

# Viral Vector-based COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet – AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria)/COVISHIELD and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 Vaccine



**Be sure to read this whole sheet carefully and ask a healthcare provider any questions you have before receiving the vaccine.**

## HOW DO VIRAL VECTOR-BASED VACCINES PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19?

- These types of vaccines use a method that involves taking another virus called an adenovirus (like the common cold virus), weakening it so it cannot grow, and inserting instructions for part of the COVID-19 virus to help our body build a strong immune response against COVID-19. as antibodies) which in turn. You can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine itself.
- The Janssen vaccine (a one-dose vaccine) has shown to prevent people from becoming sick from COVID-19 beginning 7 days after the dose is given. This protection is somewhat lower than with an mRNA vaccine. Because of lower protection and some safety concerns, mRNA vaccines are preferred by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). Discuss your vaccine choices with your health care provider

## WHO SHOULD GET A VIRAL-VECTOR VACCINE?

- Individuals 18 years of age and older without contraindications can receive the Janssen vaccine. The vaccine must be given with informed consent, including a discussion about the risks and benefits of providing getting a viral vector vaccine. It is important to discuss your viral vector vaccine choice with your health care provider.

- Those who have had a COVID-19 vaccine infection (see table below).

## YOU SHOULD NOT GET THE VACCINE IF:

- If you have had a serious or allergic reaction to a dose of a viral vector vaccine you should not receive the same shot until it is determined to be safe by a health care provider.
- A confirmed anaphylactic hypersensitivity to the vaccine or one of the ingredients in the vaccine.
- You are currently being treated for, or have a prior history of, capillary leak syndrome.
- You are at higher risk of blood clots, have a history of a vaccine-induced thrombotic thrombocytopenia, or blood clots with low platelets following vaccination, and have been advised by a healthcare provider not to get another viral vector vaccine dose.
- If you are wondering if the vaccine is right for you, talk to your healthcare provider.

## HOW IS THE VACCINE GIVEN?

- The vaccine is given as a needle in the upper arm and will require one dose for the Janssen vaccine and two doses for the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine.

- It is recommended for those who had the one-dose Janssen vaccine to get a second dose in their primary series with an mRNA vaccine to reduce serious illness and for better protection against circulating variants. If you are wondering if you need an additional dose, talk to your health care provider.
- It is important to note that you cannot get COVID-19 infection from the vaccine.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT AFTER RECEIVING A VIRAL VECTOR-BASED VACCINE?

- Wait for at least 15 minutes after receiving your vaccine in the space provided for you by the healthcare provider. Longer waiting times of 30 minutes may be recommended if there is concern about a possible vaccine allergy or if it has been advised by your health care provider.
- Though uncommon, fainting or allergic reactions can occur after vaccination. Inform a health care provider at the clinic if you feel unwell while waiting.
- Do not operate a vehicle or other form of transportation for at least 15 to 30 minutes after being vaccinated or if you are feeling unwell.
- Serious side effects immediately after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, if you develop any serious symptoms or symptoms that could be an allergic reaction, tell the health care provider at the clinic right away. The clinic staff are prepared to manage serious symptoms should it occur. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:
  - Hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy)
  - Swelling of the face, tongue or throat
  - Difficulty breathing

### WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT THE NEXT FEW DAYS?

- Common side effects can develop in the day or two after receiving the vaccine. Although these side effects are not serious to your health, they may make you feel unwell for approximately one to three days. The side effects will usually go away on their own.
- Common side effects include: pain, redness or swelling where the needle was given tiredness, muscle aches, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, nausea, vomiting, chills or fever.
- For comfort, you can put a cool/damp cloth on the injection site, rest, and/or take pain or fever medication (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen). Your health care provider may provide you with additional guidance.
- Seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms following immunization which could be associated with capillary leak syndrome (CLS). CLS causes fluid to leak from small blood vessels. Symptoms can occur within days after vaccination. Symptoms include: rapid swelling of the arms and legs, sudden weight gain, feeling faint.
- Seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms following immunization which could be associated with vaccine-induced immune thrombosis with thrombocytopenia (VITT). VITT causes blood clots with low platelets. Symptoms can occur within 4 weeks, and sometimes even up to 6 weeks, after vaccination. Symptoms include:
  - New severe headaches, worsening or persistent headaches; blurred vision, confusion or seizures
  - Shortness of breath, chest pain, leg swelling, leg pain or persistent abdominal pain
  - Unusual skin bruising or pinpoint round spots under the skin beyond the site of vaccination
- Serious side effects after receiving the vaccine are rare. However, if you develop any serious

symptoms or symptoms after you have returned home that could be serious call 9-1-1 right away. Serious symptoms of an allergic reaction include: hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing.

