

DHS COVID-19 Vaccine Update



Good morning,

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lifted the temporary recommended pause of use on the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine. The Pennsylvania Department of Health has also advised vaccine providers that they can resume use of the J&J vaccine in Pennsylvania.

We recognize that there may be some concern and hesitancy specifically towards the J&J vaccine now that it is available again, and we'd like to share a bit of information to help you weigh your options regarding the vaccines available.

By recommending that the country resume using the J&J vaccine, the CDC and FDA are affirming the J&J vaccine's overall safety. The agencies' joint statement on the return is available [here](#), but we would like to highlight a few points:

- [Clinical trials](#) for the J&J COVID-19 found 100 percent efficacy against hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19. This vaccine is still extremely effective in saving lives should a person contract COVID-19.
- As of April 23, 15 total instances of blood clots were confirmed by the CDC, primarily in women ages 18-49 and within 14 days of vaccination out of more than 8,000,000 J&J vaccines administered. This is 1 in more than 533,333 vaccines, and federal officials are continuing to closely monitor vaccine administration for potential instances of adverse effects.
- The pause allowed federal public health officials to develop formal guidance to vaccine providers, medical professionals, and the public to better monitor for potential signs of clotting and to treat this type of blood clot should it occur.
- This is the only one-dose COVID-19 vaccine currently authorized for use.

More information about the J&J vaccine, its safety, and the decision to lift the pause is available from the FDA [here](#) and CDC [here](#).

The decision to temporarily pause J&J vaccine administration demonstrates the rigorous commitment to safety to which the CDC and FDA adhere. The vaccine would not be recommended for continued use if the potential risks outweighed the overall benefit and efficacy of the vaccine, and vaccine and health care providers are now better equipped with information about the potential risks to provide more information and better monitor recipients moving forward.

While we understand the concern that can be raised by the potential risks, we strongly encourage each of you to read the CDC and FDA's recommendations and findings and consider these as you plan for a COVID-19 vaccination. Each of the three vaccines currently available will keep you safe from COVID-19 and are crucial assets in our fight against this pandemic, and if you are not yet vaccinated, we hope that you will make this choice for yourself and help protect yourself, your family, and your community.

Best,

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