
Patient Participation Group

Newsletter February 2021



Grosvenor
St James
MEDICAL PRACTICE

Practice News

We have listened to your feedback both in person, on the phone and on social media and wanted to assure you of our commitment to ensuring all our patients receive a vaccination in line with the National Covid-19 vaccination programme.

So far we have been contacting patients in the order we have been directed by NHS England. We have attempted to contact everyone in groups 1, 2 and 3 at least once by telephone, [click here for information on the priority groups](#). Those that we continue to be unable to get an answer from will receive a letter seeking confirmation of the best telephone number to contact on in order to book an appointment.

We are currently working on Group 4 which is those aged 70-74 years old OR Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.

Concurrently NHS England have written to some of our patients offering them appointments. If you have booked one of these appointments please attend your appointment as this enables us to extend the reach of the vaccine programme to those who have not been able to book an appointment.

As the National programme rolls out we will continue to work our way through the groups 5-9.

Supply of vaccine is at short notice and as soon as we are confident the supply is secured we will contact patients to book an appointment.

In these unexpected times our staff have been volunteering to work extra hours including weekends to try and reach as many people as possible as well as working at the local vaccine hub. We politely ask that you bear with us, we will contact you if you have not received your first vaccination. To date we have booked every available appointment we have access to for our patients.

Please do not call the surgery regarding an appointment for the Vaccine. Our lines are very busy currently and we are committed to providing a GP Practice service for all our patients who may have other non-vaccine related medical enquiries.

Our website does give you up to date information as to where we are with regards to inviting patients for their vaccination.

Thank you for your support.

The Partners

About the types of vaccine

In the UK, there are now 3 types of COVID-19 vaccine which have recently been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). They all require 2 doses to provide the best protection. The **Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine** and the **Moderna vaccine** both inject part of the virus's genetic code in order to provoke an immune response. The Pfizer vaccine requires storage temperatures of -70C making transport and handling difficult, whereas the Moderna vaccine requires temperatures of -20C similar to a normal freezer. The [AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine](#) utilises a genetically modified virus and can be kept at normal fridge temperatures.

Are you at increased risk from COVID-19 infection?

Coronavirus can affect anyone. If you are an older adult and have a long-term health condition, COVID-19 can be very serious and, in some cases, fatal.

You should have the COVID-19 vaccine if you are:

- an adult living or working in a care home for the elderly
- a frontline healthcare or social care worker
- a carer working in domiciliary care looking after older adults
- aged 65 years and over
- younger adults with long-term clinical conditions

Those who cannot have the vaccine

The vaccines do not contain living organisms, and so are safe for people with disorders of the immune system. A very small number of people who are at risk of COVID-19 cannot have the vaccine – this includes people who have severe allergies.

Women of childbearing age, those who are pregnant, or breastfeeding should read the [detailed information available on NHS.UK](#).

Will the vaccine protect you?

The COVID-19 vaccination will reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. It may take a week or two for your body to build up some protection from the first dose of vaccine.

The vaccine has been shown to be effective and no safety concerns were seen in studies of more than 20,000 people.

Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.

Side effects

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. Even if you do have symptoms after the first dose, you still need to have the second dose.

Although you may get some protection from the first dose, having the second dose will give you the best protection against the virus.

If you do seek advice from a doctor or nurse, make sure you tell them about your vaccination (show them the vaccination card if possible) so that they can assess you properly.

You can also report suspected side effects to vaccines and medicines online through the [Yellow Card scheme](#).

Can you give COVID-19 to anyone, after having the vaccine?

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and 2 doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. We do not yet know whether it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus. To protect yourself and your family, friends and colleagues you still need to:

- practice social distancing
- wear a face mask
- wash your hands carefully and frequently
- follow the [current guidance](#)

How COVID-19 is spread

COVID-19 is spread through droplets breathed out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

Further information

Please read the product information leaflet for more details on your vaccine, including possible side effects, on the [Coronavirus Yellow Card](#) website. You can also report suspected side effects on the same website or by downloading the Yellow Card app. Further information is available on [NHS.UK](#).

What is the timetable for receiving vaccines?

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), an independent expert group, sets the priority groups which the NHS offers the vaccines to first. **The 30 December update JCVI advice is that the vaccine is offered in age order to:**

- Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
- All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
- All those 75 years of age and over
- All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
- All those 65 years of age and over. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
- Followed by all those 60 years of age and over followed by 55 years and over then 50 years and over

The priority list is the same for all vaccines.

Where will we be able to get a vaccine?

[Tunbridge Well Masonic Hall, St Johns Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9UY](#)

The Masonic Hall is the new venue now providing vaccines for GP surgeries in Tunbridge Wells including Grosvenor and St James MC.

PLEASE NOTE—NO locations in Tunbridge Wells offer a drop-in vaccination service. All vaccinations are arranged in advance through invitation based on the national priority groups. **Please wait** to be contacted for when you can get the vaccine. For details visit: www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/covid19vaccine

Symptom-free testing

Everyone without symptoms should get tested every 2 weeks, especially if you are leaving the house for a necessary reason, such as going to work or shopping for essentials. Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 have no symptoms, so get tested regularly to make sure you are not unknowingly spreading the virus.

You can [book an appointment](#) at any of the 14 sites across Kent and a further 10 sites will be opening over the coming weeks.

These sites are in addition to the regional and local testing sites for people who have symptoms. Symptom-free testing sites are being set up using funding from central government to support local councils and help reduce rates of COVID-19.

Tunbridge Wells - Assembly Hall Theatre, Crescent Rd, Tunbridge Wells TN1 2LU.
Opening hours: 9am to 7pm, Monday to Sunday.

New National Lockdown

The government announced a new national lockdown on Monday, 4 January 2020.

This means you must stay at home, unless you need to:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attending a Covid-19 vaccine or test appointment is an appropriate reason to go out.

Visit the [GOV.UK website](#) to check for full information on what you can and cannot do during the national lockdown.

The PPG offer support to the Practice and its patients giving constructive advice on matters relating to the surgery and local NHS issues. If you would like to be more involved with your PPG please email them on: grosvenor.ppg@nhs.net.