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Covaxin not to be used in cases of allergy, fever, poor immunity

Bharat Biotech also warns against the use of vaccine in people on blood thinners

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

Those with a history of allergies, fever and bleeding disorder, people on blood thinners and those with compromised immunity or on medication that affects the immune system have been told by Bharat Biotech, manufacturer of Covaxin, not to take the COVID-19 vaccine.

A statement uploaded on the company website on Monday said the vaccine was also contraindicated for pregnant and lactating women, those using other COVID-19 vaccines and people with any other serious health-related issues as determined by the vaccinator or the officer supervising the vaccination. The statement comes amid reports of a slow uptake of the first phase of COVID-19 vaccination that began on January 16.

"There is remote chance that Covaxin could cause severe allergic reaction including difficulty in breathing, swelling of face/throat/fast heart beat, rash all over the body and dizziness and weakness," it said.

Bharat Biotech has now released a fact sheet detailing the possible adverse events.

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In full swing

Over 3.81 lakh persons were vaccinated for COVID-19 as of 5 p.m. on Monday



The wait ends: A health worker getting vaccinated at the Rajiv Gandhi Women and Child Hospital in Puducherry on Monday. ■ T. SINGARAVELOU

■ As many as 1.48 lakh beneficiaries in 25 States and UTs were vaccinated on Monday

■ In Karnataka, 36,888 persons were inoculated on Monday - the highest in the country followed by Odisha, where 22,579 persons were vaccinated

■ A total of 580 adverse events have been reported since January 16 with

seven hospitalisations

■ Two beneficiaries - a 52-year-old man from Uttar Pradesh and a 43-year-old man - from Karnataka have died

■ According to the Health Ministry, the death of the former was due to cardiopulmonary disease and not related to vaccination. The post-mortem result for the latter is awaited

1.48 lakh persons get the shot on Day 3, adverse events touch 580

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

By Monday evening, 3,81,305 beneficiaries - 1,48,266 on the day - have been vaccinated for COVID-19 with 7,704 sessions held across the country. A cumulative 580 adverse events were reported, the Health Ministry said on the third day of the drive.

"Two deaths have been reported so far. While one is not related to vaccination,

the post-mortem report of the other is awaited," said Manohar Agnani, Additional Secretary, Health Ministry.

He said one of the two deaths was of a 42-year-old man from Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh who was vaccinated on January 16 and died the following day.

"Post-mortem revealed that the death was due to cardiopulmonary disease [pockets of pus in lungs, enlarged heart], and was not

related to vaccination." The second, a 42-year-old male of Ballari in Karnataka, was vaccinated on January 16 and died on January 18.

"The cause was anterior-wall infarction with cardiopulmonary failure. The post-mortem was to be conducted on Monday at the Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences, Ballari," the Ministry said.

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Covaxin not to be used in cases of allergy, fever

The clinical efficacy of COVAXIN was yet to be established and it was still being studied in phase 3 clinical trials. Hence, it was important to appreciate that receiving the vaccine did not mean that other precautions related to COVID-19 need not be followed, it added.

A Health Ministry order has said people currently can't decide on which vaccine they will get. Getting vaccinated is voluntary.

Health experts and the Indian Medical Association (IMA), advocating an aggressive awareness campaign, especially in the light of the 447 adverse events following immunisation that included three needing hospitalisation, said their "members have been told to reach out to population using public forums, media, social media etc to increase the awareness about the vaccine."

The IMA stated that all its members would now provide the right, scientific information to people across the country and promote the vaccine.

"The IMA lost its 732 expert doctors during the past one year and now we have a vaccine. It stands with the government during this

phase where healthcare and front line workers would be vaccinated," said its honorary secretary general Dr. Jayesh Lele. More than COVID-19, rumours were proving harmful.

"People are getting misled by these myths. Obviously, as the modern medicine professional body, it is our responsibility also to fight with the menace of the misinformation against COVID-19," he added. The association, in a one-page statement, noted that vaccines were for building immunity in the human body.

Senior Health Ministry officials said that providing vaccination was an organised drive that also included proper history taking and follow-up of those receiving the vaccination. "The hesitation if any will be addressed through the ongoing awareness campaign and correct information released by the Ministry," said an official.

As per information released by the Health Ministry, India's daily COVID-19 fatalities dropped to 145 after nearly eight months, with 83% of the new deaths being reported from Maharashtra (50), Kerala (21), West Bengal (12) and Delhi (8) in the past 24 hours.

1.48 lakh persons get the shot on Day 3

The Ministry said three of the seven cases reported from across the nation requiring hospitalisation were reported from Delhi.

Two have been discharged whereas one case with reported fainting is under observation at the Max Hospital, Patparganj.

"The reported case in Uttarakhand is stable and un-

der observation at AIIMS, Rishikesh. In Chhattisgarh, one person is under observation at the Govt. Medical College, Rajnandgaon. Of the two cases in Karnataka, one is under observation at the District Hospital, Chitradurga, and the second person is under observation at the General Hospital, Chalakere, Chitradurga," it said.