



Your Questions Answered: Johnson & Johnson Vaccine

Do you have questions about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?

Atrium Health experts respond to some of the most frequently asked questions about possible side effects, upcoming vaccine appointments, and how we're adhering to the latest CDC, FDA and NC Department of Health and Human Services guidance.

Should I be worried if I recently received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?

A very small number of people have experienced a very rare blood clot disorder following vaccination with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. As of April 12, nearly 7 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine have been administered in the U.S., and the CDC and FDA are reviewing data involving six reported cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals that have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. All six cases occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48, and symptoms occurred 6 to 13 days after vaccination.

These developments should provide some reassurance that all vaccines are continually monitored by the CDC and FDA to ensure the safety of their use. While these serious reactions to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are less than one per million of Johnson & Johnson vaccines administered, they are all fully investigated to ensure and confirm the safe use of each vaccine.

What should I be looking for if I recently received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?

This is a very new development, and researchers are still learning about this based on the six cases out of the nearly 7 million who have received the J&J vaccine. Those who have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and who develop a worse than normal severe and long term headache, new weakness in your arms or legs, new seizure, leg pain or swelling in a single leg, or sudden onset of shortness of breath within three weeks of receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, should talk to an Atrium Health clinical team member by calling 704-468-2000 or seek appropriate medical care.

Has Atrium Health stopped giving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?

Yes. Out of an abundance of caution, we are following the recommendation from the CDC & FDA and have paused the use of this vaccine.

What kind of COVID-19 vaccine will I received if I have an appointment with Atrium Health soon?

As of April 13, all our appointments for COVID-19 vaccines are for either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. You can see which vaccine you are signed up to get in your MyAtriumHealth account.

There are appointments available for vaccination. Learn more at AtriumHealth.org/COVID19Vaccine.

What is Atrium Health doing to help their clinicians know how to treat this kind of blood clot?

We have alerted our care teams – especially our primary care, emergency medicine, and hospital physicians – that treatment of this specific type of blood clot is different from the treatment that might typically be administered for blood clots, and that knowing the COVID-19 vaccination history of patients with blood clots is vital. 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.

Why are we seeing blood clots following the Johnson & Johnson and Astra Zeneca vaccine but not in other vaccines?

This is a very new development, and researchers are still learning about this based on the six cases out of the nearly 7 million who have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. It is not yet known why these individuals experienced blood clots, and we will continue to monitor information and follow the guidance from the CDC and FDA regarding these latest developments.