

Love Island star urges Brits to get their COVID jab

- Yewande Biala releases video to encourage young people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds to get COVID jab
- In the video, she speaks with Professor Kevin Fenton and Dr Emeka Okorochoa to address the most common questions on the vaccines
- Video is part of efforts to tackle vaccine hesitancy and boost uptake as COVID vaccine is offered to all adults by the end of July

Today, Yewande – a science graduate who worked in vaccine development – has released a video in which she discusses the COVID-19 vaccine with Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director at Public Health England, and Dr Emeka Okorochoa, a frontline A&E doctor, to help answer common questions from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities about the jab.

Yewande, Professor Fenton and Dr Emeka discussed the strict safety and effectiveness standards that have to be met before a vaccine is approved, addressed some of the false information on social media about vaccines, and talked about how local communities are working to increase vaccine uptake across the country.

They discussed why people from BAME backgrounds are disproportionately affected by COVID-19, the risks of sharing false information and the importance of younger people getting vaccinated when they are invited to protect themselves and those around them from coronavirus.

Yewande Biala said:

As someone that has previously worked with vaccines, I feel like I have a responsibility to help to increase confidence and trust in communities where there has been low take-up.

It was important for me to hopefully educate people on the importance of vaccines and in particular the COVID-19 vaccine, helping to answer some questions they might have.

Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Nadhim Zahawi said:

Effective vaccines will not only protect people from coronavirus, they will save thousands of lives and we want every eligible person to benefit from a free vaccination, regardless of their ethnicity or religious beliefs.

The government and the NHS are working hard to encourage people in all communities to come forward and accept the offer of a jab when it comes, and it's great to have Yewande support these efforts to

boost vaccine uptake among young people and those from minority ethnic groups.

The vaccination programme will continue to expand over the coming weeks and we remain on track to meet our target of offering the vaccine to all adults by the end of July.

Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director at Public Health England said:

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a devastating year which has touched every corner of our lives and the consequences have been felt deeply in black, Asian and minority ethnic communities who have been disproportionately affected by the virus. The reasons for the health inequalities due to COVID-19 are complex but are linked to demographic, underlying health, geographical and socioeconomic factors, such as where you live or the occupation you're in.

It's important we all take advantage of getting vaccinated so we are protected as we ease out of lockdown and remerge into society.

Over 24 million people have now received their first COVID-19 vaccine dose, meaning almost half of the adult population have been vaccinated and will soon develop strong protection from serious illness, saving countless lives and significantly reducing pressures on the NHS.

People who have received a letter inviting them for a jab can log on to the national booking service at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination.

[Watch the video.](#)

Professor Kevin Fenton is Regional Director at Public Health England and has worked in a variety of public health roles across government and academia.

Dr Emeka is a frontline A&E medical doctor who is passionate about providing good healthcare and healthcare education to the public. Dr Emeka posts informative and engaging social media videos on important medical facts, health advice, myth busting and COVID-19 updates, which his thousands of followers find beneficial.

Among adults aged 16 to 29 years, 17% reported hesitancy towards the coronavirus vaccine, compared with 1% of adults aged 80 years and over, according to the [latest ONS data](#). This was the highest of all age groups. The data also indicates that less than half (49%) of black or black British adults reported that they were likely to have the vaccine; higher proportions were reported amongst white (85%) and mixed ethnicity (80%) groups.

Each of the vaccines are tested on tens of thousands of people across the world. They are tested on both men and women, on people from different ethnic backgrounds, representative of the UK population and of all ages between 18 and 84. All vaccines being used in the UK have undergone robust clinical

trials and have met the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's strict standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccines, see the [frequently asked questions answered by Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Jonathan Van-Tam](#).