

COVID-19 VACCINE BULLETIN 9

Welcome to the ninth bulletin from the HSE National Immunisation Office which highlights changes in clinical guidance for the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Bulletins will be published every week or more frequently, if required.

Impact of Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca on older people in England

A pre print study from Public Health England shows that both **Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca** are highly effective in reducing COVID-19 infections among people aged 70 years and older.

Since January, protection against symptomatic COVID-19, 4 weeks after the first dose, ranged between 57% and 61% for 1 dose of **Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine** and between 60% and 73% for COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca in this age group.

In people aged 80 years and older, data suggests that a single dose of either vaccine was more than 80% effective at preventing hospitalisation, 3 to 4 weeks after the vaccination.

[Read More Here](#)

Effectiveness of Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca in older people including those who are frail and have multiple comorbidities

More real world data is available from the UK, the AvonCAP study, which was published this week as a pre-print, showing substantial reductions in the risk of COVID-19-related hospitalisations after the **Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca** among people aged ≥ 80 and older, including frail elderly people with extensive comorbid disease.

Vaccine effectiveness against COVID-19 related hospitalisation following one dose of **Comirnaty Pfizer/ BioNTech Pfizer** vaccine in this population was 71.4% and 80.4% for the **COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca** when measured ≥ 14 days after the first dose.

Please find below a link to the pre-print (peer review pending)

[Read More Here](#)

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Interval between doses of Covid-19 vaccines

The table below shows the recommended and minimum interval for COVID-19 vaccines. The recommended intervals should be used.

The minimal interval should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Name of Vaccine	Comirnaty® (Pfizer/BioNTech)	COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna®	COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca®
Number of doses required	2	2	2
Recommended Interval	28 days	28 days	12 weeks
Minimum Interval	17 days	24 days	24 days

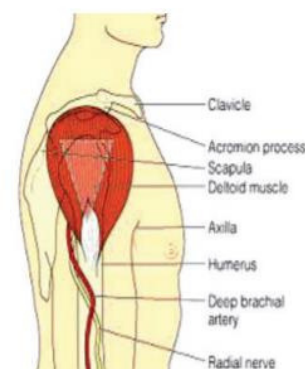
Intramuscular injection technique

We have developed a short video as a reminder of correct intramuscular injection technique into the deltoid muscle

[Watch it here](#)

Key points:

- Landmark the injection site. The light triangle in the figure indicates site for IM injection into the deltoid muscle. The recommended site is in the middle of the triangle.
- Spread the skin taut between your thumb and forefinger **DO NOT** bunch up the skin
- Insert needle rapidly at a 90° angle.
- Inject slowly
- Remove needle rapidly and apply gentle pressure for a few seconds with cotton wool or gauze



REMEMBER swift needle entry + slow injection + swift needle exit = less pain

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HPRA update

HPRA has published its latest safety update providing an overview of the national reporting experience of COVID-19 vaccine.

Up to 25 February, a total of 3,484 reports of suspected side effects were notified to the HPRA. The most commonly reported suspected side effects notified to the HPRA are in line with those typically associated with vaccination, including the types of side effects described in COVID-19 vaccine product information.

National reporting experience to date continues to support the favourable assessment that the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh the risks.

[Read it here](#)

Unused Comirnaty® vaccine vials

General Practice:

Any unused vials should be returned to the national cold chain service with your next delivery of vaccines.

Please give any unused vaccine vials to the National Cold Chain Service driver.

Reconciliation Forms

You will find Vaccine Reconciliation Forms on our website for the COVID-19 Vaccines

[View the forms](#)

The forms are editable PDFs and must be returned at the end of each vaccination session. Please follow the instructions at the end of the form

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Vaccine Deliveries

The National Immunisation Office is responsible for the delivery of your routine vaccines and this is continuing as normal; ensure your order is placed in time. Visit <https://ordervaccines.ie/login.aspx>

The National Immunisation Office is NOT involved in the allocation or delivery of COVID-19 Vaccines. Please contact GPvaccines@hse.ie

Contact details for queries about the COVID-19 vaccination programme:

- For Covid-19 Vaccine queries, please visit <https://www.hse.ie/covid19vaccine> or contact HSELive <https://www.hse.ie/eng/hselive/>
- For queries regarding COVID-19 vaccine orders or deliveries to GPs, please email gpvaccines@hse.ie
- For vaccinations carried out in General Practice: please email your vaccine traceability forms to: philip.charles.desmond@pwc.com
- For vaccinations carried out in all other settings: please email your vaccine traceability forms to: immunisation@hse.ie
- Health Professionals for your own COVID-19 vaccination appointments, please email Covid19.support@hse.ie
- Legal queries, potential challenges related to vaccination and obtaining a consent, please email lead.integratedcare@hse.ie and dervelagray@rcpi.ie
- For clinical queries and queries relating to cold chain maintenance or breakdown, please e-mail immunisation@hse.ie

Recommendations about COVID-19 vaccine are changing as more information becomes available so please visit our [website](https://www.immunisation.ie) for the most up to date information.