- Some rare reactions that have been found to occur from taking a viral vector vaccine. Seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms which could be associated with any of the following:
  - Blood clots with low platelets - Blood clots with low levels of blood platelets that occur after vaccination with viral vector vaccines (AstraZeneca Vaxzevria/COVISHIELD and Janssen) are rare but serious. These serious side effects have been reported to begin a few days after receiving the vaccine up to about a month after vaccination. Quick diagnosis and treatment are critical to reduce the risk of negative outcomes. Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any of the following symptoms: shortness of breath, chest pain, persistent abdominal pain, blurred vision, confusion or seizures; severe, persistent or worsening headache; skin bruising or tiny blood spots under the skin (sometimes away from the part of your body the needle went in).
  - Capillary leak syndrome (CLS) - Capillary leak syndrome is serious and sometimes fatal. It causes fluid to leak from small blood vessels. Symptoms include leading to swelling of the arms and legs, sudden weight gain and low blood pressure, resulting in feeling faint.
  - Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) - GBS is a potentially serious and rare neurological disorder that causes the body's immune system to damage nerve cells. Most people fully recover from GBS but some have remaining symptoms and fatal cases can occur. Symptoms include numbness and weakness in the arms, legs, face, chest or other muscles. It can occur within between 3 and 25 days after vaccination.

- Your risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 is much higher than your risk of having a rare event after these vaccines. Discuss your risks with your health care provider.
- Any serious side effects after vaccination should be reported to your local Public Health Office or health care provider.
- Continue to follow the recommendations of local public health officials.
- Do not receive testing for tuberculosis (TB) until at least 28 days after a COVID-19 vaccine (unless recommended by your health care provider).

### WHEN SHOULD I RETURN TO RECEIVE THE NEXT DOSE OF THE VACCINE?

- Make an appointment or follow the instructions of the health care provider to ensure you receive the next dose at the right time. After your primary series, a booster dose is also recommended. Receiving your next dose at the right time will ensure your safety and the best possible protection against new circulating variants that lasts as long as possible for you.
- Depending on the vaccine you receive and your health situation, the health care provider will discuss the number of doses and boosters you require to complete your COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Keep your immunization record in a safe place. Register online at MyHealthNB to obtain a record of your COVID-19 immunizations. The paper record of COVID-19 Immunization provided when vaccinated will continue to be the official record. Keep a copy and take a picture of it. The paper copy or picture of the copy can be used as proof of vaccination.

**TABLE 1: QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHEN RECEIVING A VIRAL-VECTOR COVID-19 VACCINE**

Questions	Recommendations
Have you had a COVID-19 infection?	It is important for people with previous COVID-19 infection to be vaccinated to prevent becoming infected again. After a COVID-19 infection you should wait 8 weeks to start or complete your primary series and 3 months to receive your booster dose (or 5 months from the last dose in your primary series, whichever period is longer). If you would like more information on the best optimal time to get your vaccine after infection, visit GNB's FAQs document: When should I get vaccinated after a COVID-19 Infection?
If you have received previous dose(s) of a COVID-19 vaccine, did you have any side effects after vaccination?	It may be possible for people with previous allergic reactions to a COVID-19 vaccine to receive another vaccine type or the same vaccine type again. Consult with your health care provider.
Are you allergic to polysorbate 80 (which is contained in the AstraZeneca and Janssen COVID-19 vaccine)?	If you are allergic to polysorbate 80, consult with your health care provider about whether to receive a Viral-Vector COVID-19 vaccine.  Polysorbate 80 rarely causes allergic reactions and is found in products such as medical preparations (e.g., vitamin oils, tablets, and anticancer agents), and cosmetics.
Do you have a suspected but unproven allergy to a vaccine component (e.g., polysorbate 80)?	If "yes", you may receive a Viral-Vector COVID-19 vaccine. You will be asked to wait in the clinic for 30 minutes after receiving the vaccine to make sure you are feeling well.
Are you or could you be pregnant? Are you breastfeeding?	When you are pregnant, you have a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine lowers your risk of getting seriously ill from the virus.  A viral vector COVID-19 vaccine may be offered to individuals in the authorized age group who are pregnant or breastfeeding when all other authorized COVID-19 vaccines are contraindicated.  If you are pregnant or breastfeeding and have questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your healthcare provider.
Do you have any problems with your immune system or are you taking any medications that can affect your immune system?  (e.g., high dose steroids, chemotherapy, some arthritis Medications)	Additional doses may be needed because of your immune system's response to the vaccine. Consult with your health care provider.  In addition, you should continue to follow public health measures after vaccination (such as masking, physical distancing and hand hygiene).
Have you recently received specific medications for COVID-19 treatment (monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma)?	If "yes", you may be asked to delay receiving your COVID-19 vaccine.
Do you have a bleeding disorder or are you taking any medications that could affect blood clotting?  Ask the health care provider if you are not sure about your medical conditions	If "yes", the health care worker may hold the site where the needle is given for longer to prevent bleeding and bruising.  Individuals receiving long-term anticoagulation are not considered to be at higher risk of bleeding complications following immunization and may be safely immunized without discontinuation of their anticoagulation therapy.
Have you ever felt faint or fainted after a past vaccination or medical procedure?	If "yes", the health care provider may vaccinate you lying down to prevent you from fainting.