

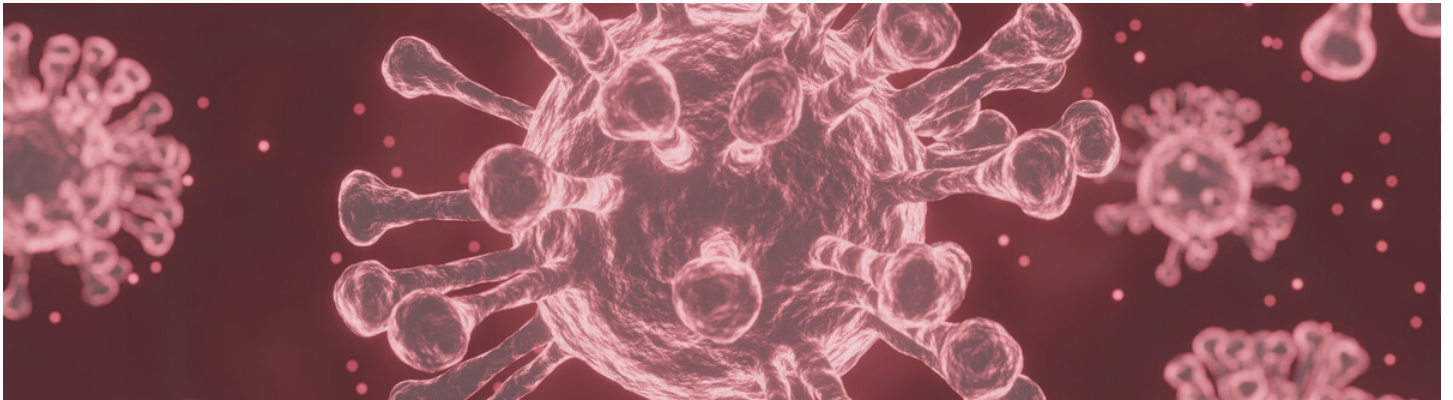
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# LYMPHOEDEMA SUPPORT NETWORK

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Covid-19

Your Health and Wellbeing Matters



Dear LSN Members, Whānau, Family and Friends

This is a challenging time around the world and here at home in New Zealand.

Knowing that you might have some concerns, especially about COVID-19 and the implications with Lymphoedema, we want you to know that you have our support and your wellness and happiness is our main concern. With that in mind, we have put together some current and relevant information to assist you.



## New Zealand Government

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

Our NZ Government have provided a very user friendly website with all the latest news and daily updates on COVID-19 Cases.

Information on the NZ COVID Tracer App, Tracer Booklet and a collective library of resources.

Available in Te reo Māori, NZ Sign Language, Large Print and Audio, Easy Read and over 20+ other languages.

New Zealand Government – Unite against COVID-19

<https://covid19.govt.nz>

<https://www.facebook.com/UniteAgainstCOVID19>

<https://twitter.com/covid19nz>

<https://www.instagram.com/UniteAgainstCOVID19>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/uniteagainstcovid19>

<https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/6925B3D1925FFCCF>





## Social Media Sites

Ministry of Health NZ

(These channels are to alert people to key updates and messaging specifically about COVID-19)

<https://twitter.com/minhealthnz>

<https://www.facebook.com/minhealthnz/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/minhealthnz>

## How to Wear and Remove your Face Mask Safely

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/covid-19-use-masks-and-face-coverings-community/covid-19-how-use-face-mask-safely>



**Australasian  
Lymphology  
Association**

If you have lymphoedema:

A 'Consensus document on COVID-19 vaccination for patients with lymphoedema' is now available courtesy of the British Lymphology Society. The ALA Research Committee has reviewed the document and support the content and guidance as relevant for the Australian and New Zealand context.

As vaccination is usually given as an injection in the upper arm, if you have lymphoedema in the upper arm we recommend that vaccination is avoided in this area.

### **British Lymphology Association Regarding Vaccinations**

For your reference, please see attached: Consensus document on COVID-19 vaccination for patients with lymphoedema.

Please remember: information is updated daily as this is an ever evolving Global Pandemic. The information in this article was up-to-date at the time of print. Please continue to check the above websites and watch any 'breaking news' on your devices, for the latest updates.

