

COVID-19 vaccination statement.

There is no evidence at this time to suggest that COVID-19 either causes or worsens neuropathy or causes Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS). In recent vaccination campaigns against other diseases, any link to neuropathy is very small or non-existent. For instance, the influenza vaccine may cause GBS in about 1 in a million vaccinations. The risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19 is about 1:1000 and substantially higher in older age groups.

You may soon be offered a COVID-19 vaccine. Based on a review of the current COVID-19 vaccines available, including their known structures, delivery methods and safety data, the BPNS recommends that almost everyone should be vaccinated; there are very few exceptions. There is so far no reason to choose one vaccine brand over another and there is no evidence to suggest that the vaccine should be avoided if a person is immunocompromised. We have no reason to believe that the vaccine would interact with intravenous immunoglobulin. The only caution is in patients who have a known severe allergy (who for instance carry an EpiPen) who should take advice from their immunologist before receiving a vaccination.

Concerns about contracting COVID or other viral infections from COVID-19 vaccination, or that the vaccine might change the recipient's DNA, are unfounded and incorrect. Where the vaccine is delivered as part of a cold-virus particle (Oxford-AstraZeneca) the virus carrying the COVID molecules has been disabled from replicating and therefore cannot cause disease. In the Pfizer/BioNTec vaccine, the mRNA cannot integrate into your host DNA as that is biologically impossible and no change to DNA of the recipient occurs.

International monitoring of any reported adverse effects is in place. Many medical problems will occur by chance during an immunisation campaign of billions of people. Scientists and regulators are alert to any evidence of causation above that occurring by chance alone.

The BPNS's recommendation is that all people who are able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine should do so. Further information regarding how the vaccine is given and potential side effects can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

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