

Issued by JPAC: 15 December 2020

Implementation: To be determined by each Service

Change Notification UK National Blood Services No. 73 - 2020

This notification has been issued following the introduction of coronavirus vaccines and applies to the following sections of the Whole Blood and Components Donor Selection Guidelines as stated below.

Coronavirus Infection

5. Coronavirus Vaccination

Obligatory a) Recipients of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, as part of the UK vaccination programme

Must not donate if:

Less than seven days after the most recent immunization was given.

b) Recipients of any other COVID-19 vaccine, including participants in clinical trials

Must not donate if:

- Less than four weeks after the most recent immunization was given, or
- Still within any deferral period advised in the protocol for any clinical trial that the donor is enrolled in.

Refer to a Designated Clinical Support Officer if unsure.

Discretionary Recipients of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine (as part of the UK vaccination programme only), if:

- more than **seven** days after the most recent immunization was given, and
- the donor is well, with no ongoing local or systemic reaction to the vaccine, accept.

See if Relevant

[Clinical Trials](#)
[Transfusion](#)
[Immunization – Non-live](#)

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<p><i>Additional Information</i></p>	<p>Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for transfusion recipients. Since 2002 there have been outbreaks in humans of new strains of coronavirus, associated with severe pulmonary infections and mortality rates of 10-35% e.g. SARS and MERS.</p> <p>COVID-19 is an illness caused by infection with a newly identified Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.</p> <p>Some individuals will have symptoms for a protracted length of time after the systemic and respiratory symptoms of the acute infection have resolved. A wide range of symptoms, including cardiac and neurological, have been reported. Donors may not realise the importance of declaring some symptoms. It is important to identify any of the specific ongoing symptoms such as chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, fatigue, even if seemingly mild or infrequent, that suggest that a donor may not have fully recovered to their pre-COVID-19 state of health, and that may put a donor at risk of an adverse event.</p> <p>Donors who are known to have antibodies to Coronavirus are eligible to donate provided they have not had symptoms of Coronavirus Infection in the last 28 days.</p> <p>Donors who have had screening for the presence of Coronavirus for reasons other than suspected infection or contact (e.g. occupational) can be accepted to donate provided they have not had a positive test for the virus or symptoms of Coronavirus in the last 28 days.</p> <p>Donors who have travelled may be required to self-isolate (also termed quarantine) on their entry into the UK. This will depend on country or area of a country travelled from, and when the entry into the UK occurred. Donors will be aware of the UK border rules at the time of their travel. Some donors may be exempt from self-isolation due to the jobs they do; this exemption does not apply to donating blood.</p> <p>Individuals vaccinated with inactivated viruses or vaccines that do not contain live agents can usually be accepted without any deferral. Both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines are non-live and as such do not pose a transfusion safety risk. Nevertheless, as these are new vaccines, a seven-day deferral after immunization is recommended to ensure donor and donation safety. This will also reduce the risk of a donation being discarded if a vaccine recipient develops symptoms directly related to the vaccine in the week after donation.</p> <p>Several other coronavirus vaccines are currently under review by regulatory authorities in the UK and elsewhere. Donor selection guidelines will be updated if and when any new COVID-19 vaccine is approved for use in the UK.</p>
<p><i>Reason for change</i></p>	<p>Specific guidance on self-isolation after travel and use of the term quarantine has been included. Additions to definition of recovery from Coronavirus symptoms. Clarification of relevant post donation information.</p> <p>Addition of information on COVID-19 vaccination and a link to Immunization – Non-live.</p>

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Immunization – Non-Live

<i>Obligatory</i>	<p>1. Post Exposure: See: Immunization - 2. Post Exposure</p> <p>2. Hepatitis B: Must not donate if: Less than seven days after administration</p> <p>3. COVID-19 (Pfizer/BioNTech or AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine) Must not donate if: Less than seven days after administration</p>
<i>Discretionary</i>	If not exposed, for non-live immunizations other than hepatitis B or COVID-19, if well on the day, accept.
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<p>Hepatitis B Coronavirus Infection</p>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<p>Sensitive assays for HBsAg may be positive following recent immunization. A positive result can lead to the donation being wasted, unnecessary tests and the need to contact the donor.</p> <p>Note, hepatitis A immunization may be combined with hepatitis B immunization.</p> <p>"Non-Live" immunizations do not use material that can cause infection. This means there is no risk to people receiving donated material from a recently immunized non-exposed donor.</p> <p>As the Pfizer/BioNTech and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines are new, a seven-day deferral is recommended to ensure donor and donation safety. This will also reduce the risk of a donation being discarded if a vaccine recipient develops symptoms directly related to the vaccine in the week after donation.</p>
<i>Reason for change</i>	<p>The 'See if Relevant' entry on Immunization – 2. Post Exposure has been moved to the 'Obligatory' entry.</p> <p>The 'Additional Information' has been extended. Addition of guidance for COVID-19 vaccination.</p>

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Appendix 2 - Table of Immunizations

Please add COVID-19 (SARS-Cov-2) to the Table of Immunizations.

Diseases Protected against	Comments and example trade names of adult preparations	
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)	Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine; AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. If more than 7 days from most recent immunization, accept.	Non-Live

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