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Information on AstraZeneca side effect

What is this side effect of the AstraZeneca vaccine?

There is evidence of a likely link between the AstraZeneca vaccine and an extremely rare blood clotting syndrome (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia, or TTS).

The recommendation from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) is that use of Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer) is preferred over AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in adults under 50 years old who have not already had a first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Is the AstraZeneca vaccine safe?

Yes. The individual benefit-to-risk balance of vaccination with the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine varies with age. This balance is based on factors including the increased risk of complications from COVID-19 with increasing age and the potential lower risk of this very rare, but serious, adverse event with increasing age. ATAGI has recommended the AstraZeneca vaccine is safe to be given to people aged 50 and over. However, the state government has paused the roll out of AstraZeneca to people under 50.

I have had my first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine, what do I do now?

If you have had your first vaccine dose without this side effect or other serious adverse effects, you should receive your second dose as planned.

What if I am worried about side effects?

If you have recently had your first vaccine dose and are experiencing any side effects that you are worried about, you can book an appointment for you to see your doctor.

What are the side effects linked to blood clotting?

People who have experienced TTS have experienced symptoms between four and 20 days following the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Symptoms include a new onset persistent headache not settling with pain relief, features of raised intracranial pressure (including acute severe headache, vomiting, confusion), focal neurological deficits, and/or seizures. Thrombosis in the intra-abdominal venous system may present as abdominal pain

I'm booked in for my first dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, what do I do?

The Department of Health have advised all State-run vaccination clinics to pause the roll out of the AstraZeneca vaccine to anyone aged under 50. If you are under 50, your vaccination appointment will be rescheduled.

ATAGI says the AstraZeneca vaccine is safe for anyone aged over 50. If you are over 50 please attend your vaccination appointment.

More information and updates on the AstraZeneca website can be found on the Department of Health website: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines>

Discuss any concerns you may have with your doctor.

How long will I have to wait for Pfizer?

The availability of Pfizer will depend on Commonwealth supply of the vaccine. The Loddon Mallee public Health Unit will work with the State Government to secure supply for our region.

Australia is COVID-free, should I bother getting vaccinated?

ATAGI recommends all Australians be vaccinated against COVID-19, given the deadly nature of the virus. The AstraZeneca vaccine is highly effective at reducing the risk of death or severe disease from COVID-19 across all adult age groups.