Covid-19 vaccination: Advice to General Practice

NICaN SACT Clinical reference group

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This leaflet is intended to address questions that people undergoing treatment for cancer have asked at our clinics about the Covid-19 vaccines.

We have no concerns about people who are receiving chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy or radiotherapy having their Covid-19 vaccination.

Some people with cancer and blood disorders have lowered immunity and might not respond as well as others to vaccination. At present, there is no information on how well people with lowered immunity respond to the COVID-19 vaccines. However, there are no particular safety concerns about using the vaccines in people with lowered immunity. The vaccines are not live and cannot cause infections.

When to administer the vaccine

Do not give the vaccine on the same day as cytotoxic chemotherapy, proteasome inhibitors or first dose T-VEC treatment. If you are not sure what type of treatment your patient is receiving please ask the treating team who will be able to advise you.

For more information on Covid-19 vaccine for patients receiving SACT please go to the UK Chemotherapy Board https://www.ukchemotherapyboard.org/publications.

Helpful Advice to say to patients after the vaccination

It is not uncommon for some people to have a temperature after the vaccine. However it is important that you advise patients on chemotherapy treatment to not ignore a high temperature. Advise the patients that if they have a temperature or shivering flu-like symptoms to contact their local cancer unit helpline. They will have received this number on an alert card when their cancer treatment started.

After having the vaccine, it is important patients continue taking appropriate measures to reduce their risk of infection including; practise social distancing, wear a face covering, wash hands carefully and frequently and follow the current guidance www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus

- See also NICaN: https://nican.hscni.net/ for updates to Covid-19 information for patients.