

COVID-19 and Flu Vaccination Support Bulletin

Issue 41, December 2022

**Issued to: Staff delivering COVID-19 and Flu Vaccination
Programmes across the Midlands**

Please forward this bulletin to all members of the vaccination team,
from vaccinators to volunteers, security and clinical staff.

Introduction

8th December 2022 brought the two-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 vaccination delivered in the UK (and in the Midlands!) and the beginning of this amazing programme. CARS want to echo the thanks that have been sent out by regional and national colleague and remind everyone involved what a brilliant and important job they have done and are continuing to do. Everyone involved, from the staff welcoming patients, the nurses, doctors and vaccinators and the business support staff behind the scenes have done such a lot to make this programme work so well for so long and most importantly helped save lives. Thank you!

As Christmas looms, we want to remind you to try and take some time to relax if you can. Christmas can be wonderful- but it can also be stressful and challenging and so if you can find two minutes to step away and breathe you will feel better for it.

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Specialist allergy clinics and peer support

Nuvaxovid clinics are now up and running across the region, so local procedures should be followed for referral.

Work is underway to set up a peer support network for those working in or with these specialist clinics to provide a space for sharing working practices, processes or for clinical discussions of complex cases. Anyone interested in taking part please email CARS, we will pass your contact details to the organisers.

Children with allergies and access to COVID vaccine

CARS have received reports of children being denied COVID vaccine and instead being referred to specialist allergy services, because of a history of food or other medication allergies. Some parents are even being given telephone numbers or other contact details for specialist services or practitioners that should ordinarily only be accessed via professional-to-professional referral, which obviously creates unnecessary workload.

The Green Book's table on managing patients with a history of allergy should always be referred to when considering a patient's eligibility for vaccine.

As is visible in the table, a previous allergic reaction where a trigger has been identified (such as nuts, bees or a medicine) is not a contraindication to receiving a vaccine. Where a patient meets the amber column requiring special precautions that patient should still be offered vaccination but arrangements should be

made to ensure they can be observed for 30 minutes post vaccine. Except for in the case of possible PEG allergy, only those with a prior anaphylactic response to COVID-19 vaccine or a component of the vaccine should be referred to specialist services. Where referral does occur it should follow the appropriate local processes and clinician contact details should not be given to parents or family members.

Table 5: Management of patients with a history of allergy

	Proceed with vaccination (no special precautions)	Special precautions	Vaccination contra-indicated
PATIENT CHARACTERISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> previous allergic reaction (including anaphylaxis) to a food, insect sting and most medicines (where trigger has been identified) previous non-systemic reaction to a vaccine hypersensitivity to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs e.g. aspirin, ibuprofen mastocytosis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prior non-anaphylaxis allergic reaction to COVID-19 vaccine history of immediate anaphylaxis to multiple, different drug classes, with the trigger unidentified (this may indicate PEG allergy) history of anaphylaxis to a vaccine, injected antibody preparation or a medicine likely to contain PEG (e.g. depot steroid injection, laxative) history of idiopathic anaphylaxis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prior anaphylaxis reaction to COVID-19 vaccine prior systemic allergic reaction to a component of the vaccine <p>(for known PEG allergy see text above)</p>
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proceed with vaccination in any setting some individuals may be reassured by being observed for 15 minutes (may not be required if previously tolerated the same vaccine) some patients (e.g. those with mastocytosis) may benefit from pretreatment with anti-histamine to reduce allergic symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider possibility of PEG allergy and seek allergy advice if needed a person has previously tolerated a dose of the same vaccine, it is safe to administer in any setting. <p>Otherwise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider giving vaccine and observe for 30 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refer to allergist or other appropriate specialist consider administration of the implicated mRNA vaccine under medical supervision in hospital, or, where reaction was to AstraZeneca or Novavax vaccines give alternative vaccine in any setting consider observation for 30 minutes

Bivalent vaccine and primary doses

The document [COVID-19 vaccine information for healthcare practitioners \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92422/covid-19-vaccine-information-for-healthcare-practitioners.pdf) is always a valuable source of information for advice where the wrong dose or vaccine has been given. When a bivalent vaccine is given erroneously as a primary dose the following guidance should be followed:

If a full dose of bivalent vaccine (either 0.5mL of Spikevax/Moderna bivalent or 0.3mL of Comirnaty bivalent) is given in error as a primary dose it can be considered a valid dose, but the patient should complete their course with the recommended vaccine in the recommended timescale.

