are they both safe?

Both Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca are very effective vaccines. It's not as simple as saying one vaccine is better than the other. An effective vaccine will save lives and reduce hospitalisations. Both vaccines have been approved because they pass the MHRA's tests on safety and efficacy, so people should be assured that whatever vaccine they get will be highly effective and protect them from Coronavirus.

## Are there any side effects?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short-term, lasting no longer than a week, and not everyone gets them.

## Are there animal components in the vaccine?

The MHRA has confirmed that the COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine do not contain any components of animal origin.

## Can pregnant women have the Pfizer / BioNTech or Oxford/ AstraZeneca vaccines?

Women should discuss the benefits and risks of having the vaccine with their healthcare professional and reach a joint decision based on individual circumstances.

The latest advice, from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is that the vaccine should be considered for pregnant women when their risk of exposure to the virus infection is high and cannot be avoided, or if the woman has underlying conditions that place her at a very high risk of complications of Covid-19.

Women who are breastfeeding can also be given the vaccine.

## Does the Covid-19 vaccine affect fertility?

There is no evidence that the vaccine affects fertility.

## Are new strains resistant to the vaccine?

There is currently no evidence to suggest that the Pfizer/BioNTech or Astra/Oxford vaccine would not protect people against the new strain.

## Can people do what they want after they have been vaccinated?

It is essential that everyone continues to stay at home if possible whether they have had the vaccine or not.

This means it is important to continue to follow social distancing guidance social distancing guidance, wear a face mask and remember hands, face, space.

**WHEN IT'S YOUR  
TURN SAY YES  
TO THE VACCINE**

Protect yourself, your family and your community.