



## Durham Region Health Department **FAX about...**

For Health Care Professionals



# AstraZeneca Vaccine – On Pause

The Ministry of Health announced that **effective immediately** Ontario is pausing the administration of the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine.

This cautionary decision was made due to an observed increase in the rare blood clotting condition, vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT). Over the last few days, reports of VITT have increased to a rate of 1.7 per 100,000 doses administered.

The decision to pause administration of AZ is also based on the increased availability of mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna). The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with Public Health Ontario, the Science Advisory Table and federal, provincial, and territorial partners continue to review data and options for the administration of the AZ vaccine going forward are being considered. Direction on vaccine interchangeability of COVID-19 vaccines from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) is pending. Early research is showing promising results after receiving two doses of different vaccines.

Data from the UK shows reduced risk of VITT with the administration of the second dose of the AZ vaccine. The Ministry of Health will be providing guidance regarding second dose administration.

While awaiting further communication, **do not administer any doses of the AZ vaccine**. Please continue to follow vaccine storage and handling guidelines and **maintain the vaccine between +2.0 to +8.0°C**.

### **Protecting Families, Loved ones and the Community**

The Ministry of Health and Durham Region Health Department maintain that individuals who received the first dose of the AZ vaccine made the correct decision to prevent illness and protect those around them and their community. We continue to encourage Durham Region residents to get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible.

To see all eligible populations and for the most up to date information, including FAQs about COVID-19 vaccines and how to book an appointment, please visit our website at [www.durham.ca/covidvaccine](http://www.durham.ca/covidvaccine)

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](http://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

