

Vaccinations of 16–69-year-old residents of Helsinki who are very susceptible to COVID-19 due to an illness

– information and instructions about the vaccinations

Helsinki has started vaccinations against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). COVID-19 can be particularly severe for older persons and persons with illnesses that significantly increase the likelihood of a severe infection.

Helsinki will offer vaccinations free of charge to everyone who wishes to receive them, in accordance with the national instructions. The vaccine is now being **offered to people who are 18 years of age or older** who have an **illness or condition that makes them very susceptible to severe forms of COVID-19**. For **16–17-year-olds** in the same risk group, the service will open on **Tuesday 16 March**. Vaccinations are also underway for older people turning at least 70 this year (born in 1951 or earlier).

The vaccination will help you protect yourself against COVID-19. The aim of the vaccinations is to alleviate COVID-19 symptoms and prevent severe forms of the disease. The COVID-19 pandemic will only stop once the majority of the population has been vaccinated.

If you are a resident of Helsinki over the age of 18 and have an illness or condition that makes you very susceptible to severe forms of COVID-19, you can now get vaccinated. 16–17-year-olds in the same risk group may book appointments starting from 16 March. The COVID-19 vaccination will be given at a vaccination point by appointment.

Here's how you can receive the COVID-19 vaccination:

- **You can book a vaccination appointment at coronavaccination-en.hel.fi or by calling 09 310 46300 (Mon–Fri at 8–18).**
- You can choose your preferred vaccination location from the vaccination points in Helsinki when making the appointment: Jätkäsaari (Tyynenmerenkatu 6), Malmi (Helsinki Vocational College, Vanha Helsingintie 5), Myllypuro (Metropolia campus, Myllypurontie 1), Messukeskus (Northern entrance, Ratapihantie 17).

The vaccine being used is delivered in two doses. You will receive information about the date of the second dose when receiving the first dose. The appointment booking service will be updated in the near future so that appointments for the administration of both doses can be booked at the same time.

The appointment booking line offers a call-back service. If your call is not answered, your number will be automatically saved in the call-back service. All callers will be called back.

It is safe to visit the vaccination points. Please remember the following when arriving at the vaccination point:

- Come for the vaccination as close to your appointment time as possible.
- Do not come for the vaccination if you have any symptoms of COVID-19. Typical symptoms include fever, coughing, sore throat, shortness of breath, muscle ache, nausea, deterioration of general health, and, as a fairly common symptom, weakened sense of smell or taste.
- Please be prepared to verify your identity with an ID card or similar.
- Wear a mask.
- Take care of hand hygiene.
- Maintain a distance of at least two metres from other people.
- Prepare to stay at the location for at least 15 minutes after the vaccination so that the staff can monitor your condition.
- You can travel to the vaccination point by car, bike, foot or public transport.

If you have contracted COVID-19 in the past, we recommend that you delay the vaccination so that about six months have passed from the start of the symptoms or a positive test result.

Even after receiving the vaccination, it remains essential that everyone maintains safe distances, takes care of hand and coughing hygiene, wears a mask, books a test when showing symptoms, and follows all other instructions regarding COVID-19.

Do I belong to the group of persons being vaccinated due to illnesses or conditions that make them very susceptible to severe forms of COVID-19?

You belong to the group of persons being vaccinated due to illnesses or conditions that make them very susceptible to severe forms of COVID-19 if you have:

- had an organ transplant or stem cell transplant
- cancer and are undergoing active treatment
- a severe immunological disorder
- a severe chronic nephropathy
- a severe chronic pulmonary disease
- drug-treated type 2 diabetes or
- Down syndrome.

1. Organ transplant or stem cell transplant

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if:

- you have had an organ transplant
- you take anti-rejection medication due to stem cell transplant or
- you have had a stem cell transplant during the last six months.

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you had a stem cell transplant more than six months ago and you are not taking anti-rejection medication.

2. Cancer undergoing active treatment

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if:

- you are receiving cancer treatment (cytostatic treatment, radiation therapy, biological or hormonal therapy)
- you are waiting for a cancer operation (queuing) or the start of a cancer treatment
- your cancer treatment ended during the last six months or
- you have leukaemia (treated or monitored).

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if:

- you have basal-cell carcinoma (even if the cancer is being actively treated)
- you have prostate cancer or some other cancer (excluding leukaemias) that is being monitored without treatment or
- you have a treated cancer that is in remission.

If you are receiving cytostatic treatment, please contact your designated nurse or treatment unit when it is your turn to get vaccinated.

Coronavirus vaccination is not recommended for persons receiving palliative care.

3. Severe immunological disorder

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have a diagnosed severe hereditary immunodeficiency or decreased immunity for some other reason. Such illnesses and conditions include the following:

- cyclic neutropenia
- some other or unspecified neutropenia
- an immunodeficiency manifested mainly as antibody deficiency
- combined immunodeficiencies
- an immunodeficiency related to other severe deficiencies
- common variable immunodeficiency
- other immunodeficiencies
- APECED syndrome
- congenital asplenia
- acquired absence of some other organ
- your spleen has been removed.
- HIV infection with a CD4 cell count of under 0.350 x 10⁹ cells/l.

The above-mentioned illnesses are very rare.

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have:

- IgA deficiency
- mannose-binding lectin deficiency or
- partial deficiency of complement factor C4.

4. Severe chronic nephropathy

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have:

- uraemia requiring dialysis (Kela compensation number 137)
- severe anaemia related to renal insufficiency (Kela compensation number 138)
- nephropathy caused by hypertension
- heart and kidney disease caused by hypertension
- diseases of the Malpighian body
- long-term tubulointerstitial nephritis
- tubulointerstitial and tubular conditions caused by pharmaceuticals and heavy metals
- long-term renal insufficiency
- unspecified renal insufficiency
- renal complications of diabetes or
- a glomerular filtration rate below 30 due to some other reason (based on repeated measurements).

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have mild or moderate renal insufficiency (GFR 30 or over).

5. Severe chronic pulmonary disease

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have, for example, long-term chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, pulmonary emphysema, bronchiectasis, long-term bronchitis or cystic fibrosis. Additionally, the group includes people with significantly impaired lung capacity (for example a missing lung). Illnesses and conditions belonging to this vaccination group include the following:

- asthmas whose diagnosis code starts with J45 (first characters of the ICD classification) or J46, provided that you have used corticosteroid medication for worsening asthma during the last year in the form of oral tablets
- long-term ordinary or mucopurulent bronchitis
- unspecified long-term bronchitis
- pulmonary emphysema
- other long-term obstructive pulmonary disease (ICD10 codes starting with J44)
- bronchiectasis or
- acquired full or partial absence of a lung.

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have asthma requiring continuous medication but have not needed corticosteroid medication in the form of oral tablets to treat a worsening of the disease during the last year.

6. Drug-treated type 2 diabetes

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have type 2 diabetes requiring treatment with tablets or insulin treatment.

You do not yet belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you do not treat your type 2 diabetes with tablets or insulin.

7. Down syndrome (in adults)

You belong to the group of people being vaccinated if you have Down syndrome.

Vaccine entitlement is checked at the vaccination points using the Kanta service or the City of Helsinki patient information system. If you are not a client of the City of Helsinki Social Services and Health Care Division due to your illness or the information of the Kanta service cannot be accessed, the illness or condition that makes you very susceptible to the severe variant of COVID-19 must be proved otherwise, e.g. with a copy of your patient record. These policies may change. Please check the latest information at coronavaccination-en.hel.fi.