Health Alert: Immediate Pause on Johnson and Johnson Vaccine Administration

Minnesota Department of Health, Tue, Apr 13 09:00 CST 2021

Action Steps

Local and tribal health department: Please forward to hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, emergency departments, pharmacies, and convenience clinics in your jurisdiction.
Hospitals, clinics and other facilities: Please forward to occupational health and employee health leadership, infection preventionists, infectious disease physicians, emergency department staff, hospitalists, primary care clinicians, pharmacists, and all other health care providers who may be vaccinating with COVID-19 vaccines.
Health care providers:

- Stop administering Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine immediately.
- Counsel patients who have had Johnson & Johnson vaccine and who develop severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after vaccination to contact their health care provider ASAP.
- Continue to store and handle supplies of Johnson & Johnson correctly.
- Health care providers should report adverse events to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System at https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html.

Background

CDC and FDA are reviewing data involving six reported U.S. cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals after receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. MDH is not aware of any cases in Minnesota as of April 2, 2021. There have been no such effects reported in association with Moderna or Pfizer vaccine.

CDC will convene a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, to further review these cases and assess their potential significance. FDA will review that analysis as it also investigates these cases. **Until that process is complete, we are advising a pause in the use of this vaccine out of an abundance of caution.**

We advise marking your supplies of Johnson & Johnson vaccine as DO NOT USE until this issue is resolved. Continue to store and handle these doses correctly. No additional orders will be placed for Johnson & Johnson vaccine until this issue is resolved, though it may be included in some shipments that are in transit and will arrive today or tomorrow.

As of April 12, more than 6.8 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine have been administered in the U.S. CDC and FDA are reviewing data involving six reported U.S. cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals after receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. In these cases, a type of blood clot called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) was seen in combination with low levels of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia). All six cases

occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48, and symptoms occurred 6 to 13 days after vaccination. Treatment of this specific type of blood clot is different from the treatment that might typically be administered. Usually, an anticoagulant drug called heparin is used to treat blood clots. In this setting, administration of heparin may be dangerous, and alternative treatments need to be given.

Right now, these adverse events appear to be extremely rare. COVID-19 vaccine safety is a top priority.

For More Information

CDC and FDA will provide additional information and answer questions later today at a media briefing. A recording of that media call will be available on the FDA's YouTube channel.

- Call MDH at 651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414

A copy of this HAN is available at: MDH Health Alert Network (http://www.health.state.mn.us/han)
The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.