



Press Release

Macon County to Pause Johnson & Johnson Vaccine Distribution – Awaiting Further Review

Macon County Public Health, at the guidance of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, will pause its distribution of the Johnson and Johnson (Janssen) vaccine immediately. There are no appointments for the J&J vaccine scheduled at MCPH at this time. However, appointments for the Moderna vaccine are still available for those 18 years of age or older. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call 828-524-1500. The Vaccine Call Center is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday.

The CDC and the FDA are reviewing data involving six reported U.S. cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals after receiving the J&J vaccine. In these cases, 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.

Pausing distribution of the J&J vaccine is important, in part, to ensure that the health care provider community is aware of the potential for these adverse events and can plan for proper recognition and management due to the unique treatment required with this type of blood clot.

Right now, these adverse events appear to be extremely rare. COVID-19 vaccine safety is a top priority, and we take all reports of health problems following COVID-19 vaccination very seriously. People who have received the J&J vaccine who develop severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after vaccination should contact their health care provider. Health care providers are asked to report adverse events to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>.

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