If less than a full dose of either vaccine is given a risk assessment should be performed to determine if the patient should be offered further vaccine. The document provides advice on risk assessment:

“This risk assessment should consider how much of the dose it is estimated was given and take account of the individual’s age, whether they are immunosuppressed or have an underlying clinical risk condition, whether they have previously had confirmed COVID-19 infection and whether this is the first, second or third primary dose.

This risk assessment is recommended because of the increased reactogenicity and the risk of myocarditis and pericarditis following mRNA re-vaccination, notably in younger age groups, which should be weighed against the risk of a lower immune response to the vaccine.”

As ever, if any additional support is needed, please contact CARS.

Top Tips: Cold chain

Temperature Monitoring

The mantra should be:

Read • Record • Reset • React

Remembering to RESET the fridge thermometer after the recording of the actual, minimum and maximum temperatures is crucial – and is often the difference between keeping or losing vaccine affected by a cold chain breach if there is no data logger available.

Christmas Quiz!

Delight your colleagues, friends and relatives and test your and their festive knowledge with the CARS Christmas Quiz. Answers below, no cheating!

1. What colour are mistletoe berries?
2. In which ocean is Christmas Island?
3. What is Frosty the Snowman's nose made from?
4. Who played Ebenezer Scrooge in The Muppet Christmas Carol?
5. In Japan, takeaway food from a well-known fast-food restaurant is traditionally eaten at Christmas. Which restaurant is it?
6. What is the name for a male turkey?
7. Where would you find "The Purple One"?
8. What are pigs in blankets called in Scotland?
9. What percent of the entire year's brussels sprout sales are in the two weeks before Christmas? 25%, 50% or 75%?
10. What relatively new Christmas tradition was created by stay-at-home mum Carol Aebersold?



11. In what year was tinsel invented?
12. In which country are deep-fried Emperor Moth caterpillars a Christmas Day delicacy?
13. Which traditional Christmas plant supposedly wards off demons?
14. What is the name of Will Ferrell's character in the film 'Elf'?
15. In the film 'National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation' what does Clark Griswold receive as his initial Christmas bonus, instead of the cheque he was expecting?
16. What is the full title of Slade's famous Christmas song?
17. Which British ruler allegedly banned Mince Pies in the 1600's?
18. Name Santa's reindeer.
19. What is the best selling Christmas song of all time?
20. How do you say "Merry Christmas" in Spanish?

Contact us

If you would like to contribute to future bulletins and have any insights to share, please contact us at:

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Clinical Advice Response Service (CARS): send an email to england.midscovid19vacs.pmo2@nhs.net marked 'for the attention of CARS'

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Disclaimer: While the information in this document is considered correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information

- Quiz answers
1. White
 2. Indian Ocean
 3. Button
 4. Michael Caine
 5. KFC
 6. A tom or a gobbler
 7. In a tin of Quality Street
 8. Killed Soldiers
 9. 25%
 10. Elf on the Shelf
 11. 1610
 12. South Africa
 13. Mistletoe
 14. Buddy the Elf
 15. One year membership to the Jelly of the Month club
 16. Merry Xmas Everybody
 17. Oliver Cromwell
 18. Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Comet, Cupid, Vixen, Blitzen, Donner, Rudolph.
 19. White Christmas by Bing Crosby.
 20. Feliz Navidad