

Change Notification for the UK Blood Transfusion Services

Date of Issue: 26 November 2024 **Implementation:** to be determined by each Service

No. 46 – 2024

COVID-19 vaccination

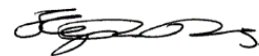
This notification includes the following changes:

	BM-DSG Bone Marrow & Peripheral Blood Stem Cell	CB-DSG Cord Blood	GDRI Geographical Disease Risk Index	TD-DSG Tissue – Deceased Donors	TL-DSG Tissue – Live Donors	WB-DSG Whole Blood & Components	Red Book Guidelines for the BTS in the UK
1. Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Appendix 2 – Immunisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Immunisation – Non-Live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

An updated **Position Statement on COVID-19 Vaccines and Blood Transfusion** is also available on the JPAC website at www.transfusionguidelines.org/document-library/position-statements.



Dr Angus Wells
Chair of Standing Advisory Committee on Care & Selection of Donors (SACCSO)



Dr Stephen Thomas
Professional Director of JPAC

Changes are indicated using the key below. This formatting will not appear in the final entry.

original text	«inserted text»	deleted text
---------------	-----------------	-------------------------

1. Changes apply to the **Whole Blood and Components DSG**

Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)

(revised entry)

<i>Includes</i>	COVID-19 disease due to infection with SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV.
<i>Definitions</i>	Testing: PCR (polymerase chain reaction) and rapid lateral flow tests (LFTs), usually by throat and/or nose swab, to detect the presence of SARS-CoV-2. This does not include testing for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2.
1. Individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection	
<i>Includes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with confirmed COVID-19 infection, diagnosed by a positive LFT or PCR test. Individuals where the results of SARS-Cov-2 testing, if carried out at the request of a health care professional, are awaited.
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate.
<i>Discretionary</i>	If it is at least seven days from the resolution of symptoms, and no further testing is required, accept.
2. Individuals with non-specific symptoms, not confirmed as COVID-19	
<i>Includes</i>	Individuals who have non-specific symptoms of a respiratory infection, including coughs and cold symptoms.
<i>Excludes</i>	Individuals who are awaiting test results for SARS-CoV-2 infection, as requested by a health care professional.
<i>Obligatory</i>	See <u>Infection - Acute</u>
3. Post-COVID Syndrome (Long COVID)	
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate.
<i>Discretionary</i>	If it is at least 6 months since all symptoms, including fatigue, have resolved, accept.
4. Occupational and other routine surveillance	
<i>Discretionary</i>	<p>Donors who have regular testing for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 (Coronavirus) can be accepted to donate provided they have not had a positive test for SARS-CoV-2 in the last seven days.</p> <p>This includes donors who work in a Health, Social Care or Educational setting.</p>
5. SARS-CoV-2 (Coronavirus) Vaccination	
<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if: <i>Less than 48 hours after the most recent immunisation was given.</i>
<i>Discretionary</i>	<i>a) If at least 48 hours have passed since the most recent immunisation was given, and</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the donor is well, with no ongoing local or systemic reaction to the vaccine, accept. <p>b) If the vaccine was given as part of an approved clinical trial and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more than 48 hours have passed since the most recent immunisation was given, and • the donor is well, with no ongoing local or systemic reaction to the vaccine, and • any deferral period specified in the study protocol has passed, accept
See if Relevant	<p><u>Clinical Trials</u> <u>Immunisation – Non-live</u> <u>Infection - Acute</u></p>
Additional Information	<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 SARS-CoV-2, a new coronavirus first identified in 2019. The guidance within this entry is focussed on COVID-19. Donors who report MERS or SARS, or contact with these infections, should be referred to a DCSO.</p> <p>Many respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, share common symptoms. As routine testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection is no longer recommended, most individuals will not have test results to confirm or exclude COVID-19. Where COVID-19 testing is not being undertaken, assessing donors using the Infection – Acute entry ensures that individuals are deferred for the appropriate time based on their symptoms.</p> <p>Individuals affected by COVID-19 may experience longer term symptoms. Post-COVID Syndrome (PCS), which may also be known as Long COVID, is recognised in individuals who have persistent symptoms for 12 weeks or more. PCS is a multisystem disease; common symptoms include fatigue, breathlessness and 'brain fog'. Affected individuals may also experience cardiac, musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal and neurological symptoms. As PCS may follow a relapsing course, it is important individuals have fully recovered before being accepted to donate.</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccines are non-live and as such do not pose a transfusion safety risk. A 48-hour deferral after immunisation is recommended to reduce the risk of a donation being discarded if a vaccine recipient develops symptoms directly related to the vaccine after donation.</p>
Post Donation Information	<p>There is no evidence at present that coronaviruses can be transmitted by blood transfusion and therefore these measures are precautionary.</p> <p>Donors must be provided with information about contacting the blood service if they develop any illness after blood or component donation.</p> <p>If a donor reports post-donation respiratory illness, refer to <u>Appendix 4 – Management of post donation illness</u>.</p>
Reason for Change	<p>«The deferral after COVID-19 vaccination has been removed.»</p> <p>This entry has been extensively rewritten to reflect changes in COVID-19 guidance across the UK.</p>

2. Changes apply to the **Whole Blood and Components DSG**

Appendix 2 – Table of Immunisations

(revised)

Diseases protected against	Comments and example trade names of adult preparations	
<i>other entries unchanged</i>		
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)	<p>All COVID-19 vaccines licenced in the UK are Non-Live. These include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pfizer BioNTech (tozinameran/Comirnaty®) • AstraZeneca (Vaxzevira®) • Moderna (Spikevax®) • Janssen Ad26.COV2-S • Novavax (Nuvaxovid®) • COVID-19 Vaccine Valneva <p>If more than 48 hours from most recent immunisation, accept.</p>	<u>Non-Live</u>
<i>other entries unchanged</i>		

3. Changes apply to the **Whole Blood and Components DSG**

Immunisation – Non-Live

(revised entry)

<i>Obligatory</i>	<p>1. Post Exposure: See: <u>Immunisation - 2. Post Exposure</u></p> <p>2. Hepatitis B: Must not donate if: Less than seven days after administration.</p> <p>3. COVID-19 See: <u>Coronavirus Infection</u></p>
<i>Discretionary</i>	If not exposed, for non-live immunisations other than hepatitis B or COVID-19 , if well on the day, accept.
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<u>Hepatitis B</u> <u>Coronavirus Infection</u>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<p>Sensitive assays for HBsAg may be positive following recent immunisation. A positive result can lead to the donation being wasted, unnecessary tests and the need to contact the donor.</p> <p>Note, hepatitis A immunisation may be combined with hepatitis B immunisation.</p> <p>'Non-Live' immunisations do not use material that can cause infection. This means there is no risk to people receiving donated material from a recently immunised non-exposed donor.</p> <p>As COVID-19 vaccines are now, additional guidance is given for these. This is included in the Coronavirus Infection entry.</p>
<i>Information</i>	This entry is compliant with the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005.
<i>Reason for Change</i>	«Guidance updated following the removal of deferral after COVID-19 vaccination.» Update of guidance for COVID-19 vaccination.
<i>Donor Information</i>	<p>If you wish to obtain more information regarding a personal medical issue, please contact your <u>National Help Line</u>.</p> <p>Please do not contact this web site for personal medical queries, as we are not in a position to provide individual answers.</p>