**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: JOHNSON & JOHNSON PAUSE**

**Why is the Johnson and Johnson vaccine being paused?**

On 4/13/21, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended a pause in the use of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine. This was because 6 cases of a rare type of blood clot were reported in people who received the vaccine in the US. The type of blood clot is called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST). The six people with these blood clots also had a low platelet count (known as thrombocytopenia). The 6 cases were in women ages 18 to 48 and their symptoms started 6 to 13 days after they received the vaccine. These blood clots are very rare. Almost 7 million doses of the J&J vaccine have been given in the US and there have only been 6 reported cases.

The pause means that CDC and FDA recommend that the J&J vaccine is not given to anyone until we know more. It was recommended out of an abundance of caution for a couple of reasons. One is to give scientists a chance to review the data and determine the potential significance of these cases. The other is to ensure healthcare providers are aware of the potential for this rare condition and can prepare to recognize and properly treat it (unique treatment is required for this type of blood clot). The pause is expected to take 1-2 weeks. We will will share more information as soon as possible.

**Why are they just finding out about this now?**

The FDA authorized the J&J vaccine for use in the US after reviewing data, including the results of a phase 3 trial in which 21,895 people received the vaccine. The vaccine met the FDA’s rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization (EUA). New safety monitoring systems were added for the COVID-19 vaccines in addition to the routine monitoring that is used for all vaccines. This is to find out about problems that might not be detected until vaccines are in widespread use. The case reports of these rare blood clots were detected through the monitoring system called VAERS (the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System).

**What if I already got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?**

- If you got this vaccine more than three weeks ago, your risk of developing a blood clot is very low.
- If you got this vaccine within the last three weeks, your risk of developing a blood clot is also very low. However, you should be on the lookout for possible symptoms:
  - Severe headache
  - Blurred vision
  - Fainting
  - Seizures or other new neurologic symptoms
  - Severe pain in your abdomen (chest or stomach)
  - Shortness of breath
  - Leg pain or swelling
  - Tiny red spots on the skin (petechiae)
  - New or easy bruising

Get medical care right away if you have any of these symptoms.

If you have any questions at all, call your doctor, nurse, or clinic. If you don’t have a medical provider, you can call 2-1-1 to be connected with a healthcare provider.
How should I report side effects from the vaccine?
If you experience side effects after any vaccine, please report them to the FDA/CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). The VAERS toll-free number is 1-800-822-7967 or report online to https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html.

Have there been any reports of these blood clots with low platelets with the other vaccines?
As of April 13th, more than 180 million doses of Pfizer and Moderna have been administered in the United States with no reports of the cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) blood clots with low platelets.

What do I do if I had an appointment for the Johnson and Johnson vaccine and it was canceled?
If you had an appointment for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, your vaccine provider will contact you about rescheduling or providing a new appointment for Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

More Information
For more information, visit the CDC webpage Recommendation to Pause Use of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine.