Covid-19: JCVI recommends autumn vaccine booster for the most vulnerable

Elisabeth Mahase

The UK should roll out a covid-19 booster vaccine in autumn 2023 for those at higher risk of severe illness, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has said.

In its recommendations to the government, the committee said that smaller groups of people, such as those who are older and those who are immunosuppressed, should also be offered an extra booster vaccine dose in the spring (2023).

They added that “emergency surge vaccine responses” may also be required if a novel variant of concern emerges with “clinically significant biological differences compared to the omicron variant.”

The advice comes as Carlos del Rio, president of the Infectious Diseases Society of America, has warned that an annual flu-like vaccine programme for covid-19 may not be suitable.1

JCVI chair of covid-19 vaccination Wei Shen Lim said, “The covid-19 vaccination programme continues to reduce severe disease across the population, while helping to protect the NHS. That is why we have advised planning for further booster vaccines for people at higher risk of serious illness through an autumn booster programme later this year.” He said that the JCVI will set out its final advice on spring boosters for those at “greatest risk” shortly.

The 2022 autumn booster campaign, which started in September, has seen 64.5% of over 50s take up the vaccine and 82.4% of those aged 75 and over. This campaign will end on 12 February 2023.


This article is made freely available for personal use in accordance with BMJ's website terms and conditions for the duration of the covid-19 pandemic or until otherwise determined by BMJ. You may download and print the article for any lawful, non-commercial purpose (including text and data mining) provided that all copyright notices and trade marks are retained.