

April 23

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Spring 23 COVID-19 – vaccination update from the government

You have been given this letter because you are a person receiving haemodialysis treatment. We wish to update you as to how to receive your spring Covid vaccination booster.

The delivery of Covid vaccination has now moved to the community. We will no longer be able to administer in the dialysis units.

People with kidney disease continue to be more likely to contract Covid-19 due to their weakened immune systems. We continue to recommend that you should be vaccinated to help protect you.

If you have difficulty accessing the community service please discuss with your Head nurse who will assist to make sure that you do not miss your dose .**The information from the government is copied below for your information and available at:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-spring-booster-resources/a-guide-to-the-covid-19-spring-booster-2023>

Spring booster eligibility

COVID-19 is more serious in older people and in people with certain underlying health conditions. For these reasons, people aged 75 years and over, those in care homes, and those aged 5 years and over with a weakened immune system are being offered a spring booster of COVID-19 vaccine.

Timing of the spring booster

You should be offered an appointment between April and June, with those at highest risk being called in first. You will be invited to have your booster around 6 months from your last dose but you can have it from 3 months.

If you are turning 75 years of age between April and June, you will be called for vaccination during the campaign; you do not have to wait for your birthday.

Vaccines in use this spring

You will be given a booster dose of a vaccine made by Pfizer, Moderna or Sanofi and approved in the UK. These vaccines have been updated since the original vaccines and target different COVID-19 variants. For a very small number of people another vaccine product may be advised by your doctor.

These updated vaccines boost protection well, and give slightly higher levels of antibody against the more recent strains of COVID-19 (Omicron) than the vaccines you would have received previously.

As we cannot predict which variants of COVID-19 will be circulating this spring and summer, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has concluded that all of these vaccines can be used and that no one should delay vaccination to receive a different vaccine.

The Sanofi vaccine contains an adjuvant (a chemical used to improve the immune response to the virus). This vaccine will only be offered to older people, who may respond less well to vaccines. The adjuvant in the COVID-19 vaccine is similar to the one used in the flu vaccine which is routinely given to over 65 year olds. The NHS website has more information [about vaccine ingredients](#).

Please accept the vaccination that is offered to you as soon as you are able to – you will be offered the right vaccine for you at the right time.

You will be invited for your booster, your GP may offer you the vaccine or you can book using [the NHS app](#) for [Apple](#) or [Android](#). You can also find your [nearest walk-in vaccination site](#) from the NHS website.

Imperial guidance

We continue to isolate people with Covid-19 at the Charing Cross unit. The Charing Cross unit has been chosen as it has good access to treatments for Covid, maintains the efficiency of the transport service and is on a hospital site with access to emergency care if required. We recognise that this can be unsettling and inconvenient but please be assured, your safety is of the highest priority and no decisions are taken without serious thought and consideration. This decision is constantly reviewed as we move further out of the pandemic.

Please continue to follow the guidance for people with kidney disease below whilst in the unit or travelling by hospital transport. This information is under constant review.

- We still see Covid outbreaks where a number of patients are infected due to a positive patient mixing with other people without correct mask wearing. We ask you to wear your mask correctly and to continue to respect social distancing whilst in the unit and not to walk around to chat to others.
- You should only remove your mask whilst in your dialysis chair to eat or drink.
- We ask you to wear a mask correctly whilst on transport.
- We will check your temperature when you enter the unit and you will be asked about any symptoms (temperature, headache, cough, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, upset stomach, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of appetite).
- You must wash or gel your hands on arrival, and wear a face covering at all times
- Dialysis chairs are spaced by two metre to reduce the risk of cross infection for all types of infection.
- If you develop any symptoms at home, please call the dialysis centre **before** you come in for dialysis. This is to reduce contact with other patients. Your dialysis **must** continue, we will arrange testing and transfer you to Charing Cross if positive
- If you have symptoms of Covid-19 you will need to travel in alone if you require the patient transport service
- We recommend keep a supply of lateral flow tests at home which are available for free via the government website.
- Please DO NOT share any food with others.
- If you have been told you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for Covid-19, you must inform us so that we can arrange to test you. We also recommend that you check a lateral flow yourself at home.

If you have any questions, please raise them with the dialysis unit team or Head nurse.

Yours sincerely

Helen watts – Lead Nurse
Dr Marie Condon – Clinical Director