

## WORRIED ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES?

As you know, many people who had diabetes have died from COVID-19. Many of us, if not all, are frightened for ourselves as well as for friends and relatives.

Our health professionals and scientific leaders say that vaccines are one of the main ways the world will be freed from the deadly COVID-19 virus. Understandably, some people are concerned that the COVID-19 vaccines have been developed and approved too quickly to be safe.

### HOW DID THEY GET DEVELOPED SO FAST?

- **Information and cooperation.** Covid-19 is a kind of **coronavirus** (like flu and colds), so scientists already know a lot about how coronaviruses work. Vaccines are developed every year to deal with the flu for example.  
On January 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, Chinese scientists shared their knowledge of the COVID-19 virus' genetics with other scientists. Across the world, many very bright and intelligent people have worked in teams in developing them, most focusing on the vaccine to the exclusion of anything else.
- **Money:** Money was made available (for example by Governments and through donations) so the scientists could change their focus quickly and the pharmaceutical companies knew they could afford to go all out.
- **Testing:** Many people quickly [volunteered to help](#).  
Brenda Riley, one of our committee members who has Type 1 is a participant in a COVID vaccine trial. Professor Simon Heller, a Sheffield based (and internationally respected) Diabetes expert has been coordinating vaccine and other COVID research as R and D director of Sheffield Teaching Hospitals; independent of the people developing them.  
The involvement of Simon and Brenda brings the vaccine closer to home and gives us confidence.
- **Approval:** The scientists sent detailed information, at every stage, to the MHRA, rather than sending it all at once at the end. This made a big difference to the ability of the MHRA to give feedback, and to make the final decision once the scientists were confident and ready.
- **NOW:**
  - ∞ **The independent UK Medicines Regulatory Authority (MHRA) constantly monitors vaccines**
  - ∞ UK-wide, **15 million doses** of Pfizer/BioNTech & Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines have been given
  - ∞ The MHRA reports that the vaccines meet the strict safety standards.
  - ∞ Side effects have been reported for only **3 out of every 1,000 people** who've had the vaccine.
  - ∞ Vast majority of reported side effects are mild and short lasting, reflecting a normal immune response to vaccines – including a sore arm and fatigue.
  - ∞ Alas, these side effects can affect diabetes: see [Diabetes101: COVID Vaccines side effects](#)

Our vision is a world where diabetes can do no harm.

## NOW IT'S OUR TURN!

Some of us (like Linsay, Stu and Professor Tesfaye) have already had the first dose, due to risk factors, or our jobs.

**Solomon Tesfaye** says: "I had my first injection in December and am waiting to have the second on 10<sup>th</sup> of February. I know many fellow black people like me are hesitant to take the vaccine due perhaps to lack of trust or misleading information on the internet but there is absolutely no reason not to take the vaccine. The vaccine is safe and provides protection against this deadly virus and I would like to encourage black and Asian and minority ethnic groups to have this vaccine without any hesitation."

Professor Solomon Tesfaye, [Consultant in Diabetes, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals.](#)

Linsay says: "it didn't hurt a bit, and I've felt fine since I'm so happy and grateful to the NHS for all their hard work in getting this out to us so efficiently.

"Do have it as soon as you can; you'll get a letter or a phone call from the NHS like I did. "It's free; there's no charge for the vaccine."

**Adults who have diabetes & are under 65 years old, are in priority group 6 for the vaccine.**

## SHORT INFORMATION VIDEOS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

Some NHS Diabetes Specialists have made short films in different languages to help answer concerns about the vaccines; **they are available just here** and on the [Diabetes 101 website](#)

[Arabic: Dr Omar Mustafa](#)

[Bengali: Professor Partha Kar](#)

[Cantonese: Associate Professor May Ng](#)

[English: Professor Jonathan Valabhji](#)

[Gujerati: Dr Alka Pandey](#)

[Kannada: Dr Punith Kempegowda](#)

[Malayam: Dr Seshadrinathan Pramodh](#)

[Mandarin: Associate Professor May Ng](#)

[Marathi: Professor Pratik Choudhary](#)

[Punjabi: Dr Najaf Haider](#)

[Sindhi: Dr Zeenat Banu](#)

[Tamil: Dr Paul Peter](#)

[Urdu, Dr Sarah Ali](#)

[Urdu: Dr Nouman Butt](#)

[Yoruba: Dr Victor Oquntolu](#)

### MORE INFORMATION:

There are useful summaries [here](#) and [here](#) about the speeded up process.

**Diabetes UK** has detailed [information about the different Covid19 vaccines](#)

This [BBC page is interesting and detailed](#); comparing the different vaccines.

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