**Covid-19 Information Update Issue 19 (updates from previous Bulletin in yellow)**

**Covid Information Champion update**

The number of coronavirus cases in Hertfordshire is falling but now is not the time to become complacent – we know that in some areas, including nearby Bedfordshire, cases of a new variant of COVID-19 are present in communities. We must continue to play our part to stop the spread. Thanks to the work of GP practices, hospitals, pharmacies, our larger vaccination sites and thousands of volunteers, more than **One Million doses** have been given in Hertfordshire and West Essex so far.

**Vaccination update**

Those aged 30 or over are now eligible to be vaccinated. Everyone who is newly-eligible will either be contacted by their GP practice or can choose to ring 119 or go online through the [National Booking Service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/) to select from a range of vaccination sites across the county.

**Walk in sessions – no need to book**

To make it even easier for eligible people to get protected against COVID-19, a number of walk-in vaccination sessions have opened up for people across Hertfordshire and nearby West Essex. This means that eligible people can turn up during walk-in sessions without the need for an appointment. A list of venues, opening times and information about which vaccines are being offered at each location are available [**Click Here**](https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/events/vaccination-walk-in-clinic-times)  Don’t forget that these walk-in sessions are first come, first served. If a session is very popular, there might be a wait to be seen and there is a chance that vaccine supplies will run out. If you prefer the certainty of a guaranteed appointment time, please book an appointment instead.

**Second doses for over 50s and those at high-risk from COVID-19**

Following updated guidance around the timing of second doses, anyone over 50 or in the top nine priority groups will be contacted by the NHS and encouraged to get the second jab as soon as eight weeks have passed. Those who booked through www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or by ringing 119 will be contacted by the National Booking Service to book an earlier appointment. **If they already have a second dose appointment that is coming up soon, we would recommend keeping that appointment.**

To rebook via the National Booking System, people have to cancel their original second dose appointment to view and book an alternative date. If they booked and received their first dose of the vaccine through a local GP service, their GP practice will contact them with details on booking their second dose.

**The COVID vaccine and fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding**

To help put people’s minds at ease about the vaccine in relation to fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding, a panel of experts got together to answer questions from the public. The video is being shared via social media and can be viewed by **[Clicking Here](https://vimeo.com/551373870)**

**Rapid Testing - 1 in 3 people who catch Covid don’t display any symptoms, which means that the virus can be spread without realising it.** Rapid testing sites, designed to detect COVID-19 in people without symptoms, are offering ‘lateral flow tests’ across Hertfordshire. Now there’s no need to book – just walk in. You can also order rapid Covid testing kits to use at home or collect them from a local site or a pharmacy taking part in the lateral flow test scheme.

Twice weekly rapid testing enables us to find cases and prevent the spread of infection. Getting into the habit of twice weekly testing helps to keep our friends and family safe, and alongside the vaccination programme, will help ensure we can continue to ease our way out of lockdown.

For more information [**Click Here**](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest)

**Remember, if you have COVID symptoms, you must get a ‘PCR’ test. Find out how to get a PCR test here:** [**www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test**](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)

**Resources**

There is a huge amount of resources you can access to get the correct information on coronavirus and the vaccines. False information is often being shared online which can lead to some serious consequences. The government have created a [**SHARE checklist**](https://sharechecklist.gov.uk/) to help and protect you from false information online.

You can find more information about the vaccination programme, including FAQs and resources for adults with learning disabilities and resources in different languages and formats [**Click Here**](https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/information-and-resources)

Videos have been created by some of Hertfordshire’s Covid Information Champions in different languages about the coronavirus vaccine [**Click Here**](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgtazLRY5Zd-yrK9YZzsEukHC4SmQ4mO0)

**If you or your family need financial or practical help and advice with the cost of food or fuel, please get in touch with HertsHelp**

Visit [**www.hertshelp.net**](http://www.hertshelp.net) email **info@hertshelp.net** or call **0300 123 4044**

For more information and guidance for residents and businesses during the pandemic please [**Click Here**](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)