



Guidance for AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine Preparation

STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

AstraZeneca vaccine vials are stored and distributed at 2°C to 8°C with an expiry 6 months from manufacture. Expiry may be shorter than this when the vaccine arrives in New Zealand. The unopened vials are NOT to be frozen and should be stored in the manufacturer's carton to protect from light. Each multi-dose vial contains 10 doses of 0.5mL in a clear glass vial with a red/orange plastic cap guard.

This vaccine does NOT need to be diluted and must NOT be shaken at any stage.

Store AstraZeneca vaccine in a clearly labelled section of the fridge, separated from other vaccines. There must be a defined space to isolate opened vials from sealed vials.

Vaccine doses should be used as soon as possible after being drawn up, ideally within one hour. **The maximum time the vaccine can be stored in a syringe is 5 hours**, either at room temperature or 2°C to 8°C. This 5 hours includes an allowance for vial being removed from the fridge a few times as different doses are prepared.

Where practical, we recommended that doses are drawn up as required.

1. PREPARE WORK AREA

Vaccine preparation should always take place in a well-lit, dust free, dedicated quiet workspace, away from distractions. The workspace should not have the presence of any other vials of vaccine, including AstraZeneca.

Preparation and administration of this vaccine should only be carried out by fully authorised, provisionally authorised, or Pharmacist Vaccinators (not COVID-19 Vaccinators working under supervision) that have completed IMAC's AstraZeneca vaccine training. A second appropriately trained staff member must provide documented double checks.

Ensure you have the appropriate equipment and supplies to hand prior to removing vaccine from fridge. This includes:

- 1mL syringes with permanently attached 23G x 25mm needle (BD Flu +)
 - If unavailable, use 1mL syringe plus 25mm LDS needle
 - If longer needle needed, use 1mL syringe plus 38mm needle
- single-use alcohol swabs
- indelible pen
- wipeable container for drawn up vaccine
- labels for syringes
- vaccine log sheet
- sharps bin
- hand sanitiser
- *Preparation of AstraZeneca (quick reference guide)* clearly displayed in preparation workspace
- Clean workstation and vaccine tray with disinfectant wipes.
- Perform hand hygiene before preparing the vaccine and before and after administering it to patient.



2. SELECT VACCINE FROM THE FRIDGE

- Check RIGHT vaccine and manufacturer's vaccine expiry date.
- Number the vaccine vial and enter the number into the vaccine log.
- **Second person also checks that the CORRECT vaccine has been selected, by confirming the product name on the vial and checking the expiry date printed on vial by manufacturer. Second person also checks the numbering of the vial and documents these checks by signing/initialling the vaccine log.**

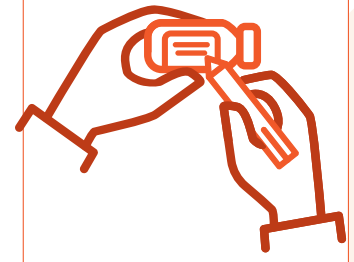
The vaccine is a colourless to slightly brown, clear to slightly opaque solution. Visually inspect the vial prior to withdrawing any doses and prior to administration. Discard if particulate matter, discolouration, or differences in the described appearance are observed.



3. CONFIRM EXPIRY DATE AND TIME

Vaccine expires 48 hours after the cap is removed, when stored at 2°C to 8°C.

- **First time removing vial from fridge:** Write on vial label, with indelible pen, the USE BY date and time, which is 48 hours from the time the cap was removed from the vial prior to drawing up first dose. All vaccine must be **administered** by this time. Any vaccine remaining after this USE BY time must be discarded appropriately.
- **Subsequent doses withdrawn from vial:** Complete checks outlined above. Both staff should confirm the vial is within 48-hour USE BY time. The vaccine must be administered to patient prior to this time.
- **Recording the USE BY time on the syringe label:** The vaccinator must ensure that the USE BY time written on the syringe label is either the 5 hours maximum post draw up, or the 48 hours from vial opening, **whichever is the soonest.**
- Any vial with the cap removed that does not have a USE BY date recorded on it will need to be destroyed.
- **Draw up required dose(s) straight away, as per section 4 instructions, and then return vial to fridge immediately.** Minimise time vial is stored out of fridge. Vaccines are best prepared as close to administration as possible.



4. DRAW UP THE VACCINE

DO NOT DILUTE OR SHAKE

Our recommendation is that the vaccine is only drawn up after patient consent is obtained as is standard practice for routine vaccine administration.

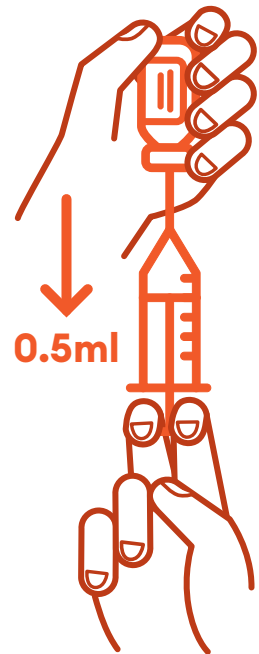
- When using vial for first time, remove red plastic cap guard on top of vaccine vial using aseptic technique.
- Number vial and record USE BY date and time (as above).
- Cleanse vaccine vial stopper using alcohol wipe and allow time to dry.
- While alcohol dries, remove syringe and needles from packaging by peeling back packaging using standard infection control procedures. Do not prepare syringes and needles in advance as this increases risk of contamination. **Preference is to use the supplied BD Flu+ syringe with integrated 25mm x 25G needles.** If you need a longer needle, use a standard 1mL syringe and 38mm (21-25G) needle.
- Using aseptic technique, draw up **0.5mL** of air into syringe.
- Puncture bung of vial, equalizing pressure by injecting air into vial.
- Invert vial and draw up **0.5mL** vaccine into syringe.
- Adjust to remove air bubbles while needle still in the vial. Do not flick the syringe while removing air.
- Remove needle from vial and replace needle guard with care.
- **Visually inspect volume (0.5mL), check for particulates, discolouration, and leaks. Discard if they are observed.**
- **Obtain second check of volume and visual inspection from appropriately trained staff member.**
- Label syringe with USE BY date and time (see above).
- **Document in vaccine log.**

Repeat full process for each subsequent dose as required. Cleanse vial stopper with alcohol wipe and allow to dry if doses aren't drawn up together.

It is normal for liquid to remain in the vial after withdrawing the final dose. Do NOT draw up a single dose from multiple vials.

Return the vaccine vial to the fridge as soon as you have finished drawing up the number of doses needed. Separate opened vials from unopened vials in fridge to reduce errors.

Vaccine does NOT need to be brought to room temperature prior to preparation and administration.



5. ADMINISTER

- Visually inspect each dose in syringe just prior to administration.
- Administer injection intramuscularly at a 90-degree angle into the deltoid.

All doses must be administered within 48 hours of vial cap removal.

Expired vaccine must be disposed of as per operational guidance.



FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE PLEASE CONTACT 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863).