



COVID-19 vaccinations in autumn/winter 2025/26 and unpaid carers

COVID-19 is more serious among older people and those with underlying health conditions. Vaccination against COVID-19 can help to protect people from serious illness.

Who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in autumn/winter 2025/26?

The groups to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine in autumn/winter 2025/26 are:

- residents in a care home for older adults
- all adults aged 75 years and over
- persons aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed, as outlined in tables 3 and 4 of the [COVID-19 chapter of UK Health Security Agency \(UKHSA\) Green Book on immunisation](#)

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 be offered an appointment between October and December, with those at highest risk being called in first. You should have your vaccine at least three months after your last one. Further information can be found online for [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern 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.

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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 whose condition makes them 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, we successfully campaigned for unpaid carers to be included on the priority list for vaccination when the virus was at its peak. Carers said that becoming ill not only posed a risk to those they care for, but would also place additional pressure on health and social care systems.

What are unpaid carers raising with Carers UK now?

Carers tell us that they are worried about passing on the virus and posing a risk or not being able to care for the person(s) with significant conditions or disabilities.

They are also raising concerns about the fact they cannot get the vaccination and about raising the age level for vaccine eligibility to 75.

Carers UK is listening to 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 have raised carers' concerns with the JCVI – the body that provides advice to the Government on vaccinations.

In response to this, the JCVI has explained that the benefit of vaccinating an individual in order to reduce the risk of serious disease in other people is much less evident now compared with previous years. They have stated that the focus of the COVID-19 vaccination programme is on offering vaccination to those most likely to directly benefit from vaccination.

Since autumn 2024 the JCVI advice has not included an offer of COVID-19 vaccination to unpaid carers, frontline health and social care workers or household contacts of people with immunosuppression under the national programme. In autumn 2024, the Government chose to extend the offer of COVID-19 vaccination to frontline health and social care workers in order to allow healthcare providers to

Updated 13.10.25

consider whether it would be appropriate to offer an occupational COVID-19 vaccination programme in the future. This extension has not been offered for autumn 2025, meaning that frontline health and social care workers will not be eligible for COVID-19 vaccination under the national programme this year.

The JCVI says that it acknowledges the significant role of unpaid carers and supports the offer of clinically appropriate vaccines to carers. The JCVI has stated that it is very important that all carers are up to date with routine immunisations. They recommend that carers with incomplete or unknown vaccine history should contact their GP practice for further assistance. Further details on the complete routine immunisation schedule can be found here: [Complete routine immunisation schedule - GOV.UK.](#)

If you are the main carer for someone who may be put at risk if you become ill, you should be offered a free flub jab. You should also be offered one if you're receiving Carer's Allowance (or Carer Support Payment in Scotland). For more information, please see this [webpage](#).

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/>