

COVID-19 Vaccine Myths

Myth: You can catch COVID-19 from the vaccine

Truth: You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine as they do not contain live virus and so are unable to cause disease. The vaccines contain a genetic code that our cells use to make a little bit of the COVID-19 virus which causes our immune system to produce antibodies and other anti-virus immune responses. It is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realise you have the symptoms until after your vaccination.

Myth: The vaccine changes our DNA

Truth: The vaccine cannot and does not change DNA. Vaccines alert our immune system that there is something in our body that shouldn't be there. The COVID-19 vaccine contains a little piece of the virus which prompts our immune system to mount a response against it. Our immune system remembers this response and is ready to fight COVID-19 if encountered in the future.

Myth: The vaccine isn't safe, it was created too quickly

Truth: The COVID-19 vaccines have been thoroughly tested to make sure they are safe. The NHS would not offer any COVID-19 vaccinations to the public until it is safe to do so. The [MHRA](#) standards for safety and effectiveness have not changed due to the speed of production and testing, rather than waiting until the end of the clinical trial to assess the data it has been analysed throughout the trial which has helped speed up the approval process.

Myth: The vaccine isn't safe for BAME communities

Truth: There is no evidence the vaccines will work differently in different ethnic groups. Participants in the [Pfizer](#) vaccine trials included 9.6% black/African, 26.1% Hispanic/Latino and 3.4% Asian. In the [Oxford/AstraZeneca](#) vaccine trials 10.1% of recipients were Black and 3.5% Asian. New [video](#) aims to reach ethnic minority communities hesitant over Covid vaccine.

Myth: If you have had the vaccine you cannot pass COVID-19 on to anyone else

Truth: It is not yet known whether it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus, it is expected to reduce this risk, but it is important to still follow the guidance.

Myth: You don't need the vaccine if you have already had COVID-19

Truth: Re-infection is possible, and it is not yet known how long people may be protected from getting COVID-19 if they have already had it. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 those who have had it are still offered the vaccine.

Myth: The vaccine reduces your future fertility

Truth: There is no evidence to suggest that the vaccines affect fertility. The [Public Health England](#) guidance states there is no advice to avoid pregnancy after COVID-19 vaccination.

Myth: Pregnant women should not have the vaccine

Truth: The vaccines have not yet been tested in pregnancy, so until more information is available, those who are pregnant should not routinely have this vaccine. The [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) has recognised that the potential benefits of vaccination are particularly important for some pregnant women including those who are at very high risk of catching the infection or those with clinical conditions that put them at high risk of suffering serious complications from COVID-19. Non-clinical studies of the Astra-Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine have raised no concerns. The [Public Health England](#) guidance recommends you should delay the second dose until after the pregnancy is over ([unless you are at high risk](#)) if you become pregnant after having the first dose.

Myth: If you are breastfeeding it is not safe to have the vaccine

Truth: There are no data on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in breastfeeding or on the breastfed infant. Despite this, COVID-19 vaccines are not thought to be a risk to the breastfeeding infant, and the benefits of breast-feeding are well known. [Public Health England](#) has recommended that the vaccine can be received whilst breastfeeding.

Myth: The vaccine contains pork products

Truth: Vaccine manufacturers [AstraZeneca](#) and [Pfizer/BioNTech](#) have confirmed the vaccine does not contain any animal ingredients and no animal-derived cells were used.

Myth: The vaccine contains parts of aborted foetus

Truth: [Public Health England](#) guidance confirms no foetal material is present in the final vaccine. AstraZeneca has confirmed its vaccine was not developed using MRC-5 cell lines but does use a different cell strain taken from a female foetus aborted in the 1970s. The cells are used to propagate the virus for the vaccine but these cells do not make it into the final vaccine.

Myth: You need an NHS number to have vaccine

Truth: If you do not know your number you can still register for the vaccine on the [NHS](#) website.

Myth: The vaccine contains a microchip

Truth: There is no microchip in the vaccine. This myth is thought to be linked to a [paper](#) that is not to do with COVID-19 vaccines published by MIT researchers who have developed a novel way to record a patient's vaccination history. Information is

stored in a pattern of dye, invisible to the naked eye, that is delivered under the skin at the same time as the vaccine. The dye, which consists of nanocrystals called quantum dots, can remain for at least five years under the skin, where it emits near-infrared light that can be detected by a specially equipped smartphone. It is not a microchip, the only information this dye would produce is whether or not you have had the vaccine and this novel method is not being used in the COVID-19 vaccines.

Myth: The vaccine wont work with a 12 week wait between doses

Truth: The [UK Chief Medical Officers have agreed](#) a longer timeframe between first and second doses so that more people can get their first dose quickly, and because the evidence shows that one dose still offers a high level of protection. This decision will allow us to get the maximum benefit for the most people in the shortest possible time and will help save lives.

Myth: If I'm unable to get to a mass vaccination centre I will miss the opportunity to get a vaccine

Truth: Everyone is encouraged to get [vaccinated](#) at the earliest opportunity, if you cannot or do not want to attend a mass vaccination centre you can choose to wait and get your vaccination from your GP.