

Update for General Practice on frequent enquiries regarding COVID vaccination

Dear Colleague

We are conscious that the number of clinical referrals being sent to the COVID contact centre is increasing and the vast majority of these citizens could in fact attend their scheduled appointment.

We hope you find this information helpful in supporting any discussion with your patients

Bulk Appointments are now complete although small numbers of people are continuing to self-register and receive appointments. If anyone has been missed they should use the self registration option on NHS Inform

Choice of Vaccine

We are not in a position to offer people a choice of vaccine

Those over 40 will be offered the Astra Zeneca vaccine

The Green Book indicates the following

Aged 40 years and over or in high risk groups

Individuals aged 40 years and over, those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and those in clinical risk groups (see table 3) are at high risk of the complications of COVID-19. The JCVI, MHRA and WHO consider that any risk from the rare side effects seen after AstraZeneca vaccine are outweighed by the benefits of vaccination. These individuals can therefore be offered vaccination with any of the available products, unless otherwise contra-indicated.

The *only* individuals contraindicated to the AZ vaccine are

Individuals with past clotting episodes and those diagnosed with thrombophilia, whether or not they are on long term anti-coagulation, remain at risk of COVID-19 disease. There is no evidence that those with a prior history of thrombosis or known risk factors for thrombosis are more at risk of developing this immune-mediated condition of thrombosis in combination with thrombocytopenia after the AstraZeneca vaccine. For most of these individuals, the risk of recurrent thrombosis due to COVID-19 infection, remains far greater than the risk of this syndrome. Therefore individuals aged 40 years and over with such a history should be vaccinated with any of the available vaccines (provided they are not otherwise contra-indicated). The same consideration applies to those who experience common clotting episodes after the first dose of AstraZeneca vaccine but without concomitant thrombocytopenia.

Early Second Doses

For both adenovirus vector and mRNA vaccines, there is evidence of better immune response and/or protection where longer intervals between doses are used.

Currently, JCVI is recommending an interval of 8 to 12 weeks between doses of all the available COVID-19 vaccines. NHSGGC residents are being offered appointments at 8 weeks currently.

We are not in a position to administer a second dose in less than 56 days unless someone is about to start immunosuppressive treatment.

We are not in a position to offer people an earlier second dose for the purposes of travel or work.

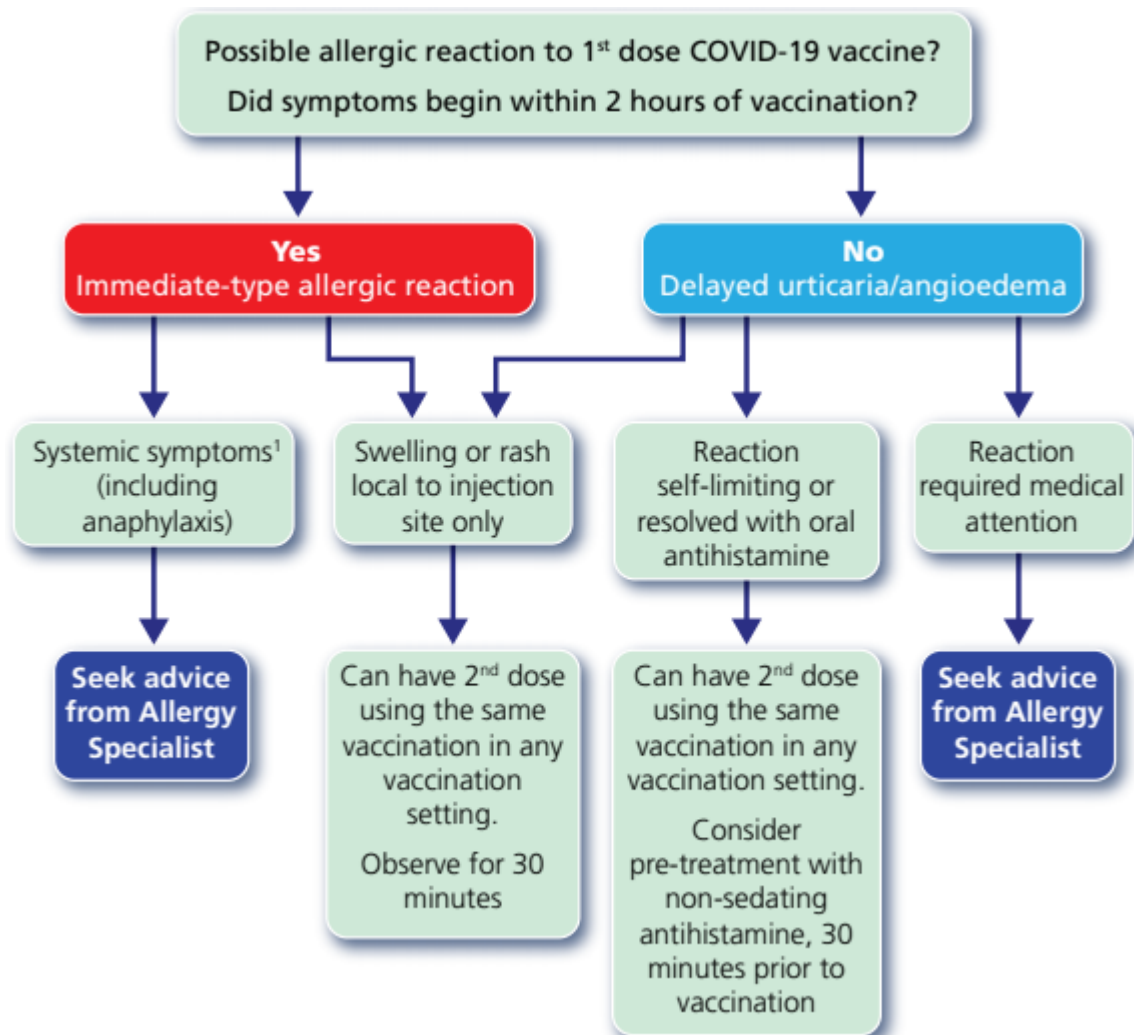
We follow national policy based on JCVI advice and we do not have discretion to decide on these issues locally

Allergic reactions

Anyone with a previous history of allergic reactions **to the ingredients of the vaccine** should not receive the Pfizer vaccine, but those **with any other allergies** (such as a food or penicillin allergy) **can have the vaccine**

Individuals with non-allergic reactions (vasovagal episodes, non-urticarial skin reaction or non-specific symptoms) to the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine can receive the second dose of vaccine in any vaccination setting.

A small number of people will require review by the national allergy MDT or to attend a clinic in a hospital setting as per the following flow chart and these people should be referred into the contact centre



We have an allergy clinic once a month and patients will be sent an appointment directly

Please only use the clinical referral form where someone meets these clinical criteria for an alternative or earlier vaccine

If they are not being progressed you will be contacted and advised of this

The 'Where to direct queries' document (latest version attached) should also continue to answer most patient queries.