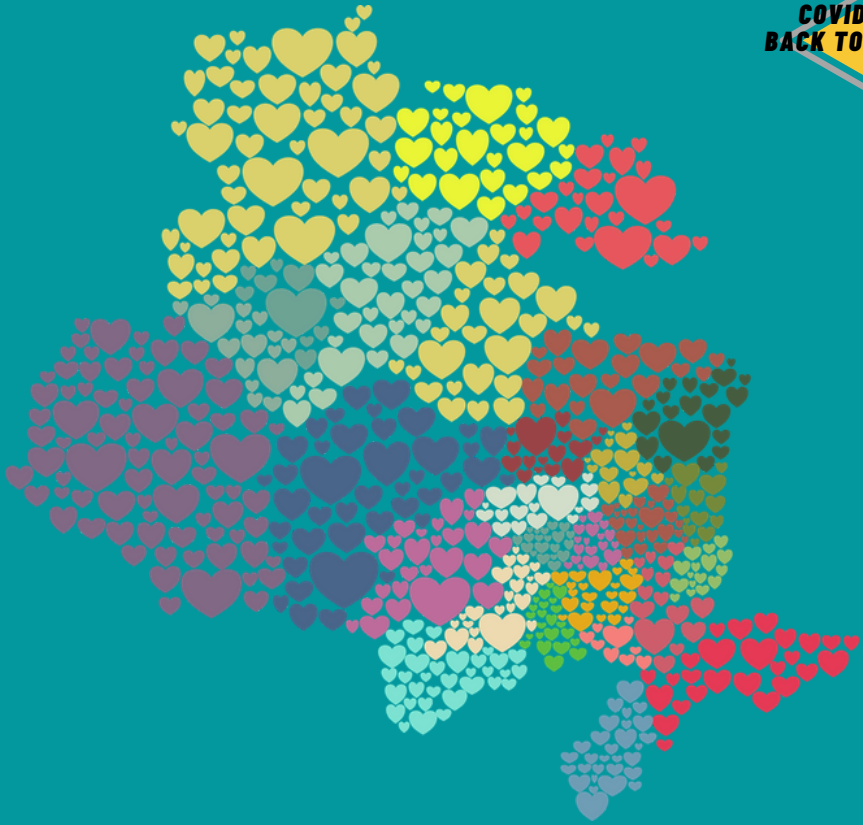


**COVID-19:
BACK TO BASICS**



Covid-19 vaccines

All you *needle* to know



COMMUNITY ACTION
Bradford & District



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Introduction

Covid-19 vaccinations are now under way in our District. Understandably people have lots of questions and much of this information exists, but you've asked us to put it all in one place, so here goes!

The Small Print

Firstly, we've tried (really hard!) to provide as much information as we can. The world of vaccinations changes regularly, from what vaccines are available, who is eligible to get it, to when, where and how. So, everything in this document was correct at the time of publication (15th March 2021).

We're keeping a close eye on the latest information and we will update you if anything changes, but our first 'ask' is this - if there are gaps, please let us know by emailing us at: info@cabad.org.uk



We're not scientists so we've presented the information in the most accessible and easiest way to understand. Our second 'ask' is, if something doesn't make sense or is too simplistic and you need more info, please let us know and we'll revisit it.

The majority of our information is from the [NHS](#) (they are leading on the vaccinations) along with Public Health England (PHE).

There is also the [West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership](#) website.



Really, really important...

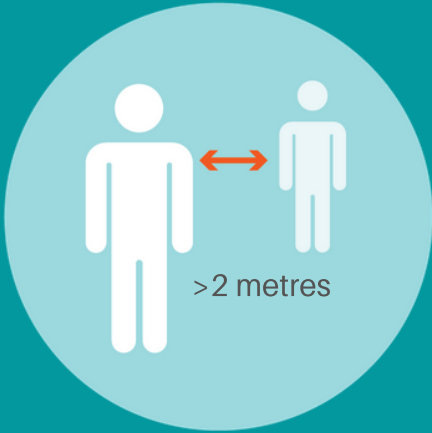
The roll out of the vaccine is undoubtedly a great weapon in our fight against Covid-19. However, we must not get complacent. To protect yourselves, loved ones and communities, whether you've had the vaccine or not, we must all still follow the safety guidelines.



