

Pharmacists Group Urges Widespread Use, Equitable Allocation of FDA-Authorized COVID-19 Vaccines

ASHP looks to counter misperceptions about authorized vaccines that may compromise public acceptance.

BETHESDA, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) issued the following statement on the use and allocation of vaccines authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) against the COVID-19.

This week represents an important milestone in combatting the COVID-19 global pandemic that has devastated families and communities for over a year. Thanks to the tireless efforts and innovation of scientists from around the world, there are now three viable vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 in the U.S.

“ASHP’s position is that all three FDA-authorized vaccines have – based on the available evidence – proven efficacious in preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19,” said Daniel J. Cobaugh, Pharm.D., DABAT, FAACP, vice president of publishing and editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy (AJHP). “Individuals should obtain whichever vaccine is immediately available to them to protect themselves and others from COVID-19, support the establishment of herd immunity, and effectively respond to the pandemic.”

As a leader in the evidence-based evaluation of medications and vaccines, ASHP has evaluated the evidence and possesses great confidence that any authorized vaccine thus far promises population protection against clinically meaningful endpoints for COVID-19. After this careful evaluation, ASHP offers the following statements to counter any misperceptions about the vaccines that may compromise public acceptance.

ASHP urges widespread use and acceptance of all vaccines currently authorized by FDA. Time is of the essence. The landscape of COVID-19 is rapidly evolving due to the emergence of variants, and the global community has been experiencing the consequences of this pandemic for far too long. It is imperative to capitalize on the promise these vaccines offer as soon as possible. While there are slight differences with each vaccine, including clinical outcomes, adverse effects, and storage and handling considerations, they are all significantly effective in reducing severe symptoms, decreasing hospitalizations, and decreasing death from COVID-19. These endpoints

hold promise to lessen the burden of disease and death in our communities and ease the strain on our healthcare system. Healthcare professionals need to message confidence in all of the vaccines and [counter myths](#) that may lead to hesitancy or misinformation.

ASHP calls for the equitable allocation of any vaccine across populations and communities, prioritized for the greatest public health impact, regardless of geographic or economic status. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in continued devastation of public health, economies, and geopolitical relations. ASHP is deeply concerned by the perception vaccines might be allocated based on population or socioeconomic status. Each COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial took place in different parts of the U.S. and the world, at different times and with varying rates of COVID-19 disease. However, each vaccine demonstrated a benefit to all populations evaluated for the emergency use authorization by FDA; therefore, any vaccine administered is an effective countermeasure to COVID-19. While logistical demands for the storage and handling of each vaccine may [warrant allocation](#) to a particular point of dispensing, there is no acceptable reason to allocate a vaccine solely based on population differences or socioeconomic status.

ASHP is the leader in trusted, authoritative sources of evidence-based drug information. The society develops professional and patient-focused scientific content that drives optimal medication use and health outcomes. ASHP stands ready to evaluate and educate on COVID-19 vaccine safety and efficacy data with a focus on thoroughly assessing advantages and disadvantages in different patient populations, including interpretation of the various claims of vaccine efficacy.

About ASHP

ASHP represents pharmacists who serve as patient care providers in acute and ambulatory settings. The organization's nearly 58,000 members include pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. For 79 years, ASHP has been at the forefront of efforts to improve medication use and enhance patient safety. For more information about the wide array of ASHP activities and the many ways in which pharmacists advance healthcare, visit ASHP's website, ashp.org, or its consumer website, SafeMedication.com.

Aretha Hankinson

ASHP (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists)

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