

Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Which vaccine is used for the Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service?

The Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service uses either a vaccine called VarilRIX® or VariVAX®.

How many doses of the vaccine do I need?

A full course consists of two doses administered at least 6 weeks apart.

How is the vaccination given?

Children under the age of two will typically be vaccinated in the thigh, and anyone over the age of two will be vaccinated by intramuscular injection into the deltoid muscle of the upper arm. However, the healthcare professional will use their judgement in each case to decide whether to vaccinate in the thigh or arm. Therefore, it's helpful for you or your child to wear loose fitting clothing and short sleeves that can be rolled up.

Will I need a booster dose?

No booster dose is currently recommended.

How effective is the vaccination?

It's been shown that 9 out of 10 children vaccinated with a single dose will develop immunity against chickenpox. Having two doses is recommended, as this gives an even better immune response. For more information visit

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/chickenpox-vaccine/>.

Does the vaccine have any side effects?

Like all vaccines, the chickenpox vaccine can cause side effects, although not everyone gets them. Whilst vaccinations shouldn't cause too much discomfort, the injected area can become swollen and red. A fever may develop (a temperature over 37.5°C), so it's a good idea to check your, or your child's, temperature regularly with a thermometer and use age-appropriate paracetamol if needed as long as it's suitable for you. Following the vaccination, if you're in any doubt about your health or your child's, trust your instincts and seek medical advice.

Is it a live vaccine?

VarilRIX® and VariVAX® are both live vaccines.

Does the vaccine contain egg?

VarilRIX® and VariVAX do not contain egg.

Is the vaccine suitable for vegetarians or vegans?

The chickenpox vaccines used in our private service would not be considered vegetarian or vegan. This is because VariVAX® contains porcine gelatin.

Is the vaccine suitable to have whilst pregnant or breastfeeding?

The Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service isn't suitable for pregnant or breastfeeding women.

On rare occasions, people who have received the chickenpox vaccine can transmit the infection to others.

If you're very likely to come into contact with pregnant women who haven't had chickenpox, newborn babies of mothers who haven't had chickenpox, those with a weakened immune system or who are at risk of serious illness if they have chickenpox, you should avoid any such contact for six weeks after each dose of vaccination.

This is particularly important if you develop a rash within six weeks of the first or second dose and, should this occur, contact must be avoided until the rash has completely disappeared. This is because more vulnerable people can develop serious complications if they catch chickenpox.

Can I have the vaccine at the same time as other vaccinations?

The service is not suitable for anyone who's received the MMR vaccine in the previous four weeks. The healthcare professional will check suitability during the consultation.

Can I have the vaccine if I take certain medicines or have a health condition?

As part of the consultation, we'll ask some questions about your medical history so that we can check that the service is suitable for you.

Can I get the vaccination on the NHS?

The NHS currently offers a chickenpox vaccination to certain vulnerable groups, protecting those who are most at risk.

The Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service is available to those seeking protection from the chickenpox virus, including those who are eligible through the NHS but choose a private vaccination service.

Who is the Boots Chickenpox Vaccination Service suitable for?

The service is suitable for both adults and children aged between one and 65 years inclusive at the time of the first vaccination. The service is not suitable for anyone with a weakened immune system, or anyone who's had an allergic reaction to any previous vaccination. The service is also not suitable for anyone who's received the MMR vaccine in the previous four weeks. This is not a complete list and the healthcare professional will check suitability during the consultation.

What if my child or I currently have chickenpox?

If you or your child currently have chickenpox, or have recently been exposed to chickenpox, our pharmacy team can provide advice and recommend treatments, such as lotions and pain relief to help ease the symptoms.

If you're an adult with chickenpox, we recommend you speak to a pharmacist who may refer you to your GP because of the risk of complications in adulthood.

If you're experiencing any of the following, please see your GP urgently or call the NHS on 111:

- If you're pregnant, haven't had chickenpox before or you're unsure, and you've been near someone with it
- If you or your child have a weakened immune system or are at risk of serious illness if you develop chickenpox and have been near someone with chickenpox

- If you think your newborn baby has chickenpox or you're not sure
- If there are symptoms of a bacterial skin infection, such as if the skin around the blisters looks red (redness may be harder to see on some skin tones) and/or feels hot and painful
- If you're concerned you or your child have become dehydrated
- If chickenpox symptoms suddenly worsen

What if I had my first dose with a different provider?

If you, or your child, had a first dose of chickenpox vaccine at a different provider, you can still have your second dose at Boots, providing you meet all the eligibility criteria for the Boots service.

I've booked and paid for an appointment online. How do I change it?

You can change or cancel your appointment by going to My Orders in your account [here](#).

I've paid online but I no longer want the vaccination. Can I get a refund?

Yes, if you haven't yet had the appointment, you can cancel your order by going to My Orders in your account [here](#). This will refund the payment to your original payment method. Please allow up to 14 days for the refund to appear on your account.