Wash or sanitise your hands regularly



Wear a face covering



Try to maintain a 2 metre distance



Vaccinate to protect yourself further



If you are asked to self isolate or have any symptoms, please stay at home to protect yourself and others. Don't forget there are services that are #StillHereToHelp

Back to basics...

You may or may not know what a virus and a vaccine is and how they work. If you do know, turn over the page, if not - here are some simple explanations.

What is a virus?

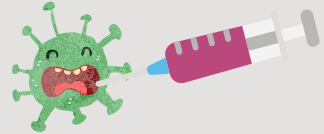
Viruses are a type of germ. They're very tiny and when they get inside your body, they can make you sick.

Viruses cause colds, chicken pox, measles, flu and many other diseases.







If you would like to know more about viruses, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPCckjHzCb3A>

What is a vaccine?

Vaccines offer you protection. They are a way of alerting your body to a potential threat, and teaching your immune system how to fight it - so that if that threat appears your body is ready to deal with it quickly, preventing you from getting ill.



Do vaccines work?

DISEASE	CASES THEN*	CASES NOW**	DECREASE
WHOOPING COUGH 	19,878	1,275	93%
MEASLES 	61,370	83	99%
CHICKENPOX 	72,343	464	99%
MUMPS 	47,671	94	99%
DIPHTHERIA 	9,010	0	100%
POLIO 	5,384	0	100%

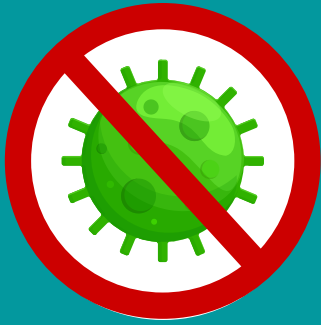
*'Then' references a year before vaccine introduction for each disease.

By the way...

Vaccines do not alter your DNA or genetic material and you cannot get Covid-19 from the vaccine.



Why do I need a vaccine?



The approved Covid-19 vaccines offer you protection from the virus. Vaccines are a vital part of ending the Covid-19 pandemic. Through vaccination we can protect those most at risk from getting the virus, which means less people will be admitted to hospital, and less people will die.

When as many people as possible are vaccinated, it will make it much harder for the virus to spread. The vaccines against Covid-19 are one of the key ways we will stop this pandemic and with time we can hopefully start to get back to our normal ways of life.

However, having a Covid-19 vaccine won't stop the pandemic immediately. It will take time, and as we've already said (because this is really, really important) everyone needs to continue the following if we're to stop the spread of the virus:

- Hands - Face - Space
- Self-isolate if you have the virus or you have been in close contact with a positive case
- Get tested if you have symptoms



Do I have to have a vaccine?

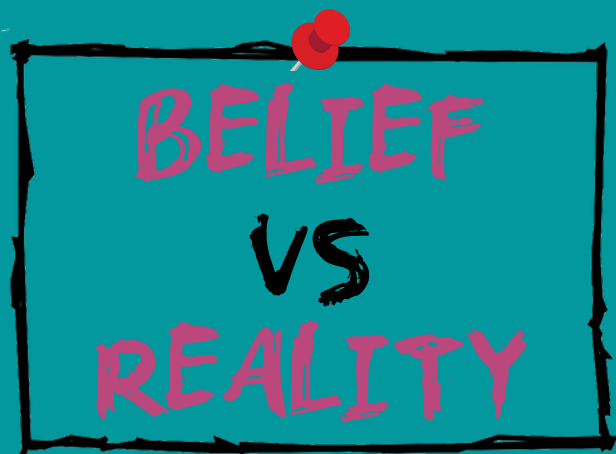
Fact: It's this simple. It is your choice whether to have the vaccine.

As with all other vaccines, there is no intention to make the Covid-19 vaccine compulsory in the UK. If the time comes when the vaccine is offered to people under the age of 18, children will not be vaccinated without consent from parents or guardians.

You will not be fined or arrested for not having the vaccine.

Safety first

We know that safety is the most important thing - to those receiving the vaccine and to those who are giving the vaccine. In the next section, we cover all you need to know about vaccine safety. We hope it helps.



Beliefs: We know that some people are concerned that approval for the Covid-19 vaccines seems to have happened really quickly, perhaps too quickly. Were corners cut? Standards dropped? The answer is no.

The reality: It is true that most vaccines usually take many years to be developed. However, in this case, Governments around the world (including the UK) have invested billions of pounds to speed up the vaccine development, but the approvals process has remained the same as it is for any vaccine.

Scientists across the world have worked together in tackling the pandemic. Worldwide funding has been committed to support research and development to find a vaccine that works. This means they were able to complete years of work in months.

Focus on the facts: The vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness as set out by the regulatory body, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The MHRA follow international standards of safety.

Any vaccine that is approved must go through all the clinical trials and safety checks.



Safety continued...

Did the trials include different ethnic groups and ages?

The answer is yes. Tens of thousands of people from across the world have taken part in vaccine trials, including a fantastic response from residents right here in the Bradford District at the National Institute for Health Research.

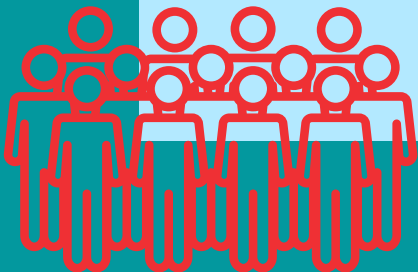
All the vaccines approved for use in the UK included trial participants from a wide range of age groups and ethnic backgrounds.



How do we know there won't be side effects later on?

This is another popular question. Millions of people have been given a Covid-19 vaccine so far, including people who took part in the vaccine trials, and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions have been incredibly rare.

The vaccines were given to tens of thousands of people during their clinical trials which took place several months ago and no major side effects or safety concerns have been reported. That's reassuring.



It is also reassuring that vaccinations have been used to fight diseases around the world for a very long time. Although the Covid-19 vaccine is new, it has been made by scientists with decades of experience and expertise working on similar vaccines - none of which have been shown to have long term impacts (apart from saving millions of lives of course!).

Does the vaccine make you ill?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. This doesn't mean that every person who has a vaccine will experience side effects, or that the side effects will be particularly bad.

Most side effects are mild and short term, and tend to happen in the first couple of days after the vaccination and can last a few days. Common side effects include:

- a sore arm where the needle went in
- feeling tired
- a headache
- feeling achy
- feeling or being sick
- General aches and pains, or mild flu like symptoms



**GOOD
NEWS!**

All vaccines approved in the UK have been shown to be safe and highly effective. The important thing is that they will protect you from becoming seriously ill from Covid-19.

What about allergic reactions?

This will be discussed with you when you are booking your appointment, and if necessary, the NHS will ensure you are offered the correct vaccine for you.

If you have a known allergy to any vaccine ingredients this will be picked up by a medical professional and you will be monitored if necessary.



Covid-19 vaccine and fertility

There has been a lot of misinformation about the vaccine affecting fertility. Doctors and midwives have spoken publicly to reassure men and women that there is no evidence of the vaccine affecting fertility.



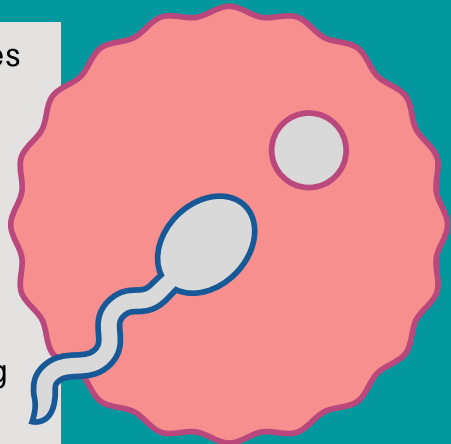
Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists Dr Edward Morris, President at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, said:

"Claims of any effect of Covid-19 vaccination on fertility are speculative and not supported by any data. There is no biologically plausible mechanism by which current vaccines would cause any impact on women's fertility"



Like all vaccines, the Covid-19 vaccines teach your body to fight the disease and to develop antibodies to do this. They do not have any ingredients that would affect fertility and the components leave the body within a few days.

