

### Key points for COVID-19 immunisation providers:

1. **ATAGI advice has been updated based on the latest TTS risk assessment:** Comirnaty COVID-19 (Pfizer) vaccine is now preferred for use in people aged under 60 years.
2. **All people offered the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine** should be advised of the risk of TTS, the symptoms to watch out for in the 4 to 30 days following vaccination, and when to seek medical advice.
3. **Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS)** is a rare, newly identified condition associated with the COVID-19 AstraZeneca and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccines.
4. TTS usually involves **thrombosis, thrombocytopenia** ( $<150 \times 10^9$ ) and/or a **high d-dimer** (typically  $> 5 \times$  the upper limit of normal) with onset of symptoms **4 to 30 days after COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccination**.
5. TTS can be treated effectively. **If TTS is suspected**, investigate with appropriate blood tests and imaging, seek haematologist advice and notify your local public health unit. Do not give heparin-based anticoagulants or platelet transfusions. The latest guidance is available from the [ACEM](#) and [THANZ](#).

Updated ATAGI advice on Thursday 17 June: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-statement-on-revised-recommendations-on-the-use-of-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca-17-june-2021>

#### Key points:

- Based on an updated ATAGI risk assessment, the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine is the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for people aged under 60 years. People of any age who have received their first dose of COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine should be offered the second dose of AstraZeneca vaccine, unless they experienced a serious adverse event following the first dose.
- People aged 50 to 59 years who are booked for their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine should be offered the Comirnaty Pfizer vaccine, instead of the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine.
- All people who are offered the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine should be advised of the risk of TTS, the symptoms to watch out for in the 4 to 30 days following vaccination, and when to seek medical advice.

#### Clinical reminder:

People presenting with symptoms of TTS in the 4 to 30 days after vaccination should be urgently investigated as per the latest [ACEM](#) and [THANZ](#) guidance\*.

#### Symptoms of TTS include new onset of:

- Persistent headaches with or without changes in vision, other focal neurology or seizure-like activity
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Leg swelling or pain with or without associated colour change
- Chest pain and/or shortness of breath (without a clear alternative cause).

**Suspect TTS** in patients with TTS symptoms in the 4 to 30 days after COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccination and:

- Presence of thrombosis such as cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST)
- Presence of thrombocytopenia ( $<150 \times 10^9$ ); AND/OR
- Presence of a high d-dimer (typically  $> 5 \times$  the upper limit of normal).

\*Latest guidance on TTS investigation and management is available here:

**ACEM:** [https://acem.org.au/getmedia/0bb52115-4510-42a1-b596-153b1cc6820c/TTS-following-COVID-vacc-guidelines\\_R5](https://acem.org.au/getmedia/0bb52115-4510-42a1-b596-153b1cc6820c/TTS-following-COVID-vacc-guidelines_R5)

**THANZ:** <https://www.thanz.org.au/news/vitt-multidisciplinary-guideline-for-doctors>

An adverse event following immunisation (AEFI) is a notifiable condition under the NSW Public Health Act (2010). **All uncommon, unexpected or serious AEFIs must be notified** by health professionals to the local NSW Health public health unit (PHU) on **1300 066 055**.

COVID-19 vaccination information for clinicians is available here:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/vaccine/Pages/clinicians.aspx>