



AstraZeneca Information

AstraZeneca Vaccine

There is a link between the AstraZeneca vaccine and a very rare condition, which involves blood clotting and low blood platelet levels. The condition is called Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS).

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all adults. The Pfizer vaccine is the preferred vaccine against COVID-19 for adults under 50 years of age. However, adults under 50 years of age may still choose to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine. Talk to your doctor to help make your decision.

The AstraZeneca vaccine will be given to people 50 years and over.

What is Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (known as TTS)?

Thrombosis means blood clot.

Thrombocytopenia means low blood platelet levels.

TTS is a very rare, potential side effect of the AstraZeneca vaccine. If it does happen, it can be serious and can cause disability or death. TTS causes blood clots, which can be in different parts of the body. It can also cause low blood platelet levels, which can lead to bleeding.

When does TTS happen?

The reported cases of TTS have happened between 4 to 28 days after vaccination, usually with the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

How common is TTS?

TTS is very rare. As of 13 May 2021, for those aged over 50 it is estimated to affect about 12 people out of a million people who receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. But for those under 50 years of age, while still very rare, the rate is currently estimated to be higher at about 20-40 people out of a million people. These estimates are based on the small numbers of people who have been vaccinated in Australia but are similar to rates seen in some countries overseas. These estimates will be updated as more information becomes available.

Are any groups more at risk of TTS?

TTS appears to be more common in younger adults, although it has been reported in some older adults. We do not know if there are any pre-existing medical conditions that may contribute to blood clotting. Researchers are investigating this.

What are the symptoms of TTS?

TTS might cause some of the following symptoms:

- a severe ongoing headache that:
 - appears at least 4 days *after* vaccination
 - does not improve with simple pain medication
 - may be worse when lying down
- nausea and vomiting
- blurred vision
- difficulty speaking
- drowsiness
- seizures
- difficulty breathing
- chest pain
- swelling in your leg
- ongoing stomach pain
- small blood spots under the skin away from the site of injection.

If you or another person get any of these serious side effects after you get a COVID-19 vaccination, you should call 000 straight away.

Are the benefits of the AstraZeneca vaccine greater than the risks?

Yes. The benefits of vaccination are greater than the risks, especially for older people who have a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

What if you are under 50 and are booked in to receive your first dose of AstraZeneca?

If you are booked in for your first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine and you are under 50 years of age, talk to your doctor. They will help you to decide whether to have the vaccine.

What if you have received your first dose of AstraZeneca and are due for your second dose?

Almost all reported cases of TTS occurred after the first dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. If you had no severe side effects after your first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine, you can be confident in getting your second dose, even if you are under 50.

Is the AstraZeneca vaccine safe for people who have had blood clots in the past?

If you have had other types of blood clots in the past, or are at risk of blood clots, you can still have the AstraZeneca vaccine. There is no evidence that having a previous blood clot increases the risk of TTS following the AstraZeneca vaccine.

For more information

If you have questions about the AstraZeneca vaccine, speak to your doctor, go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-vaccines-languages, or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080. For translating and interpreting services, call 131 450.