

# COVID Vaccine - key messages for kidney patients



- 1** The vaccine is completely safe. Your kidney care team and the Welsh Renal Clinical Network strongly advise you to have the vaccine when offered.
- 2** When you are called for a vaccine you should make it a **priority to attend** - if you have any concerns or questions speak to your kidney care team.
- 3** The biggest defence against COVID19 is still to maintain the mantra, **HANDS, FACE, SPACE**

## Myths & Facts

*"I've heard that some of the vaccines are live, therefore unsuitable for transplant patients".*

All of the vaccines being rolled out are suitable for kidney patients (whether transplant, dialysis or other kidney conditions) and should be taken, based on advice from your kidney doctor or GP.

*"I'm not having the vaccine because it hasn't been tested on kidney patients and I don't think it's safe."*

The vaccines that are being rolled out have undergone stringent tests with many thousands of people. None of the trials specifically included kidney patients but the risks to kidney patients of getting covid19 far outweigh the risks of potential side effects. All of the vaccines being administered in the UK have received regulatory approval for which safety is a key consideration; they would not have been approved for use if they were not safe. Your kidney doctor or GP will be able to advise you on how the vaccine is being rolled out.

*"I heard that someone's consultant told them we don't know enough about how the vaccine will affect kidney patients so I'm not having it."*

The vaccines have been recommended by national experts. In addition the renal experts at the Renal Association and the British Renal Society, who represent renal doctors and nurses, have looked at this national advice and agree that people with kidney disease and people with kidney transplants should have the vaccine. People with kidney disease often have other conditions too and vary in age as well, so what is right for one person, may not be right for someone else. Your kidney doctors will advise you on what is best for you and it is recommended that you follow their advice.

*"I read a story that said people with suppressed immune systems need a different vaccine so I will refuse any until I can have that one."*

We know that with people who have suppressed immune systems (for example transplant recipients) often don't respond as well to vaccines as others. However the vaccines are still suitable for all kidney patients; they may just not be as effective as they might be in someone who has a fully functioning immune system. This is why you are still recommended to follow social distancing guidance, wash your hands regularly and wear face coverings. There is no reliable information to suggest that immunosuppressed patients should receive a different vaccine.

*"None of the vaccines are 100% effective or 100% safe so I am not going to have one."*

No medicine is ever 100% safe or effective as there will always be people who react differently. Your kidney doctors or GP will advise you on the best course of action for you, but you should not avoid having a vaccine because of potential side effects. The risks of catching covid19 far outweigh these.

For further information, please see the **Kidney Care UK** Coronavirus guidance for patients with kidney disease:  
<https://www.kidneycareuk.org/newsandcampaigns/coronavirus-advice/>

**The guidance provided by our organisations is based on specialist and reliable sources of public information from the NHS, Welsh Government and Public Health Wales. Please base your vaccine decision on facts.**