

COVID-19: Britons aged 18-29 to be offered alternative to Oxford-AstraZeneca coronavirus jab where possible

There is a possible link between the vaccine and "extremely rare" blood clots, the MHRA said.



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COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS

OXFORD-ASTRAZENECA VACCINE



'This is a course change' - Van-Tam



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Britons aged 18-29 will be offered an alternative to the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine after 79 people developed blood clots within

Younger people are much less likely to die from **COVID-19**, so the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has decided it is safer to advise that age group are offered a different jab, where possible.

[Follow live COVID updates from the UK and around the world](#)



What is the AstraZeneca blood clot risk and how does it compare?

England's deputy chief medical officer Professor Jonathan Van-Tam said the new advice is a "course correction" for the UK's "very successful" vaccine rollout - and said for most age groups the "benefits outweigh the risks".

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He said the new advice will have a negligible impact on the UK's rollout, which is continuing "full speed ahead".

Oxford Vaccine Group chief Andrew Pollard said the identification of the blood clot cases "shows the safety system works".

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The advice is being given after a total of 79 people in the UK have developed blood clots following their first Oxford-AstraZeneca jab up to the 31 March, Dr June Raine, chief executive of the MHRA, said.

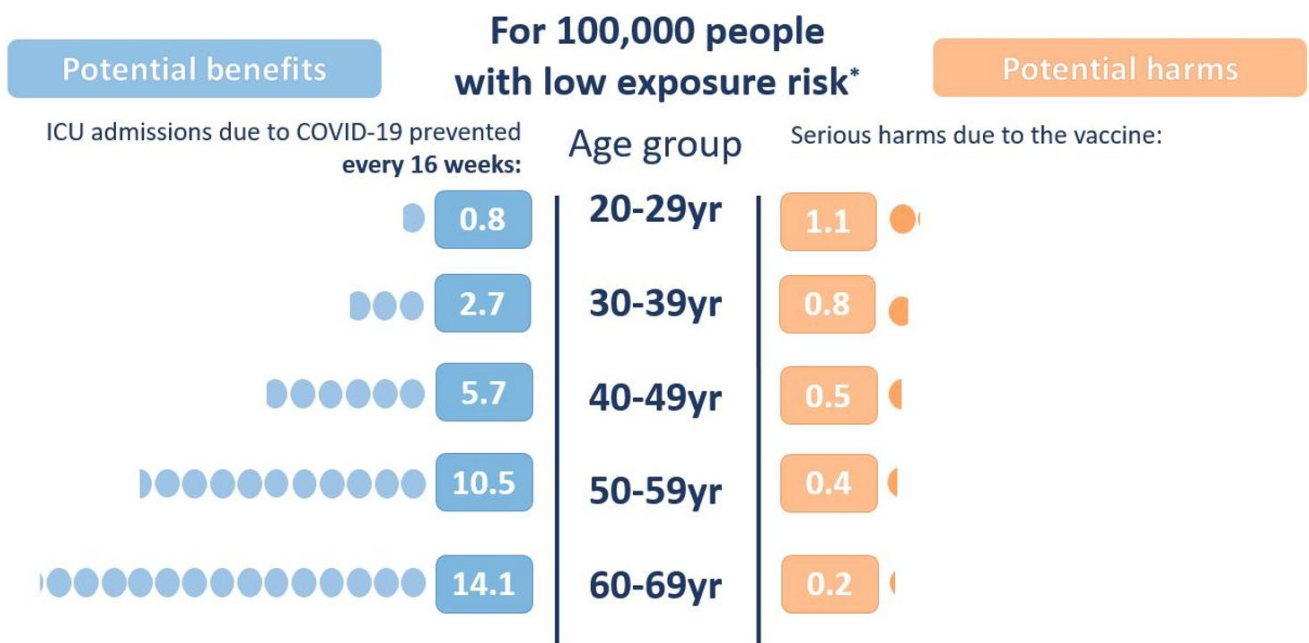
More than 20 million people have been given the Oxford vaccine.

