

COVID-19 Vaccine – 12 to 15-year-olds

Key messages

Primary

- The COVID-19 vaccine is now available for 12 to 15-year-olds.
- The vaccine has been found to be safe and effective in 12 to 15-year-olds and many countries around the world are already vaccinating children in this age group.
- The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that the health benefits of vaccinating 12 to 15-year-olds outweigh the risks, but not sufficiently enough to recommend a universal programme on health grounds alone. It suggested the government may wish to seek further views from the Chief Medical Officers on the wider societal impacts of vaccinating 12 to 15-year-olds, including educational benefits, which are outside the remit of the JCVI, before reaching a decision.
- The Chief Medical Officers in the UK recommended that vaccination should be offered to all children 12 years and over having considered the wider impacts to young peoples' education.
- It's important for children and young people and their parents or carers to discuss the vaccine and come to a decision together. Where possible, parents and carers will be invited to accompany their children to their vaccine appointment and will be given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the benefits and risks of the vaccine.
- Individual choice should be respected for the decisions young people and their parents or carers make in accepting, or not accepting the vaccine offer.
- If you are aged 12-15 or are the parent or carer of someone in that age group, visit [NHSinform.scot/12to15](https://www.nhs.uk/informationscotland/12to15) for more information or speak to your vaccinator who can answer any questions.
- One dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, which has been approved for this age group, will be offered in a range of settings depending on the Health Board area.
- Advice on second doses for 12 to 15-year-olds will continue to be monitored.

Secondary

- Until now the vaccine has only been available in Scotland to 12 to 15-year-olds who are at increased risk of serious illness from COVID-19 or those aged 12-15 who are household contacts of adults or children who are immunosuppressed.
- It is likely that vaccination will help reduce (but not eliminate) disruption to education.
- Young people aged 12-15 should get agreement from their parents or carers before getting the COVID-19 vaccine, but it isn't always necessary. More information can be found on [young people's right to consent](#).