**29th September 2021**

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**IBD and the Third COVID-19 Vaccine**

The Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recommended that all people in the UK who were immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second COVID vaccine should receive a third dose to help protect them from the virus. This means that shortly, if you have IBD and are on a form of immunosuppression, you will be entitled to an additional dose of the vaccine.

**Immunosuppression drugs in IBD are:**

Adalimumab

Azathioprine

Infliximab

Mercaptopurine

Methotrexate,

Prednisolone (tablets only)

Tacrolimus

Ustekinumab

Vedolizumab

**The following IBD drugs are not immunosuppressants:**

Asacol, Mesavant, Ocatasa, Pentasa, Salofalk, Salazopryin, rectal therapies.

**What vaccine will I receive?**

Those aged 18 and over will most likely be given the [Pfizer vaccine](https://bloodcancer.org.uk/support-for-you/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/), or [Moderna vaccine](https://bloodcancer.org.uk/support-for-you/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/). The JCVI have said that if there is an issue with supply of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, [AstraZeneca](https://bloodcancer.org.uk/support-for-you/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/covid-vaccine-blood-cancer/) may be used. For those aged 12 to 17, the Pfizer vaccine is preferred.

**Why is this being called a third dose and not a booster?**

The JCVI are calling this a third dose as they are recommending it be given as part of primary treatment to prevent COVID in people who are unlikely to have had a strong immune response to doses one and two. A booster on the other hand is given to everyone in certain categories regardless of their immune response**.** A booster vaccine is to make sure that protection does not decrease over time whereas a third dose exists for people who are unlikely to have responded as well to the first two doses of the vaccine. We've been told that if a booster programme were to be rolled out, people with IBD on immunosuppression may also be entitled to a booster dose, although we're waiting for more advice from the JCVI on this.

**Booking your third vaccine**

You will be contacted in the next few weeks via letter or text to book your vaccine. If you have not received communication please call 119 for advice on this matter.

**Further information**

For further information please visit the CCUK website

https://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/news/latest-coronavirus-vaccine-for-people-with-crohns-or-colitis

Yours sincerely,

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