It is standard practice for new medicines not to be recommended for pregnant women or those planning a pregnancy. The independent body responsible for assessing the safety of vaccines (the Joint Committee for Vaccinations & Immunisations), has now updated its advice and says there is no need for women to delay pregnancy after having either vaccine.



FAQ's: If you have more questions than we've answered, take a look at [this document](#) from the British Fertility Society.

Covid-19 vaccine and pregnancy

What are your options if your pregnant?

Trials testing the vaccine in pregnant and breastfeeding women have not yet been completed. Whether to get the vaccine in pregnancy is your choice.

What are the benefits of the vaccination?

Covid-19 may be more dangerous in pregnancy. Studies have shown that hospital admission and severe illness may be more common in pregnant women (compared to those not pregnant), especially in the third trimester of pregnancy, and that pre-term birth is more likely (compared to pregnant women without Covid-19).

What are the risks of the vaccination?

Covid-19 vaccines have not yet been tested specifically in pregnant women, although available data does not indicate any safety concern or harm to pregnancy. We do not know whether the vaccine works as well in pregnancy. There's no evidence the Covid-19 vaccine is unsafe if you're pregnant, but more evidence is needed before you can routinely be offered it.



Your options:

Get a Covid-19 vaccine

OR

Wait for more information about the vaccine in pregnancy

Who can be vaccinated?

The Covid-19 vaccination is only offered to two groups of pregnant women, those with high risk medical conditions (clinically extremely vulnerable) and health or social care workers who are at very high risk of catching Covid-19.

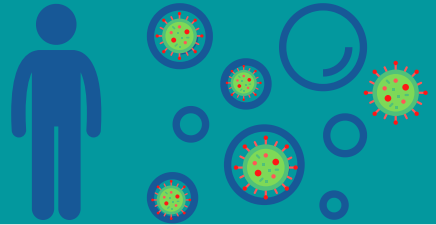
How effective are the vaccines?

No vaccine is 100% effective. For the Covid-19 vaccine, the first dose gives us some protection and then the second dose boosts that protection - studies show up to 95% effectiveness.

unvaccinated
no protection



vaccinated
up to 95% protection



Will the vaccine prevent the spread of Covid-19?

We know the vaccines prevent people becoming unwell with Covid-19, and scientists are still looking at the evidence about how effectively the vaccines will prevent the spread of the virus.

In the long term, the vaccine will protect our community. When a lot of people are vaccinated the virus has a harder time circulating because most of the people it encounters are unlikely to catch it.

The more people who are vaccinated, the better chance we have of controlling the virus and getting back to our normal ways of life.



Do the right thing

It's important you continue to follow the **hands, face, space** safety measures to prevent the spread.

The 'Big 3' vaccinations - UK

The three vaccines approved for use in the UK (at the time of writing) are the Pfizer/BioNTech, Oxford/AstraZeneca and Moderna vaccines.

The vaccines are usually described by the names of the organisation that developed them.



Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna have both developed a type of vaccine which involves injecting a tiny part of the virus's code into the body, this gives your body the tools to defend itself (by producing antibodies) - this is not a live virus.



The Moderna vaccine is likely to be available in the UK from Spring 2021, while Pfizer and Oxford are currently being rolled out nationwide.



The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is slightly different; it uses an inactive part of a harmless virus as a vehicle to carry the virus's code into the body. This is the same technique used for other vaccines such as the flu.



Both of these vaccination methods have been used safely in other vaccinations.

Safe to take?

What are the ingredients?

Well, we're not scientists and unless you are, the list of ingredients probably won't make much sense. The vaccines are made with ingredients that are safe and used widely in many other medications.

You can find the full list of ingredients for all UK approved vaccines at www.nhs.uk/Coronavirus

What we can say is, the vaccine does not contain any:



Foetal product/cells



Animal product including egg or pork



Live virus

Further questions?

