

## **COVID-19 vaccinations in autumn/winter 2024/25 and unpaid carers**

COVID-19 is more serious among older people and those with underlying health conditions. Vaccination against COVID-19 is very important to protect people from serious illness and to support NHS and adult social care provisions.

### **Who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in autumn/winter 2024/25?**

The groups to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine in autumn/winter 2024/25 are:

- residents in a care home for older adults
- all adults aged 65 years and over
- persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as outlined in tables 3 and 4 of the [COVID-19 chapter of UK Health Security Agency \(UKHSA\) Green Book on immunisation](#)
- pregnant women
- frontline health and social care workers and staff in care homes for older adults.

In Wales, unpaid carers are also eligible: [COVID-19 vaccination programme | GOV.WALES](#). The recommendations for who is eligible for the vaccine have been decided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), based on the [latest scientific evidence](#).

The current UK Government COVID-19 advice is available [here](#).

If you are unsure if you are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, please contact your GP.

### **How to book a COVID-19 vaccine**

Eligible people will begin receiving invitations from their health service to receive their jabs, while GP practices and other local NHS services will also be contacting people to offer both vaccines. Further information can be found online for [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and Northern [Ireland](#). Ireland.

If you are eligible for a flu vaccine, you may be able to have them at the same time – or you can have them separately.

### **Why should carers be concerned about COVID-19?**

If you are caring for an elderly, ill or disabled relative or friend we encourage you to check if they are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine as well. The vaccine should help protect the person you are caring for from serious illness.

You may wish to take extra care and precautions if you are caring for someone who is vulnerable. See the [government guidance](#) for more details about how to stay safe this winter.

### **Have unpaid carers been eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination in the past?**

Yes, during the pandemic, in particular, we campaigned for unpaid carers to be in the priority list for vaccination, which we achieved. Carers said that, as the primary carers of people with vulnerabilities, getting ill not only posed a risk to those they cared for, but would also put strains on the health and care systems.

### **What are unpaid carers raising with Carers UK now?**

Carers are telling us that they are worried about passing on the virus and posing a risk or not being able to care for the person with significant conditions or disabilities. Some have told us that they are sick with worry.

### **What is Carers UK doing about carers' concerns?**

We are encouraging all carers to make sure they, or the person they are caring for, have had the COVID-19 vaccine, if they are eligible. You can access our [online guide for carers](#) for more information.

We are concerned about carers not being eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine this winter and have raised this with senior politicians at the Labour party conference.

### **Key links for more information about the COVID-19 vaccine**

- [NHS England](#)
- [The coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine | NHS inform](#)
- [Flu vaccine and COVID-19 Autumn Vaccine - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine | nidirect](#)
- [Government guide to COVID-19 autumn vaccination](#)
- <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/covid-19-guidance/>