



NEWS RELEASE

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Illinois Department of Public Health Updates Vaccination Plans, Communicates with all Partners While J&J COVID-19 Vaccine on Hold

Illinois transferring 50,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine to the city of Chicago in response to J&J pause

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is developing and implementing plans to move forward with COVID-19 vaccinations in Illinois after putting a pause on administration of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine, including robust communication with all providers and the transfer of 50,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Chicago.

Earlier today, at the recommendation of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), IDPH paused the use of the J&J COVID-19 vaccine out of an abundance of caution. The CDC and FDA are reviewing data involving six reported U.S. cases of a rare and severe type blood clot in individuals after receiving the J&J vaccine, out of a total of more than six million Americans who have received the J&J vaccine. In Illinois, of the total 7.3 million doses administered to date, 4% or approximately 290,000 have been J&J. These individuals remain fully vaccinated and do not need to seek out an alternate vaccine. People vaccinated with J&J should consult with their medical provider if they develop severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after vaccination.

“Public health officials made a commitment that any safety signals that came up concerning COVID-19 vaccines would be fully addressed in a transparent manner, which is what is occurring right now with the J&J vaccine,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “The blood clot cases appear to be extremely rare and there are no reported cases associated with either the Pfizer-BioNTech or the Moderna vaccines. IDPH is taking immediate action to ensure as little disruption to Illinois residents as possible during this pause, and I strongly encourage people to continue to get vaccinated. Millions upon millions of people have already been safely vaccinated and it will take millions more before we can put this pandemic behind us.”

Upon learning of the recommendation, IDPH took the following actions to ensure COVID-19 vaccine providers and health care workers in Illinois were aware of the pause and received the support they needed to adjust their planning:

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- Immediately sent notification about the pause to COVID-19 providers, local health departments, and health care providers via the State of Illinois Rapid Electronic Notification system, which included follow-up calls, text, and emails.
- Directly emailed and called all local health departments through IDPH Emergency Response Coordinators, to assess impact and work to mitigate using Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines.
- Connected with all mass vaccination sites, Illinois National Guard vaccination missions, and one-day J&J clinics scheduled in EMTrack to develop alternate plans where necessary and ensure the least amount of disruption possible on individuals with appointments.
- Sent notification to hospitals, emergency departments, physicians, and other health care providers about treatment for this specific type of blood clot

The pause on the J&J vaccine will not have a large impact on state vaccination efforts as the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines make up the vast majority of doses on hand in the State of Illinois. No state-supported mass vaccination sites will be closed and no rapid response team clinics, faith-based or equity clinics, or rural clinics have been cancelled at this time. They will all move forward with a different type of vaccine.

The total allocation of J&J vaccine to Illinois, including Chicago, is 760,300, of which 290,615 doses have been administered. This week, the state's allocation of J&J was 17,000 doses. For the week of April 18, 2021, the expected allocation for the State is 483,720 total doses. Of that total allocation, 5,800 doses were expected to be J&J.

In an effort to vaccinate as many people as possible across Illinois, the State is allocating 50,000 first doses of Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to the City of Chicago over the next seven days to help meet demand. The State will also be allocating 50,000 doses to Chicago when second doses come due to be administered.

IDPH encourages people to register with V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker, a smartphone-based tool that uses text messages and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccine. For more information on v-safe, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>.

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