For updates and more information on staying safe, visit [Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

## Key Websites

### *Official Information*

Ministry of Health NZ

<https://www.health.govt.nz>

World Health Organisation (WHO)

<https://www.who.int>

Safe Travel Website

(Official advice for New Zealanders travelling/coming home)

<https://www.safetravel.govt.nz>

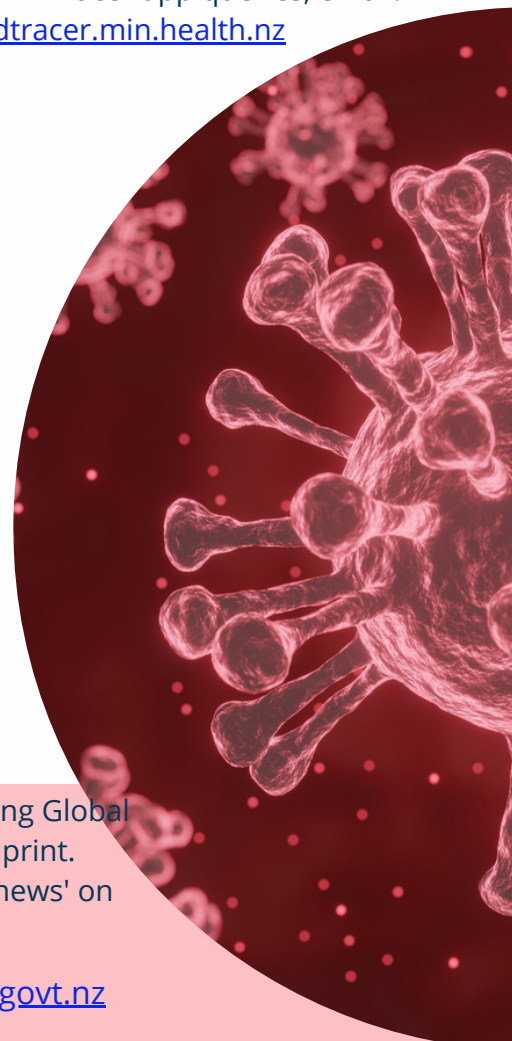
## Health Advice Phone Numbers

For COVID-19 health advice and information, contact the Healthline team (for free) on **0800 358 5453** or **+64 9 358 5453** for international SIMS.

## Queries

For other COVID-19-related queries, email: [covid-19response@health.govt.nz](mailto:covid-19response@health.govt.nz)

For NZ COVID Tracer app queries, email: [help@covidtracer.min.health.nz](mailto:help@covidtracer.min.health.nz)





## **Consensus document on COVID-19 vaccination for patients with lymphoedema (Updated 25th May 2021)**

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COVID-19 is an infection caused by an infectious respiratory coronavirus. Vaccinations are currently being rolled out across the U.K to help protect the population from this infectious disease. There are currently four vaccines available; none contain live forms of the virus, so you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine. The vaccine mimics parts of the virus; this triggers the immune system to produce antibodies which protect from COVID-19. The initial dose gives some protection, but protection is better after the subsequent 'booster' dose, given at a later date.

This consensus document aims to give advice regarding vaccination to patients with lymphoedema, based on the best available evidence and expert opinion.

It is important that individual patients liaise with their General Practitioner about their own medical circumstances, as this guidance cannot cover other medical problems patients may have, which can influence suitability for vaccination.

In general, patients with lymphoedema are not considered to have a weakened immune system. Some patients with rare forms of genetically inherited lymphoedema may have weakened immune systems; you will have been told if this applies to you.

- **COVID-19 vaccination is advisable for patients with lymphoedema and should help your body produce antibodies to fight the virus should you encounter it in the future.**

- **Patients with forms of genetically inherited lymphoedema associated with weakened immune systems should also have the vaccine. However, it is possible that these patients may not make a full immune response, and therefore should continue to take precautions.**
- **Patients are recommended to accept whichever vaccine is offered, providing they have no other reason not to.**

The vaccination is usually given as an injection into the upper arm. Within the areas of the body affected by lymphoedema, the immune cells which fight infection may not work as well. Vaccination into these areas may therefore result in a weaker immune response and less protection from COVID- 19. Damage to the skin within an area of lymphoedema can also act as an entry site for infection, so careful skin care and protection is advisable for areas of swelling. We therefore recommend that vaccination is avoided in these areas.

We have produced the following guidance to help select the most appropriate area of the body for vaccination:

- **If you have one arm affected by lymphoedema:** Both doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given in the unaffected, opposite arm.
- **If you have had the lymph nodes removed from the axilla (armpit) of one arm:** Both doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given in the opposite arm.
- **If both arms are affected by lymphoedema, but not the legs:** Both doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given into one of the thighs.
- **If both arms and one leg is affected by lymphoedema:** Both doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given into the unaffected thigh.
- **If both arms and both legs are affected by lymphoedema:** Both doses of COVID-19 vaccine should be given into the limb least affected by lymphoedema.

Please note that each of the vaccines in use in the UK, the Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna COVID- 19 vaccine documents (in the footnotes) confirm that injection maybe given into the thigh. Lymph node swelling is a known side effect of all the COVID-19 vaccines. It should resolve promptly after the vaccination.

<https://www.thebls.com/>

<https://www.lymphoedema.org/>

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The BLS consensus document can also be found here:

<https://www.thebls.com/documents-library/consensus-document- on-covid-19-vaccination- for-patients-with-lymphoedema>