



# COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

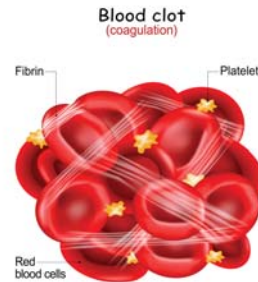
## Johnson and Johnson CoVID-19 Vaccine Put on Pause

The administration of the Johnson and Johnson (J&J) vaccine has been temporarily put on pause due to the occurrence of a rare blood clotting disorder. This disorder has been caused by other vaccines in the past. The condition is vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia or VITT. It is caused by the immune response triggering platelets in the blood stream to clot, that can lead to serious health effects when they lodge in organs, especially the brain, and can be fatal. It can also lead to a low level of platelets in the blood stream, that can allow excess bleeding to occur, as if the person were on a blood thinning medication. The condition occurs within 5 to 13 days after receiving the vaccine. The pause in the provision of the J&J vaccine is being performed to allow medical researchers to develop a treatment regimen for this condition.

In the US, there have been 6 cases of this condition that have occurred, all in women, one of whom died, after they received the J&J vaccine. These cases are out of the 6.85 million doses that have been given, making the chances of this occurring a little less than one in a million. According to the CDC, the chances of being struck by lightning are about 1 in half a million (500,000), so the chances of this occurring are like being struck twice by lightning. Similar cases have occurred in Europe, after the administration of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine and there have been 220 cases out of 34 million doses given, making the chances there about 6 in a million, but no deaths to date.

There are symptoms and medical treatments for the condition. The symptoms may include:

- severe abdominal pain,
- a painful swollen leg,
- a skin rash with tiny reddish-purple spots,
- persistent and severe headache,
- seizures
- blurred or double vision
- shortness of breath/chest pains



Anyone who has received the J&J vaccine and has them should seek immediate emergency medical attention and tell the medical providers they have received that vaccine. They should not receive the medication heparin, as it can make the condition worse, but other blood thinning drugs and immune reaction treatments can be effective.

Both the J&J and AZ are virus vector vaccines, that use an inactivated virus to deliver the genetic code that causes the virus spike protein to be generated. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines do not use a virus in their vaccines and only carry the messenger RNA, or mRNA, to cause the protein spike to be made. The only medical concerns caused by these vaccines has been the potential for an extreme allergic reaction, called anaphylaxis, and if that occurs it happens shortly, typically 15 minutes after the vaccine is received, which is the reason for the waiting period after receiving it at the clinics.

## Pfizer and Moderna Vaccination Eligibility Increases

All New Yorkers age 16 and over are now eligible for the vaccine. Vaccinations can be completed at authorized sites which include pharmacies, hospitals, local health departments and Federally Qualified Health Centers statewide. Children under 16 are not yet eligible for the vaccines, however Pfizer has submitted for emergency use authorization approval to the FDA after clinical trials have proven successful with children ages 12-15.

### NEW YORK STATE COVID-19 VACCINATION HOTLINE

1-833-NYS-4-VAX (1-833-697-4829)

The COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline is open 7AM - 10PM, 7 days week, to help New Yorkers determine if they are eligible and schedule vaccination appointments.

<https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>