If you have a specific question about how the vaccine may affect you and you cannot find the answer on a reputable and trusted website (NHS, Public Health, Gov UK) or in this booklet, we would advise you speak to a qualified healthcare professional.



Social media is not always a reliable source of information. False information can spread quickly, so you should do your own research and refer to trusted documents and websites only.



The vaccines cannot replicate once inside your system and they cannot give you Covid-19.

Second dose

All three vaccines will be given through a first dose, followed by a second dose a number of weeks later.



People need two doses of the vaccine to give them maximum and longer lasting protection from the effects of the virus



Evidence shows that people build up a better protection to Covid-19 symptoms when the vaccine is given in two smaller doses, with an interval between them



For both vaccines currently being given, the second dose will come around 12 weeks after the first

Why was the timing for second doses changed?

The UK Chief Medical Officers agreed a longer timeframe between first and second doses so that more people can get their first dose quickly. Medical experts agree this is safe and the evidence shows that one dose still offers a high level of protection after two weeks.

This decision helps us to get more people protected in the shortest time possible, it will save lives. Getting both doses is still important for that longer lasting protection so people are urged to return for their second dose when invited.



PS... More than one dose isn't something new!

Have you ever had a Tetanus jab? Booster shots are given every ten years to give you long lasting immunity for those aged nineteen to sixty-five. It's the same concept!

Choosing your vaccine



Can I choose which vaccine I get?

You cannot choose which vaccine you receive because medical staff will be using the vaccine that is available to them at the time of your appointment. The medical staff will ask questions to determine if the offered vaccine is suitable for you.



Is one vaccine better than the other?

Both vaccines have been shown to be safe and highly effective. The important thing is that they will both protect you from becoming seriously ill from Covid-19.



What about wastage of vaccines?

A vaccine dose is left over when eligible patients fail to show up for their appointment. In this instance, the principle is to avoid wastage as vaccinations have a limited shelf life. All vaccination sites are working hard to make sure there is no waste by calling in eligible patients at short notice to fill appointments if needed.



Can I still attend my appointment during the national lockdown?

Yes! Getting the Covid-19 vaccine, or any other vaccine, is an important medical appointment and is within the rules no matter where you live. If you have booked or are offered an appointment, please attend.



Who decides who gets the vaccine?

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is an independent expert committee that advises the UK on vaccine safety. They have decided the order that people get offered the vaccine based on vulnerability.

Order of the vaccine

The JCVI have prioritised the order of vaccinations based on who is at the biggest risk from Covid-19, these people will get the vaccine first which makes total sense. Their recommendations are based on preventing Covid-19 deaths, and protecting health and social care staff, including the NHS.

Age is the biggest factor in death from Covid-19. The JCVI have reflected this in their recommendations.

The recommendations are that people are vaccinated in the following order:

1. Care home residents and staff
2. People aged 80 and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. People aged 75 and over
4. People aged 70 and over, and 'clinically extremely vulnerable' and shielding
5. People aged 65 and over
6. People aged 16 to 64 with health conditions putting them at greater risk, carers and people with learning disabilities
7. People aged 60 and over
8. People aged 55 and over
9. People aged 50 and over
10. All other adults working down the age groups in order e.g. 45 and over, 40 and over etc.



At the time of print many of these groups have already been vaccinated, that's millions of adults in the UK with protection from Covid-19!

How do I get vaccinated?

Can any member of the public be vaccinated? Can they just walk in to a service?

No, people are being offered vaccinations in the order the JCVI have recommended and will only be able to get a vaccine if they have an appointment. The NHS will contact people when it is their turn to book an appointment, this will either be from your GP practice or a letter from the national booking system.

The NHS are opening up appointment as they move through the priority groups - for the latest information about which groups can book an appointment please check [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk).



The easiest way to book your appointment is through the national booking service which can be accessed on the NHS website when you are eligible.

You can choose a date, time and location that suits you!

Can people get a vaccine without their NHS number or if they aren't registered with a GP?

