

MHRA issues new advice on AstraZeneca vaccine

The Medicines and Healthcare product Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have updated guidance in relation to the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine

There have been reports of an extremely rare adverse event of blood clots and unusual bleeding following vaccination with the first dose of AstraZeneca.

Although this condition remains extremely rare there appears to be a slightly higher risk in people shortly after the first dose of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine. Around 4 people develop this condition for every million doses of AZ vaccine doses given.

This is seen slightly more often in younger people and tends to occur between 4 days and 2 weeks following vaccination.

Further guidance can be found at: COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

First doses

Anyone aged under 30 currently eligible for a vaccination will not be sent an appointment for their first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine but will be contacted when we have alternative vaccine available. Some under 30 year olds who have an underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease should have a discussion with their GP about the risks and benefits of a prompt AZ vaccine versus the risk of waiting for an alternative vaccine.

Everyone over 30 years should attend their vaccination appointment, the benefits of prompt vaccination in this age group outweigh the risks of AZ vaccine. Staff at the vaccination centre will be available to discuss any questions you have.

Second doses

If you have received a first dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine you should continue to have a second dose of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, irrespective of age.

The Covid-19 vaccines continue to be safe and effective for most and we would advise people attend appointments when invited. Consultation will be offered when you attend and any concerns can be discussed.