

Guidance around surgery and the COVID-19 vaccination.

You must adhere to guidance about preventing the spread of COVID-19 and ensuring you have minimised your risk of developing COVID-19 in the period before and after a procedure **EVEN IF YOU HAVE HAD THE VACCINE.**

Exact guidance depends on your health and the surgery being performed. You should have been provided with a leaflet detailing what is expected to keep you safe from Coronavirus.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine is safe and effective. It gives you the best protection against coronavirus. It takes at least 10-14 days for the vaccine to work. Furthermore the vaccine may occasionally cause fever or chills especially after the second dose. These symptoms may also sometimes occur after surgery and if the surgery takes place soon after the vaccine it may be difficult to tell what has caused the symptoms.

The guidance about the vaccine and surgery/injections is detailed below:

SURGERY:

If you are having planned surgery, we strongly recommend that you should allow **at least two weeks after your first vaccination dose** before having surgery to give the vaccine a chance to work (unless your surgery is urgent).

You should allow **at least 7 days after the second dose** of the vaccine before having planned surgery.

STEROID INJECTIONS:

If you have a steroid injection shortly before or soon after the vaccine, you may not mount a good immune response to the vaccine. We recommend that you should not have a steroid injection less than two weeks **before** or **after** your first or second vaccinations.

COMMON QUESTIONS:

Is it mandatory to have the vaccine prior to surgery?

It is not mandatory to have the vaccine prior to surgery. You have the right to choose to delay the surgery until you have had the vaccine.

Will my surgery be cancelled if I don't have the vaccine?

Vaccination provides the best protection against COVID-19 and is strongly encouraged but your surgery will not be cancelled if you do not have the vaccine.

Can I delay my surgery until I have had the vaccine?

Yes. You may delay surgery until after one or both vaccinations. Please contact our schedulers if you would like to delay surgery.

Should I delay my vaccine to have the surgery first?

It is your choice as to whether you prioritise the surgery over the vaccine. Where possible we would encourage patients to have the vaccine prior to surgery.

Can I be prioritised for a vaccine if I am due to have surgery?

We encourage patients to have the vaccination at their first possible opportunity, but at present there is no national or local guidance allowing patients awaiting surgery to be prioritised.