

JCVI issues interim advice on COVID-19 booster vaccination

Press release

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has been asked to consider the options for a potential coronavirus (COVID-19) booster programme.



The JCVI's interim advice is that any potential COVID-19 booster programme should be offered in 2 stages from September, starting with those most at risk from serious disease. This includes care home residents, people aged over 70, frontline health and social care workers, clinically extremely vulnerable adults and those who are immunosuppressed.

Professor Wei Shen Lim, COVID-19 Chair for JCVI, said:

The primary objective of any potential COVID-19 booster vaccine programme should be to reduce serious disease, including death.

The JCVI's interim advice is that, should a booster programme be required, a third COVID-19 vaccine dose should be offered to the most vulnerable first, starting from September 2021 to maximise individual protection and safeguard the NHS ahead of winter. Almost all these people would also be eligible for the annual flu vaccine and are strongly advised to have the flu vaccine.

We will continue to review emerging scientific data over the next few months, including data relating to the duration of immunity from the current vaccines. Our final advice on booster vaccination may change substantially.

In Stage 1 of a potential booster vaccination programme for 2021 to 2022, the following groups should be offered a booster dose and the flu vaccine from September:

- adults aged 16 years and over who are immunosuppressed
- those living in residential care homes for older adults
- all adults aged 70 years or over
- adults aged 16 years and over who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable
- frontline health and social care workers

In Stage 2, the following groups should be offered a booster dose as soon as practicable after Stage 1, with equal emphasis on the flu vaccine where eligible:

- all adults aged 50 years and over
- all adults aged 16 to 49 years who are in an influenza or COVID-19 at-risk group
- adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals

As most younger adults will only receive their second COVID-19 vaccine dose in late summer, the benefits of booster vaccination in this group will be considered at a later time when more information is available.

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