Of those who have developed blood clots, 19 have died - three under the age of 30.

A total of 51 women and 28 men aged 18 to 79 were affected, but Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed, chair of the commission on human medicines, said there is no evidence women have a predilection to develop blood clots after having the Oxford jab.

"The risk is four people in a million," Dr Raine added.

Weighing up the potential benefits and harms of the Astra-Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine

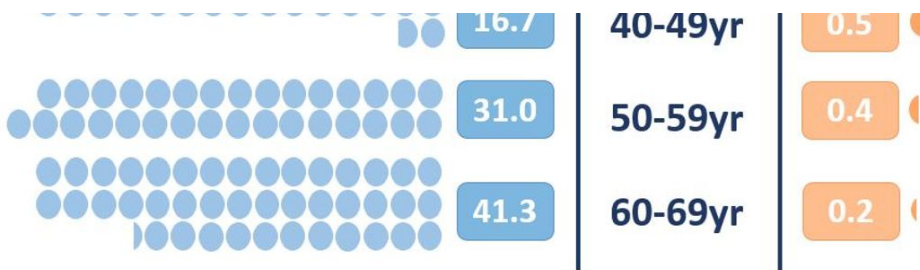


Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication
* Based on coronavirus incidence of 2 per 10,000: roughly UK in March

The 20-29 age group is at the lowest risk of being admitted to ICU with COVID but the highest risk from serious harm due to the AstraZeneca vaccine (still relatively low)

Weighing up the potential benefits and harms of the Astra-Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine

