



UK Health
Security
Agency

Vaccination of those who received COVID-19 vaccine overseas

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Background

In the UK, 4 coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are currently in use. Although these vaccines are also being administered in many other countries, a number of other different COVID-19 vaccines are also available. Some of these vaccines have been given emergency authorisation by the World Health Organization (WHO), some are currently under review and others have not yet been submitted for review.

The various COVID-19 vaccines differ in their immunogenicity and effectiveness. Whilst data on vaccine effectiveness is still evolving and limited for some vaccines, current data indicates that some vaccines appear to have lower effectiveness than others.

In order to optimise protection for individuals who have received COVID-19 vaccines abroad and who now plan to stay in the UK, guidance as to what further vaccination is recommended has been set out in the table below.

This document provides clinical advice, following consideration of whether additional doses would be beneficial to enhance protection. The advice given in this document may differ from the requirements for supplementary doses in order to obtain certification for travel or domestic (for example occupational) purposes. Specific information about this is available in separate guidance. Where someone is considered fully vaccinated from a clinical viewpoint, but may require additional doses for certification purposes, it is vital that this separate guidance is consulted as only certain products and doses may be recognised.

Those who have received vaccines as part of a clinical trial should seek advice from the trial investigators.

The information in this document was correct at time of publication. As knowledge about the effectiveness of the different COVID-19 vaccines is still evolving, some recommendations may change. The recommendations in this table will be reviewed regularly as more vaccines and information about the effectiveness of these vaccines becomes available. Please use the online version to ensure you are accessing the latest version.

General recommendations

If a person (aged 18 years or over) has received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine overseas that is also available in the UK, they should receive the same vaccine for their second dose (unless contraindicated).

If the vaccine they received for their first dose is not available in the UK, the most similar alternative should be offered for the second dose (see the table below).

If the vaccine received overseas is not listed in the table, a full course of the appropriate vaccine recommended for the individual in the UK (which may depend on their age) should be given.

Those who are eligible to receive a booster dose should be given a full dose (30 micrograms) of the Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty 30 micrograms/dose COVID-19 vaccine or a half dose (50 micrograms) of the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine. In this instance, the minimum interval of 3 months should be from their final primary dose as defined below. So for those considered fully vaccinated before arrival, the 3 months is taken from their final dose given overseas; for those requiring one or more UK doses, the 3 month interval is taken from the final 'additional' dose given in the UK.

The above advice applies to individuals aged 18 years and older.

Children and young people aged 5 to 17 years

Children and young people aged 5 to 17 years who have commenced immunisation with an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna) overseas should continue their vaccine course as per the UK recommendations for their age and risk group. Those that have received any other type of COVID-19 vaccine (not an mRNA vaccine) should be managed as per the advice in the table but using age appropriate dosing and schedules for the UK. For those under 18 years who are eligible for a booster dose, any additional doses of vaccine given in the UK may count as a booster if given at least 3 months after the second dose.

Children and young people in both of the above groups should complete their schedule with the Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty vaccine (50 microgram/dose vaccine or 30 microgram/dose vaccine as appropriate for age).

Booster doses received overseas

For individuals (aged 16 years and over) who have already received a booster dose of vaccine overseas, this dose would count as a valid booster dose if they have received:

- a homologous course (primary and booster doses) of AstraZeneca (or Institute of India Covishield) or mRNA vaccine (Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna)
- a heterologous course (primary and booster doses) that included at least one dose of AstraZeneca (or Institute of India Covishield) or mRNA vaccine (Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna)

If the booster dose received overseas was given less than 3 months after the last primary dose (regardless of which vaccine was given), the booster dose should be repeated in the UK using an mRNA vaccine (full dose Pfizer BioNTech or half dose Moderna (if over 18 years)) at least 3 months after the previous dose.

For those individuals eligible for the UK 2022 Spring booster (adults aged 75 years and over, residents in a care home for older adults, and individuals aged 12 years and over who are immunosuppressed), if they have already received a booster dose overseas which is being counted as a valid booster dose, they should be offered the Spring booster around 6 months after the previous dose. This interval may be brought forward to a minimum of 3 months to ensure they receive the booster during the spring campaign.