While the NHS write to people based on their GP records, you will still be able to get vaccinated if you aren't registered or don't have an NHS number. It does help to be registered with a GP so the NHS can check for any reasons that you might not be able to get a vaccine, and make sure there is a record that both doses of the vaccine have been given.

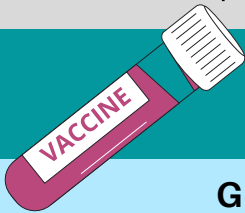
Details of how to register with a GP are available on the NHS website. If you have problems registered with a GP surgery, call the NHS England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 311 2233.

Anyone unable to book online can call 119 free of charge, anytime between 7am and 11pm seven days a week.

Vaccination day

People may understandably feel nervous about going to a vaccine centre when they have been staying at home and avoiding contact with other people. This section shares what measures will be in place when it's your time to go to your appointment.

- All the vaccine centres have been designed to keep people safe from Covid-19 and have strict cleaning and social distancing procedures in place
- All staff will be wearing masks and other protective equipment to keep themselves and you safe, people will be asked to wear face coverings whilst in the centre
- People still need to follow the guidance even after they've been vaccinated. This is because, while the vaccine prevents people becoming ill from Covid-19, it's too early to know if it will stop them spreading the virus to others



Getting a vaccination

There are several different places where people can get vaccinated. This could be a hospital, a community vaccination centre, a local pharmacy, or a GP practice.

There are also a number of large vaccination centres. People who are eligible and live within a reasonable travelling distance (45-minute drive) of these centres will get a letter from the national booking system inviting them to make an appointment here.

The large centres in West Yorkshire can change regularly so please refer to [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) for the full list of vaccination sites.



People who are housebound will be contacted by their GP about alternative ways to get vaccinated.

My vaccination experience

Salma Hussain is a Stronger Families keyworker who was vaccinated at Bradford Royal Infirmary. Here's what she had to say about her experience:

Getting a vaccination

"At first I said no to the vaccination because I was worried and unsure about the side effects. I did know the vaccine was safe for Muslims though.

I spoke to my manager and my brother who talked it through with me and encouraged me to have it. In the end it was going to be my choice and I said yes - mainly for my children and to help me to continue the work that I do with families safely. I was also thinking ahead to the future and going on a holiday (remember those!), perhaps to Pakistan.

I went for my vaccination, it was so well organised. Parking was easy and free too! There were really helpful marshals on hand to direct me and clear signs to follow.

The nurses and staff were so helpful, patient and friendly, but most importantly I never felt rushed. I asked questions and they readily answered them which not only reassured me that I was doing the right thing, but helped to relax me too.

I got my vaccination 'prescription' and then went to another queue to get the vaccination. It was quick and easy and I remember thinking afterwards, why I was so anxious about it all?

I then sat in one of the lecture theatres for 15 - 20 minutes so the staff could check that I was ok. I had a sore arm for a couple of days after, but otherwise I felt ok.

I would definitely recommend the vaccination to other people, we all need to do our bit if we're to protect each other and get back to some sense of normality."



Conspiracy theories and beliefs

And finally, the elephant in the room...

In the first pandemic of this digital age, there has been a huge and worrying amount of conspiracy theories and disinformation spreading across so many different platforms, especially on social media.

Where conspiracy theorists once seemed alien to us, they are now far more familiar – sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, neighbours and friends to mention but a few. Some people say we should ignore the conspiracy theories, that they'll go away on their own. So we'd like to be clear why we're addressing this.

The vaccine offers people vital protection against the effects of Covid-19 so it is very important that people are acting on **accurate information** before making a decision on whether to have it.

The NHS website has lots of information on the vaccine as well as links to other trusted sources of information:
www.nhs.uk/CovidVaccine

What follows is a summary of the conspiracy theories and beliefs we know exist and the facts behind these statements.



Conspiracy theories and beliefs continued...



