

AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine

There are lots of questions about this vaccine, especially on how it compares to the previous Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines. Here are some answers to the most common questions we get.

1. Does the AstraZeneca vaccine use the same technology as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines?

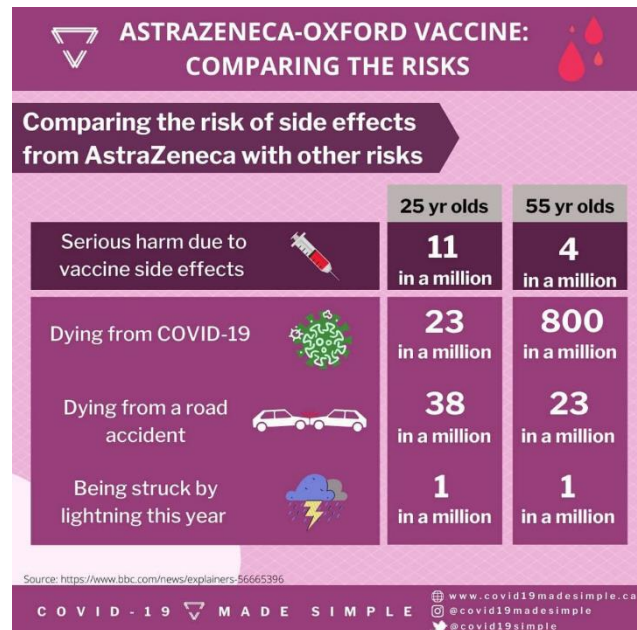
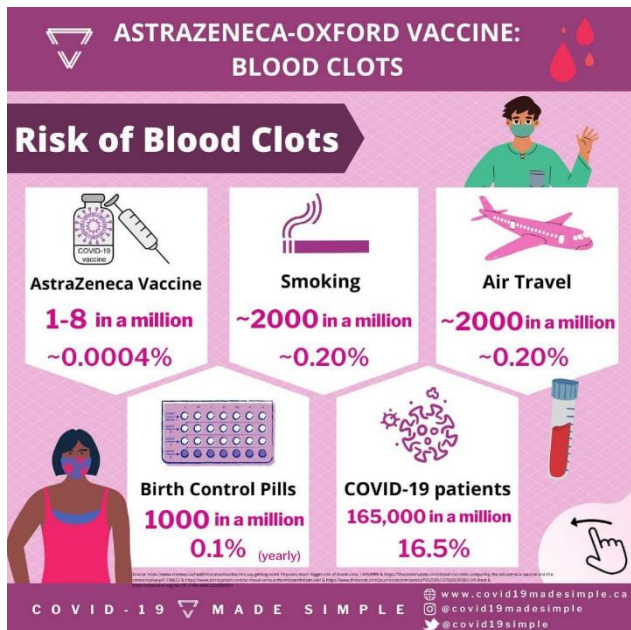
No. The AstraZeneca vaccine technology uses a viral-vector delivery system. This is a technology quite commonly used in the vaccine world. It permits simple refrigeration and easy transport, which will promote distribution more widely. In comparison, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use mRNA technology. Check out this link for more info: <http://www.unambiguous-science.com/advmoa/>

2. Is the AstraZeneca vaccine as effective as the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines?

Every COVID-19 vaccine currently approved by Health Canada (including the AstraZeneca vaccine) has shown to be 100% effective in preventing severe COVID disease (hospitalization and death). Protection against serious disease extends to variants too (UK's B.117, South Africa's B.1.351 and Brazil's P1 variants).

3. What is the risk of having a blood clot with the AstraZeneca vaccine?

There is no overall increased risk of developing a blood clot after receiving any of the approved COVID-19 vaccines, including the vaccine made by AstraZeneca. However, the AstraZeneca vaccine may be associated with extremely rare cases of serious blood clots. The incidence of blood clots after receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine appears to be less than 1 in 250,000. These infographics help put the risk into perspective:



For additional information about the risk of blood clots, see: <https://thrombosiscanada.ca/wp-uploads/uploads/2021/04/COVID-19-vaccine-and-Thrombosis-FAQs-April-2-2021-Final.pdf> & <https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/sciencebrief/vaccine-induced-prothrombotic-immune-thrombocytopenia-vipit-following-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccination-lay-summary/>

4. Why is the AstraZeneca vaccine only provided to individuals 55 years and over?

The rare risk of blood clots associated with the AstraZeneca vaccine seems to be higher in younger individuals (see infographics above). To reduce this risk, Health Canada has decided to offer the AstraZeneca vaccine only to individuals over 55.