

Brazil grants full approval to Oxford vaccine, orders Sputnik

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Brazil granted full regulatory approval Friday to the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University and pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca, voicing confidence in it even as a raft of countries suspended its use.

Federal health regulator Anvisa said it saw "no health risk for the population associated with the use of this vaccine," and upgraded it from emergency to full regulatory approval.

"The benefits outweigh the risks," it said.

The decision came despite the fact that countries including Denmark, Norway, Bulgaria and Thailand have suspended use of the vaccine as a precaution after reports of recipients developing blood clots.

The European Medicines Agency said Friday severe allergies should be added to the vaccine's side effects warning.

But the World Health Organization (WHO) insisted there was no reason to stop using it, describing it as an "excellent vaccine."

AstraZeneca said there was no evidence of higher

blood clot risks.

Anvisa also approved the antiviral medication remdesivir for use against COVID-19, despite the WHO finding it has "little or no effect" on mortality from the disease.

Hard-hit Brazil, which has struggled to source enough vaccines for its 212 million people, also announced the purchase of 10 million doses of Russia's Sputnik V.

However, that vaccine still needs regulatory approval in the South American country, which is so far using only the Oxford vaccine and Chinese-developed CoronaVac.

Both are two-dose vaccines.

Around 9.3 million people have received a first dose of [vaccine](#) in Brazil, and around 3.3 million people a second.

COVID-19 has claimed 273,000 lives in Brazil, according to [health](#) ministry figures, the second-highest death toll worldwide after the United

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