

'Minuscule' clotting risk after AstraZeneca Covid jabs: India

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An analysis of adverse health effects in people who received the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine in India found that the number of blood clot cases was "minuscule", the health ministry said Monday.

Some countries have restricted or dropped AstraZeneca shots from national [vaccine](#) campaigns over very rare blood clots, though experts have said the benefits outweigh the risks.

The Oxford-AstraZeneca jab—one of three shots granted emergency approval in India—is the most widely used in the country and is manufactured by Pune-based Serum Institute, the world's largest vaccine maker.

The nation of 1.3 billion people has administered nearly 183 million doses of all vaccines so far.

"AEFI (Adverse Event Following Immunisation) data in India showed that there is a very minuscule but definitive risk of thromboembolic events," the [health ministry](#) said in a statement, citing a report by the National AEFI Committee.

The vaccine "continues to have a definite positive benefit risk profile with tremendous potential to prevent infections and reduce deaths due to Covid-19 across the world and in India", it added.

The committee looked at reports of health effects in jabs administered up to April 3, which included 68.6 million of the AstraZeneca shot and 6.7 million of Covaxin, which was developed by Indian firm Bharat Biotech.

In its review of 498 "serious and severe events", 26 cases were reported to be "potential thromboembolic" following the administration of the AstraZeneca shot.

The ministry stressed that the rate of such events were 0.61 per million doses and that it was "much lower" than those reported in the UK.

It did not provide further details about the nature of the adverse events.

No clotting cases were reported after the Covaxin jab, the ministry added.

India—which has reported nearly 25 million coronavirus cases so far—has been grappling with a huge new wave of infections that has overwhelmed the healthcare system and led to severe shortages of hospital beds, oxygen and critical medicines.

The country has halted exports of vaccines to meet local demand.

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