

Patient name:

Date of birth:

NHS number (if known):

Preferred contact details:

Dear clinician,

Re: Vaccinations for people who are severely immunosuppressed.

Based on the most recent advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), people who are severely immunosuppressed should receive a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine eight weeks or more after their second dose.

This is different to the 'booster' dose of the vaccine, which will be made available to some members of the population six months after their second dose. NHS England has published its guidance on how primary care should identify eligible patients using the GP COVID-19 vaccine dashboard and invite these patients to receive their third dose.

Many people taking treatment for their rheumatological condition will qualify as part of this 'severely immunosuppressed' group. However, this may not be reflected in their current primary care records.

The full list of medical conditions and treatments that qualify a patient as severely immunosuppressed to receive a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is available in the COVID-19 Vaccine Green Book.

The British Society for Rheumatology has published its interpretation of how this guidance applies to people with rheumatological conditions.

They advise that most people who were taking the following treatments during the time of their first two doses receive a third dose of the vaccine, to maximise their level of protection from COVID-19:

- Conventional DMARDs, such as methotrexate, azathioprine, mycophenolate mofetil.
- Anti-TNF biologics, such as infliximab, adalimumab, etanercept, golimumab, certolizumab pegol.
- Other biologics, such as rituximab, tocilizumab, abatacept, ustekinumab, secukinumab, belimumab.
- JAK inhibitors, such as baricitinib, tofacitinib, upadacitinib, filgotinib.
- Prednisolone (steroid tablets) at doses of at least 10mg per day.

For more information please see:

- British Society for Rheumatology COVID-19 guidance:
<https://www.rheumatology.org.uk/practice-quality/covid-19-guidance>
- COVID-19, the Green Book chapter 14a:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunisation-against-infectious-disease-the-green-book>
- NHS England guidance for GPs on vaccinating immunosuppressed individuals with a third primary dose:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/covid-19-vaccinations-assuring-implementation-of-jcvi-guidance-for-vaccinating-immunosuppressed-individuals-with-a-third-primary-dose/>
- Third primary COVID-19 vaccine dose for people who are immunosuppressed: JCVI advice:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/third-primary-covid-19-vaccine-dose-for-people-who-are-immunosuppressed-jcvi-advice>

Thank you for supporting this patient with accessing the COVID-19 vaccine at the best time for them.