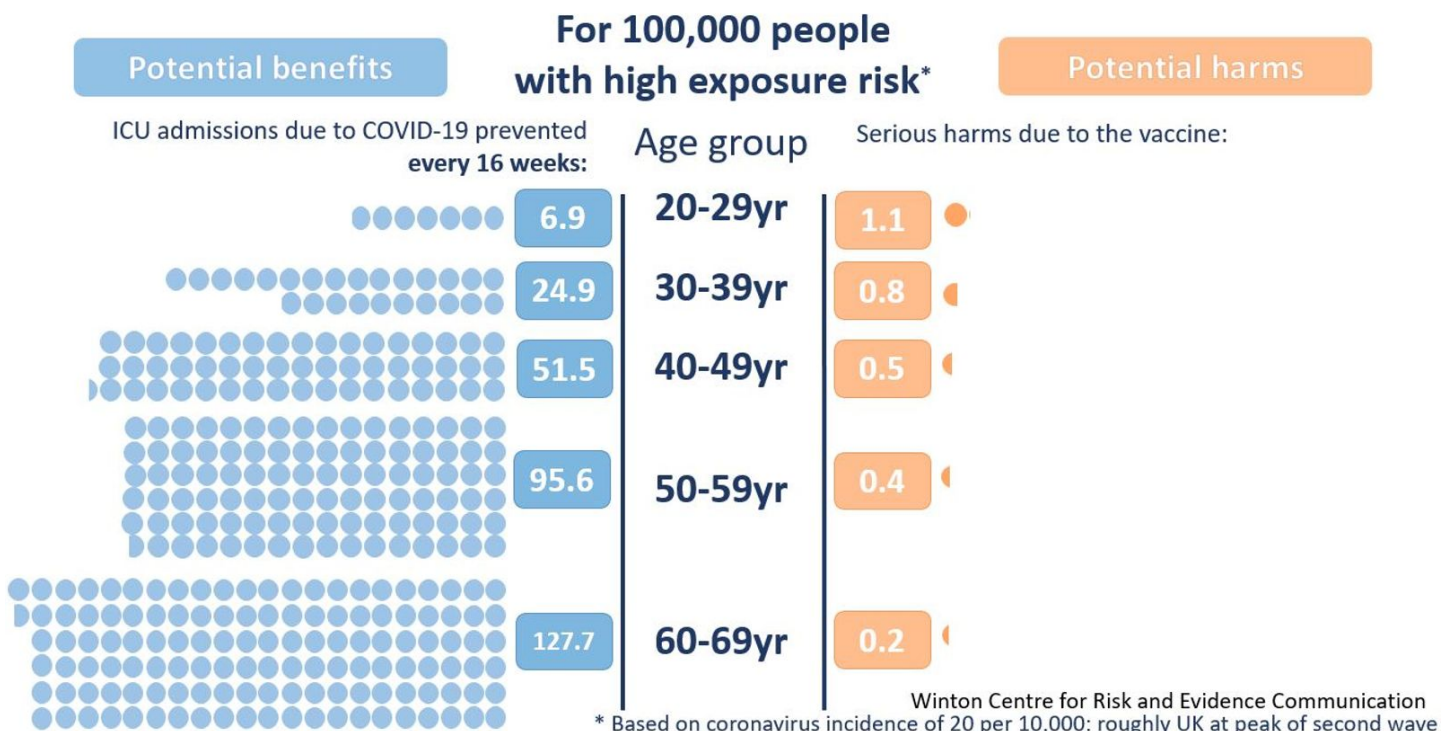




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 * Based on coronavirus incidence of 6 per 10,000: roughly UK in February

For those at medium risk of exposure to COVID-19, the risk of serious harm from the vaccine is the highest for 20-29 year olds

Weighing up the potential benefits and harms of the Astra-Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine



Even those at the highest exposure risk to COVID-19 are at the most serious harm from vaccines in the youngest adult age group

Both UK and EU regulators have requested AstraZeneca lists the "extremely rare potential side effect" on the vaccine's labels, the pharmaceutical giant said. It added that it has been "actively collaborating" with the regulators.

Dr Raine said anybody suffering the following side effects four days after getting a jab should seek medical attention:

Headaches

Blurred vision

Shortness of breath

Chest pain

Leg swelling

Abdominal pain

Bruising or pinpoint spots beyond the vaccination site



'These vaccines are safe and save lives' - PM

The JCVI has said people of any age who have received the first dose of the Oxford vaccine should continue to be offered the second dose according to schedule.

JCVI chairman Professor Wei Shen Lim said: "We are advising a preference of one vaccine over another vaccine for a particular age group out of utmost caution rather than any serious safety concerns."

He added that people who are just over 29-years-old should make their decision, but getting the vaccine is much safer than not getting it.



Matt Hancock ✓
@MattHancock



The [@MHRGovuk](#) & [@EMA_News](#) have confirmed that the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is safe, effective & that the benefits far outweigh the risks for the vast majority of adults.

We're on track to offer a first jab to all adults by the end of July. When you get the call, get the jab.

4:16 PM · Apr 7, 2021



Prof Van Tam said it is quite usual for physicians to alter their preference on medicines and vaccines, and said the NHS will get the "right vaccine to you at the right time" but said some people may have to travel further for their vaccines.

He said it remains "vitally important" that people get their vaccine when they are invited.

Currently, the UK is also rolling out the Pfizer jab, and the first doses of the Moderna vaccine were administered today in Wales. Mr Van Tam said Moderna jabs are expected in England in mid-April.



Nadhim Zahawi
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The reassurance that pharmacovigilance in both the United Kingdom & the EU works well. This is important in maintaining confidence in the largest vaccination program in history. As [@BorisJohnson](#) has said; We will follow the advice & are confident in meeting our programme targets.

3:41 PM · Apr 7, 2021



524



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Following the announcement, Boris Johnson reiterated that "this vaccine is safe, effective and has already saved thousands of lives - and the vast majority of people should continue to take it when offered".

The development comes as the EU's medicines regulator announced the conclusions of its own review, saying that "**unusual blood clots should be listed as a "very rare" side-effect.**"

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