If an individual has not received any doses of either AstraZeneca (or Institute of India Covishield) or mRNA vaccine (Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna) as part of their previous course, then they should receive an additional booster dose of an mRNA vaccine in the UK at least 3 months after their last dose of COVID-19 vaccine. If they are eligible for the Spring booster then this additional dose will count as their Spring booster and no further doses are currently recommended before the autumn.

Withdrawn October 2022

Vaccine manufacturer	Vaccine names (if applicable)	Manufacturer's authorised schedule	UKHSA advice	UK alternative
AstraZeneca	Vaxzevria AZD1222	18 years+, 2 doses, 4 to 12 weeks apart	If partial primary vaccination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete course with same vaccine if possible (or closest alternate) with at least 8 week interval from previous dose if more than 8 weeks since first dose, complete course as soon as possible 	Any suitable locally available alternative
Pfizer BioNTech	Comirnaty BNT162b2	12 years+, 2 doses, at least 3 weeks apart		Moderna*
Institute of India	Covishield	18 years+, 2 doses, 4 to 12 weeks apart		AstraZeneca
Moderna	Spikevax COVID-19 Vaccine mRNA-1273	12 years+*, 2 doses, 4 weeks apart	If complete primary course given less than 3 months ago: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no further immediate vaccine needed unless severely immunosuppressed at or around time first or second dose given in which case third primary dose should be given from 8 weeks after second dose 	Pfizer BioNTech
Novavax	Nuvaxovid NVX-CoV2373 Covovax	18 years+, 2 doses, 3 weeks apart		Any suitable locally available alternative
Janssen / Johnson and Johnson	COVID-19 Vaccine Janssen JNJ-78436735 Ad26.COV2.S	18 years+, single dose	Booster dose for both groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enrol for booster in UK if eligible and give minimum 3 months after final primary dose 	Not required as single dose schedule
Gamaleya National Centre of Epidemiology and Microbiology	Sputnik V Gam-COVID Vac	18 years+, 2 doses, 3 weeks apart		Any suitable locally available alternative
Bharat Biotech	Covaxin	2 doses, 4 weeks apart		Any suitable locally available alternative

Vaccine manufacturer	Vaccine names (if applicable)	Manufacturer's authorised schedule	UKHSA advice	UK alternative
Gamaleya National Centre of Epidemiology and Microbiology	Sputnik Light	18 years+, single dose	If vaccinated with one dose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide 1 dose of UK approved vaccine 8 weeks after previous dose enrol for booster in UK if eligible and give minimum 3 months after final primary dose 	Any suitable locally available alternative
CanSino Biologics	Ad5-nCoV Convidecia	18 years+, single dose		Any suitable locally available alternative
Sinopharm (Beijing)	COVID-19 vaccine BIBP BBIBP-CorV	18 years+, 2 doses (3 in some cases), 3 to 4 weeks apart	If vaccinated with 2 doses and second dose was less than 3 months ago: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide 1 dose of UK approved vaccine 8 weeks after previous dose enrol for booster in UK if eligible and give minimum 3 months after final primary dose 	Any suitable locally available alternative
Sinopharm (Wuhan)	WIBP-CorV	18 years+, 2 doses 3 to 4 weeks apart		Any suitable locally available alternative
Sinovac Biotech	CoronaVac	18 years+, 2 doses, 2 to 4 weeks apart	If vaccinated with 2 doses and second dose was more than 3 months ago: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give an additional dose of UK approved vaccine now. For those eligible for a booster, this will count as their booster dose and no further doses are currently recommended If vaccinated with 3 primary doses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enrol for booster in UK if eligible and give minimum 3 months after final primary dose 	Any suitable locally available alternative

Withdrawn October 2022

* Although authorised for use from 12 years, the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is not currently recommended for individuals under 18 years in the UK.

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[UKHSA](#) is an executive agency, sponsored by the [Department of Health and Social Care](#).

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