

COVID Vaccine Update- Johnson & Johnson

The FDA has placed a hold on Johnson & Johnson COVID vaccinations. The FDA is investigating rare blood clots (less than 1 in 1,000,000 people) associated with this one particular vaccine. The blood clots have been seen within 2 weeks of vaccine administration. Blood clots have not been seen with the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. At this point, the Calvert County health department will only vaccinate people with Moderna and Pfizer vaccines until the FDA concludes its investigation of Johnson & Johnson.

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines were developed using a completely different technology than the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. 200 million doses of Moderna and Pfizer vaccines have been administered in the U.S. without any safety concerns.

The Calvert County Health Department strongly encourages people to get vaccinated. We continue to see high rates of COVID spread in our county along with hospitalizations and deaths from the virus. Currently, those hospitalized in Calvert include people in their 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's, and 80's. Recent deaths have included people who range in age from their early 40's to their 80's. During the past month, close to 100 Marylanders have died each week due to COVID infections. Among those who have been vaccinated, we have not seen any hospitalizations or deaths.

For those who have recently received a Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the risk to your health is extremely low. Please keep in mind that the blood clots have occurred in less than 1 in one million people who received a dose, and it is not clear that the clots were a direct result of the vaccine. This type of clot, called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis, occurs in approximately 1 in 200,000 Americans each year. Symptoms include severe headaches that are generally accompanied by vision changes, problems with speech, and a sudden onset of muscle weakness in one area of the body. These are also symptoms of a stroke. Anyone with these symptoms should immediately seek medical care.

We will update our website as more information becomes available.