

Excerpts of Zoom Meeting held with Dr Raman Gangakhedkar and Expert panel of Dr Harish Moorjhani New York, Dr SK Gupta, Dr Pankaj Chaudhary, Dr Ruby Bansal, Dr Vijay Arora, Dr Ashok on 25 Feb 2021 under aegis of East Delhi Physician Association regarding Current Vaccines and Newer Strains of Corona Virus

Salient Points.

1. All approved vaccines including Pfizer, Moderna, Covishield and Covaxin have ~100% efficacy in preventing Death due to Covid.....
 - Very High efficacy against Severe Covid
 - High to moderate efficacy (60%-95%) against symptomatic Covid but
 - poor efficacy only against asymptomatic covid
 - so people should not run after efficacy data while choosing a vaccine
2. Because all vaccines prevent severe covid and death. Vaccination of large cohort of population is important if we want to save the humanity from ill effects of the current pandemic.
 - Everyone should get vaccinated and encourage others to get vaccinated.
3. Nasal vaccines might be able to prevent even asymptomatic covid because it generates local IgA antibodies cutting chain of transmission and bringing an end to this pandemic
4. Vaccination of 10000 pregnant ladies has been done in USA without any additional side effects seen up to 3 months of follow up. Hence, Pregnant ladies can be safely vaccinated.
5. People with allergy to food, drugs, latex, venom previous non covid vaccine can safely take covid vaccine.
6. Only People with severe anaphylaxis to previous covid or non covid vaccine should avoid covid vaccine.
7. People who have had Covid in past must go for Covid Vaccination four to six weeks after recovery. Data is emerging that they might need just one shot of vaccine as Robust Neutralizing antibody titres and Strong T cell responses have been found in them even after single shot of vaccination.
8. People who have received Plasma therapy should wait at least four weeks before taking a vaccine. Because during these four weeks the preformed antibodies transfused in external plasma will wane off and this will avoid the neutralization of virus (protein) produced by covid vaccine
9. People with Severe disease who are admitted should wait at least 4 to 10 weeks after recovery before taking any vaccine.
10. People with Diabetes should go for vaccination after taking food/ breakfast

11. People who are on Corticosteroids should decrease dose to less than 7.5 mg per day if possible for six weeks when taking the vaccine because higher doses act as immunosuppressive and may decrease immunity development.
12. Inhaled steroids may not be tapered when taking covid vaccine because systemic bioavailability of inhaled corticosteroid is low.
13. People with nasal allergy, Bronchial asthma skin allergy can be safely vaccinated
14. People on immunosuppressive agents like methotrexate should stop the drug two weeks before and two weeks after the vaccine
15. Rituximab given for Non- Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Rheumatoid arthritis should be avoided for at least 4 weeks {drug acts by attaching to B cells}
16. Those being treated for Blood cancer and who have been given Bone marrow transplant should wait at least 3 months
17. Those being given Monoclonal antibodies can be given vaccine safely as it is not alive vaccine.
18. Those without bone marrow transplant/Cell therapy should wait for vaccine till Absolute Neutrophils Count returns to normal.
19. Those who are planning to undergo surgery should take vaccine at least 2 weeks in advance for protection
20. For patients with Autoimmune diseases like SLE Sjogrens Syndrome, no disease specific data exists but theoretically covishield and m RNA vaccination is unlikely to increase auto immunity. Vaccination should be encouraged though extra caution be taken
21. Older people should be encouraged to take vaccine as risk of covid mortality is high among them.
22. Stable CKD, 22. People with Dementia, paralysis etc Neurological disorders should take vaccine as their covid appropriate behaviour is likely to be compromised. Cardiac failure, Liver failure can take Vaccine but their immune response may be poor.
23. Immunocompromised people should preferably be given Covishield vaccine as it has a non replicating viral vector coding for spike protein.
24. People taking Aspirin and Clopidogrel need not stop these drugs before vaccination
25. People on anticoagulants can be given vaccine safely.