



communication

Dear Member,

**If you have previously contracted COVID-19**

COVID-19 vaccines have been topical and continue to raise several questions from many South Africans. As the country continues the process of rolling out vaccines according to regulated prioritisations, we would like to help you better understand the need for vaccination should you previously have contracted COVID-19.

Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against COVID-19 as it will help in reducing the severity of the illness as well as reducing the burden on our health systems.

If you have been infected, it's almost certain that you will have some immunity to coronavirus/SARS CoV-2 to protect you against future infections. Scientific experts do however not yet know exactly how long you are protected and the degree of protection that you may have from a virus of a different variant that also causes COVID-19 infection.

There is also a possibility that immunity to COVID-19 may only last for a short period of time with preliminary evidence suggesting that neutralising antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 remains in your blood for approximately five to six months after infection. Should this protection from antibodies wane over time, individuals may be susceptible to a future, but likely milder form of COVID-19 illness.

For reasons as explained above, the National Department of Health (NDOH) therefore recommends that even those who have previously contracted COVID-19 before should get the vaccine.

Vaccines continue to provide a degree of efficacy against variants of COVID-19 and vaccine manufacturers are continually adapting vaccines to make them more effective against new variants of COVID-19.

While progress has been made with procuring vaccines for the country, it will take time before sufficient numbers of the general public have been vaccinated. Until then, we need to follow public health strategies like social distancing, respiratory precautions, wearing masks in public, and hand washing to help reduce the transmission of the virus and the number of infections.

As more evidence becomes available about how vaccines offer protection against COVID-19, we will keep you updated.

*Disclaimer: Please take note that the information relating to COVID-19 is rapidly evolving as new information is made available - the information being provided is current as at this point in time.*

Kind regards,



<http://www.health.gov.za/covid19/assets/downloads/pamphlets/!%20already%20had%20COVID-19,%20I%20can%20still%20benefit%20from%20the%20vaccine.png>

<https://www.webmd.com/lung/qa/can-you-be-reinfected-if-you-have-already-had-the-coronavirus>

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/can-i-be-re-infected-with-the-new-variant-if-ive-had-covid-19/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-what-you-need-to-know>

<http://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Media-Statement-South-Africa-rollout-Covid-19-Vaccine.pdf>