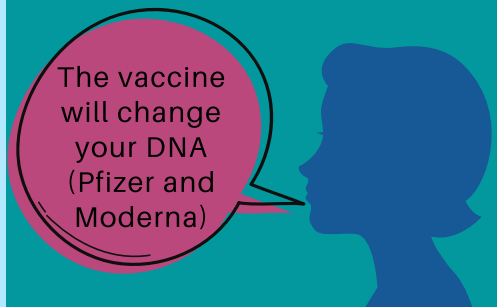
But I've already had Covid-19?

You still need the vaccine. There is a chance you could catch it again, and the vaccine offers longer lasting protection than the body's natural immunity does.

See this [statement from the Department of Medicine at Imperial College London.](#)

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will use a small part of the Covid-19 virus (called the mRNA) in the vaccine. The mRNA is not the same as DNA and can't alter your DNA. It doesn't last very long in your body and doesn't come anywhere near your DNA.

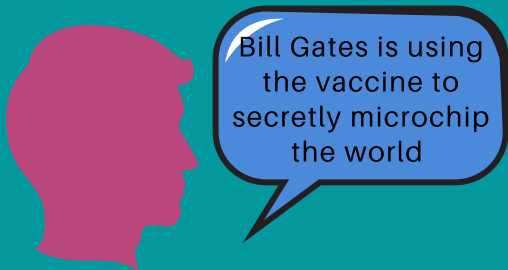
See the [Guardian: Covid questions answered](#) for more detail.



The vaccine will change your DNA (Pfizer and Moderna)

Bill Gates is regularly the subject of conspiracies due to his charity's work in vaccine development. However, he has repeatedly denied these claims and there is no evidence that he, or anyone else, is trying to implant microchips in people.

In reality, there are much easier ways to track you through phones, bank cards and cameras.



Bill Gates is using the vaccine to secretly microchip the world


A small number of people do have allergic reactions to vaccines. If you've ever had a serious reaction, speak to your GP as they can decide which vaccine is better for you.

If you have a known allergy you will be monitored if required. Staff are trained to deal with these reactions immediately if they happen.



I'll have an allergic reaction

Conspiracy theories and beliefs continued...



The vaccines are haram, they're not halal and they have pork in


The vaccine manufacturers have not used any animal ingredients in the vaccines and no animal cells were used.

The British Islamic Medical Association and the Mosque and Imams National Advisory Board are both recommending that Muslim communities, particularly those at risk, get vaccinated.



There are no cells or tissues from foetuses in the vaccines, in fact no foetal cells are used in any vaccine production process.

When vaccines are being produced there are stages in labs where human cells are used to test the vaccine works properly. No traces of any lab cells remain in the vaccine you are given.

Some of the cells used are descended from embryonic cells gathered in the 1960's however these original cells are long gone and no foetuses were aborted for this research.



The vaccine has cells from aborted foetuses in it



I'm protected the day after my first vaccine

It takes time for vaccines to work and your body to build its defence. A good level of protection is ready two weeks after your first dose, and the full long lasting protection comes after your second dose.

It's important to continue washing your hands, covering your face and making space.

Information to help make an informed decision

We want to encourage everyone to have the vaccine to protect themselves and others, and save lives. Having the vaccine is a personal choice, and it should be an informed choice based on accurate information and facts. People may find the following sources of information helpful when making a decision.

The Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) produced the Friday Sermon (khutbab) text for mosques which explains why Muslims should have the vaccine.



The British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA) has recommended both the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines for Muslims.

Neasden Temple has produced a video in Gujarati to explain the facts about Covid-19, providing reassurance on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine.



The Vatican has said that all vaccines are recognised as safe and effective and can be used in good conscience.

The Christian Medical Fellowship have said that God enables science and medicine so vaccines are permitted.



The Conference of European Rabbis have released position statements on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.



The Vegetarian Society have confirmed the vaccines have not got animal products in and that they are safe.



And finally...

We know this document is long (sorry!) but we hope we've helped to simplify information surrounding the Covid-19 vaccination, and you feel better informed to make the right decision for you. If you have any questions, please email us at info@cabad.org.uk

If you would like support and advice around Coronavirus, please see our booklet which you can download at:
<https://www.cabad.org.uk/self-care-booklet>

THANK
YOU

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