



Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
HEALTH ALERT NETWORK
! ALERT !



TO: Pharmacies, Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Long-Term Care Facilities & Public Health

FROM: Gary Anthon, MD
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RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Pause of Johnson and Johnson /Janssen Vaccine

DATE: April 13, 2021

On Thursday, April 8th, DHHS, Douglas County Health Department, and Nebraska Medicine consulted with CDC and FDA about a rare and severe type of blood clot diagnosed in a Nebraska resident.

On Tuesday, April 13th the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have **recommended out of an abundance of caution that all states and sites pause the use of the Johnson and Johnson/Janssen vaccine**. This recommendation is due in part to ensure that all health care providers are aware of the potential for extremely rare, adverse events and can plan for the proper recognition and management to treat this type of blood clot (cerebral venous sinus thrombosis in combination with thrombocytopenia).

As noted in their joint press release, “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.” (Found here <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/joint-cdc-and-fda-statement-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine>)

At this time, DHHS is requesting that all sites pause using the Johnson and Johnson one-dose vaccine until the CDC and FDA are able to complete their investigation into these cases. Again, these adverse events appear to be extremely rare, but vaccine safety and the health of Nebraskans is our top priority.

Please note that there currently are no recommendations to pause the use of the other two vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna. These two vaccines should be provided in place of the Johnson and Johnson/Janssen vaccine until further notice.

For providers and pharmacies that currently have supplies of the Johnson and Johnson /Janssen vaccine please retain your supply and follow the recommendations listed in the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for storage, found at <https://www.fda.gov/media/146304/download>.

Individuals who have received the Johnson and Johnson /Janssen vaccine and who develop the following symptoms WITHIN THREE (3) WEEKS of administration should immediately contact their health care provider:

- Severe headache
- Abdominal pain
- Leg pain
- Shortness of breath

Health care providers are asked to report adverse events as soon as possible to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>.