

Preliminary results from Bristol study among evidence considered for interim advice from JCVI to administer COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time, if booster programme required

Interim advice has been announced by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that the COVID-19 booster vaccines could be delivered alongside the flu vaccine programme, with preliminary results from a study by researchers in Bristol among the evidence considered.

The Combining Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccination (ComFluCOV) study looked to determine whether booster COVID-19 vaccines should be given at the same time as flu vaccines.

Led by researchers at the Bristol Trials Centre (CTEU) at the University of Bristol and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW), the study was supported by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

Interim advice from the JCVI on any potential COVID-19 booster programme is that a third COVID-19 vaccine dose should be offered in two stages from September, starting with those most at risk from serious disease. This includes care home residents, people aged over 70, frontline health and social care workers, clinically extremely vulnerable adults and those who are immunosuppressed.

As part of the JCVI's interim advice, in Stage 1 of a potential booster vaccination programme for 2021 to 2022, the following groups should be offered a booster dose alongside the flu vaccine from September:

- adults aged 16 years and over who are immunosuppressed
- those living in residential care homes for older adults
- all adults aged 70 years or over
- adults aged 16 years and over who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable
- frontline health and social care workers.

In Stage 2 of a potential booster vaccination programme, the following groups should be offered a booster dose as soon as practicable after Stage 1, with equal emphasis on the flu vaccine where eligible:

- all adults aged 50 years and over
- all adults aged 16 to 49 years who are in an influenza or COVID-19 at-risk group
- adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals.

As most younger adults will only receive their second COVID-19 vaccine dose in late summer, the benefits of booster vaccination in this group would be considered at a later time when more information is available.

Dr Rajeka Lazarus, a consultant in infectious diseases and microbiology at UHBW and Chief Investigator for the trial, said: "Early results from the study have shown that it is safe to give both the COVID-19 and influenza vaccine together. This means fewer appointments needed which will hopefully will make it easier for people to get both vaccines."