

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2021

Department of Health Extends Pause on Johnson & Johnson Vaccinations Following FDA/CDC Recommendation

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Health today notified all COVID-19 vaccine providers that the pause in administering doses of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine will be extended until April 24 or until updated guidance is provided from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

[Earlier this week](#), the department recommended a pause in administering Johnson & Johnson vaccine until April 20 to give the CDC and FDA time to review six incidents of rare blood clots that occurred within two weeks of receiving Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices held an emergency meeting yesterday that ended without taking a vote to change the current recommendation to pause administering the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Another meeting is expected within 10 days.

During the meeting, the CDC acknowledged that one of the six cases being studied involves a 26-year-old Pennsylvania woman who recovered after treatment at a New Jersey hospital. The CDC is not releasing personal information in the case.

These six cases occurred in women between 18 and 48 who were among the 6.8 million Americans who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Out of the more than 6.6 million vaccine doses that have been administered in Pennsylvania, only 247,063 doses have been Johnson & Johnson.

This announcement shows that the federal oversight process of a vaccine's safety and effectiveness is working, and all steps are being taken to protect Americans.

"The safety procedures built into the vaccination process are working and should instill confidence in the safety and effectiveness of the available COVID-19 vaccines," Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam said. "I urge individuals who have appointments scheduled to receive a Pfizer or Moderna vaccination to keep those appointments."

People who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine who develop severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain or shortness of breath within three weeks of their vaccination should contact their health care provider. For more information, find the CDC/FDA guidance online at: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/joint-cdc-and-fda-statement-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine>.

The department also has sent communications to stakeholder groups and others who have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine as a part of a special vaccination initiative.

While vaccine supply from the federal government remains limited, the Department of Health is working to ensure the vaccine is provided in a way that is ethical, equitable and efficient. To keep Pennsylvanians informed about vaccination efforts:

- The [Your Turn](#) tool provides a way to register to be alerted when it's your turn to be vaccinated.
- A [commonwealth COVID-19 vaccination guide](#) explains the current process for getting one. Pennsylvanians with questions about the vaccination process can call the Department of Health hotline at 1-877-724-3258.
- [Vaccine provider map](#) to find a COVID-19 vaccine provider near you.
- All of the locations that received vaccine and how much they have received can be found on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution webpage](#).
- [Vaccine dashboard data](#) can also be found on the website to find more information on the doses administered and showcase demographic information.
- Pennsylvanians can provide feedback on the [Pennsylvania COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#) by clicking on the Plan Feedback Form square under Popular Vaccine Topics [here](#).
- Frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out, you are required to wear a mask when in a business or where it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing.
- Download the COVID Alert PA app and make your phone part of the fight. The free app can be found in the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#) by searching for "covid alert pa".

Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics

- [Daily COVID-19 Report](#)
- [Press releases regarding coronavirus](#)
- [Latest information on the coronavirus](#)

- [Photos of the state's lab in Exton](#) (for download and use)
- [Coronavirus and preparedness graphics](#) (located at the bottom of the page)
- [Community preparedness and procedures materials](#)

#