



Australian Government

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Talking to patients about AstraZeneca vaccine

Information current as of 20 July 2021

What you need to know about the AstraZeneca vaccine

- The **AstraZeneca** vaccine is recommended for people aged 60 and over.
- The AstraZeneca vaccine requires two doses, with a recommended interval of 12 weeks. The minimum interval between doses is 4 weeks.
- In outbreak situations, an interval of between 4 and 8 weeks is preferred.
- Adults under the age of 60 years have a higher risk of **thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS)** following AstraZeneca vaccination than those aged 60 years and over.
- People of any age without contraindications who have had their first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine without any serious adverse events **should** receive a second dose of the same vaccine.
- For people aged 60 years and over, the expert medical advice is that the **benefit of receiving the vaccination outweighs the risk** of this rare but serious side effect.
- Experts are continuously reviewing the benefit versus risk profile of both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines. If Australia was faced with a large outbreak, the current advice on the preferred usage of AstraZeneca and Pfizer may be reviewed.
- The number of Australian cases of TTS suggests it is very rare, but occurs more often in younger people than older people.
- An alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine is preferred for people under 60 years old.
- The AstraZeneca vaccine is not recommended for people with a past history of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis, heparin-induced thrombocytopenia, idiopathic splanchnic vein thrombosis and anti-phospholipid syndrome with thrombosis.
- The AstraZeneca vaccine is contraindicated for people with anaphylaxis to a previous dose of AstraZeneca vaccine, TTS following the first dose of AstraZeneca vaccine, and other serious adverse events attributed to the first dose of AstraZeneca vaccine.
- No other risk factors for this syndrome have been detected.
- In addition, what we know about TTS treatments and diagnosis has vastly improved. The number of people successfully treated for this side effect has risen and critical care specialists and haematologists get a better understanding of what is occurring at a microscopic level with TTS.

Where to get more information

- [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au)
- [National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance \(NCIRS\) COVID-19 vaccines: Frequently asked questions](#)