

Today you have received **AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria)**.

## Post Vaccination Observation

Even though the risk of a serious reaction is very low, you will be asked to stay at the Centre for 15 minutes after vaccination to ensure your safety, or longer if your doctor thinks it's necessary.

**Notify the vaccination staff IMMEDIATELY if you experience, hives, skin redness/itching, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, abdominal cramps, nausea/vomiting and/or diarrhoea. If you have already left the premises seek URGENT medical care.**

## What side effects should I expect?

Mild to moderate side effects lasting 1 to 2 days after vaccination occur in around two-thirds of people who receive the AstraZeneca.

- Common side effects may include tenderness or pain, swelling, redness or itching at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle and joint pains, nausea, fever, chills, and feeling unwell.
- Less common side effects include enlarged lymph nodes, pain in limbs, dizziness, decreased appetite and stomach pain.
- Some people will have more significant flu-like symptoms from this vaccination compared to other vaccines and may require time away from normal activities. These symptoms are more common after the first dose compared with the second dose.

As with any vaccine or medicine, there may be unusual and/or unknown side effects.

Medications are not usually recommended for mild symptoms however you can take paracetamol or ibuprofen (note, ibuprofen is not recommended during pregnancy) for fever and pain if you feel you need it. If you have swelling at the injection site you can apply a cold compress. You should see your GP if you have any symptoms you are worried about.

**Rare** side effects that have been reported after **AstraZeneca** are:

- Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis):
  - Anaphylaxis after AstraZeneca is very rare. The rate in Australia appears similar to any other vaccine.
- A condition called thrombosis and thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS) which involved blood clotting (thrombosis) and low platelet levels (thrombocytopenia):
  - Information from Australia and overseas shows that TTS is a rare condition.)
  - The blood clots can occur at different parts of the body, including the brain (this is called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis) and the abdomen (this is called idiopathic splanchnic vein thrombosis). The low level of blood platelets can cause bleeding.
  - The symptoms of this condition mostly start between 4 and 42 days after vaccination.
  - People with this condition get very unwell and need to go to hospital. This condition can lead to long-term disability, and even death.

## You should seek medical attention after vaccination if:

- You think you are having an allergic reaction. Call 000 if you experience severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing, a fast heartbeat or collapsing.
- You have an expected side effect of the vaccine which has not gone away after a few days.
- You have any of the following symptoms, particularly around 4 to 42 days after vaccination:
  - headache that persists beyond 48 hours after vaccination, or appears later than 48 hours after vaccination. Simple painkillers may alleviate headache initially, but it persists
  - blurred vision
  - weakness of face or limbs
  - confusion or seizure.
  - shortness of breath
  - chest pain
  - persistent abdominal pain
  - leg swelling
  - pin-prick rash or bruising not at the injection site that cannot be explained.

Be sure to tell your doctor that you have recently received the vaccine. For symptoms which are not urgent, you can see your regular healthcare provider (usually your GP).

## Vaccine Safety Monitoring and Reporting Side Effects

If you or your health care provider think a COVID-19 vaccine has caused a side effect, we encourage you to report it. Every report is valuable, as they help to maintain and improve the safety of vaccines. You can report suspected side effects to your vaccination provider or other healthcare professional. They will then make a formal report on your behalf to your state or territory health department or directly to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

If you would prefer to report it yourself, please visit the reporting suspected side effects associated with a COVID-19 vaccine webpage on the TGA website and follow the directions on the page.

<https://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-suspected-side-effects-associated-covid-19-vaccine>

## COVID-19 testing after vaccination

Some side effects from COVID-19 vaccination might be similar to symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever).

However, COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca does not contain any live SARS-CoV-2 virus and cannot cause COVID-19.

You may not need to get a COVID-19 test or isolate:

- if you develop general symptoms like fever, headache or tiredness in the first two days after vaccination, and
- if you are sure that you don't have any respiratory symptoms (e.g. runny nose, cough, sore throat, loss of smell or loss of taste).

However, you should check the current guidelines in your state/territory for the most up-to-date information. This advice may change in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in your local area. You may still need to get a COVID-19 test if you meet other criteria, for example if you are a close contact of a known COVID-19 case. If in doubt, seek medical assessment.

## Get proof of your COVID-19 vaccination

Your vaccination details will be sent through to the Australian Immunisation Registry (AIR) today to update your immunisation history. Your immunisation history statement records your COVID-19 vaccination status and should be updated with details of your covid vaccine within 48 hours.

The easiest way to get your statement is online using either your Medicare account through myGOV or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app. If you can't get your immunisation history statement online or need help, call 1800 653 809.

Alternatively, contact the Centre to obtain a copy of your vaccination details.

## Remember your second appointment

It is important that you receive two doses of AstraZeneca, usually about 12 weeks apart but shortening the interval to no less than 4 weeks may be appropriate in certain circumstances. The second dose is likely to prolong the duration of protection against COVID-19.

## Third dose for people with severe immunocompromise

Some people who are severely immunocompromised should have a third dose of the vaccine to achieve the same level of immunity as the general population. An mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Spikevax (Moderna)) is preferred to Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca) for this third dose.

## Booster doses

Booster doses are available to everyone 18 years and older. ATAGI recommends both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for booster doses. However AstraZeneca may be most suitable for some people. Your doctor will advise which vaccine is most suitable for you. You can book your booster dose if it has been four months or longer since your second dose of your COVID-19 vaccine. From 31 January 2022, you can book a booster dose if it has been three months or longer since your second dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Immunocompromised individuals who have received 3 primary doses of a COVID-19 vaccine are also recommended to have a booster dose in line with the timing for the general population.