

Information for COVID-19 AZ Vaccination

What should I know before I have my COVID-19 Vaccine?

Which brand of COVID-19 vaccine am I receiving?

AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine (AZ Vaccine), currently the only vaccine available in Taiwan.

1. Who should not have the AZ vaccination?

- ❖ Allergy history to vaccine
- ❖ Age under 18 years old
- ❖ Pregnant women (Currently, there is insufficient evidence to prove the safety of AZ vaccine in pregnant women, thus vaccination is not recommended.)

2. Who should consider postponing AZ vaccination?

- ❖ Those with current fever or acute moderate to severe illnesses; You should wait until disease recovery/stabilization before vaccination.
- ❖ Those taking oral contraceptive pills or hormone replacement therapy: these medications should be stopped for at least 28 days before vaccination.
- ❖ Those who received other vaccines recently: Inactivated vaccines (Influenza, Pneumococcus, Hepatitis B vaccines... etc.) require a 14-day interval with AZ vaccination. Live-attenuated vaccines (MMR, Polio... etc) require a 28-day interval with AZ vaccination.

3. Can I still receive AZ vaccine if I was vaccinated with other brands of COVID-19 vaccine before?

Vaccines of different brands are not considered interchangeable. The two-dose course should be completed with the same vaccine. However, if an alternate brand is used for the second dose, a third of COVID-19 vaccine does not need to be given.

What may happen when I get my COVID-19 vaccination?

1. Vaccination reactions in the first 30minutes (rare)

You should rest at our injection unit for 30 minutes of observation after vaccination. Inform our medical staff if you experience any discomfort. You may leave after the 30-minute observation period if there is no significant discomfort.

Vasovagal reaction (Feel faint) : usually happens within 5 minutes of injection.

Anaphylaxis-acute allergic reactions (rare) : usually happen 5-30 minutes after injection, symptoms include dyspnea, shortness of breath, dizziness, racing heartbeats, general rash...etc.

If one uses medications such as antiplatelets, anticoagulants, or has underlying coagulopathy, one should apply pressure to site of injection for at least 2 minutes and observe if persistent bleeding or hematoma is present.

What should I take note of after COVID-19 vaccination?

1. When should I receive the 2nd dose of AZ vaccine?

Currently the WHO recommends a 8- to 12-week interval between the first and second dose of AZ vaccine. According to Taiwan ACIP, a minimum of 8-week interval is recommended between the two doses.

2. What are the possible side effects of vaccination? How should I manage these symptoms?

1. Fever may develop within 2 days of vaccination

You should drink plenty of water for hydration and to have adequate rest. You may also take antipyretics prescribed by the doctor (Acetaminophen). If fever persists or other debilitating symptoms develop, consider visiting a doctor stating your vaccination history and your symptoms to aid diagnosis.

2. If fever persists after 2 days of vaccination

You should visit a doctor as soon as possible, and inform the doctor about your history of vaccination.

3. Injection site tenderness, headache, fatigue, muscle ache, joint pain

Most of these symptoms resolve within a few days, if symptoms persist or worsens, visit a doctor for evaluation and treatment.

4. Severe allergic reactions (Dyspnea, shortness of breath, dizziness, racing heartbeats)

You should rest at our injection unit for 30minutes of observation after vaccination. Inform our medical staff if you experience any discomfort. Immediate evaluation and treatment will be provided.

5. Blood clot formation and thrombocytopenia (rare)

You should observe for the following symptoms in the 14 days after vaccination: shortness of breath, chest pain, persistent abdominal pain, swelling or coldness of your limbs, persistent and progressive severe headache, blurred vision, spontaneous bleedings, bruises or purpuras. If any of these symptoms is noted, please visit the hospital immediately.

3. Can I receive other vaccines after COVID-19 vaccination?

We do not recommend receiving COVID-19 vaccine together with any other vaccines. Currently, we recommend completing the 2 doses of AZ vaccine before receiving other vaccinations. After the 2nd dose of COVID-19 vaccine, you may receive inactive vaccines after a minimum 14-day time interval; you may receive live-attenuated vaccines after a minimum of 28-day time interval.

4. Vaccines **do not give 100% protection** from infection. After vaccination, some risks of COVID-19 infection are still present. Thus, you should still continue to take protective measures to minimize possibilities of infections e.g. washing your hands frequently, wearing a mask, and maintaining safe social distances.

~Mackay Memorial Hospital wish you good health and safety~