

## **COVID-19 VACCINATION AND COMPLEX CHRONIC DISEASES**

With COVID-19 vaccination being rolled out, many patients with complex chronic diseases (CCDs) such as ME/CFS, post-Lyme syndrome and fibromyalgia have contacted us for advice on vaccination. This brief covers our current general advice about the use of vaccines against COVID-19 in people with CCDs.

The advice for people with CCDs is the same as for the general population. COVID-19 is a serious disease and the vaccines provide very good protection. Side effects are not uncommon, but they are usually mild and short-lived. There is no indication at present that these vary significantly according to the specific vaccine given.

We suggest that people with CCDs and those with ME/CFS in particular, allow for long periods of rest on the day of vaccination, and also the day before and up to 72 hours following vaccination. In the event of side effects, pain killers such as acetaminophen may be taken.

People should not be vaccinated if they have specific allergies to vaccine components. Please make sure you report any allergies at the vaccination centre and do discuss with your primary care provider if you have any concerns, and particularly if you are one of the few that have multiple allergies. Using over the counter medications with anti-allergic effects such as cetirizine, loratadine and famotidine on the day of vaccination may be recommended to some.

It is important to note that the use of vaccines against COVID-19 has started very recently and evidence on their use is building rapidly. Please do continue to follow public health advice and be attentive to any changes.