

Bartlett Regional Hospital



December 16, 2020

Vaccine Adverse Reaction Update

The Bartlett Regional Hospital staff member and first known adverse allergic reaction to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in the U.S. is recovering and will remain another night in the hospital under observation. She is still encouraging her colleagues to get the vaccine.

As per the CDC's recommended method of vaccine administration, recipients are required to remain in place for 15 minutes after inoculation in the event any after effects arise. After 10 minutes, the Bartlett health care worker showed signs of an anaphylactic reaction, with increased heartbeat, shortness of breath and skin rash and redness. She was given epinephrine and Benadryl, admitted to the hospital, and put on an intravenous epinephrine drip. Her reaction was serious but not life threatening, said Emergency Department Medical Director Lindy Jones, MD. She had no known previous allergies or adverse reactions to vaccines.

A second staff member experienced eye puffiness, light headedness, and scratchy throat ten minutes after being injected with the vaccine today. His reaction was not considered anaphylaxis. He was taken to the Emergency Department and administered epinephrine, Pepcid and Benadryl. He felt completely back to normal within an hour and was released. He too does not want his experience to have a negative impact on his colleagues lining up for the vaccine.

Both incidents were reported to the CDC's Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) database. Bartlett Regional Hospital and The State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) are in close communication with the CDC, and the agency is providing guidance and support.

"We were expecting these things and we had all the right systems in place," said Infection Preventionist Charlee Gribbon.

Gribbon is overseeing a mass operation to vaccinate as many staff as possible. Four hundred Bartlett staff signed up for the COVID-19 inoculation. Over the past 24 hours, 144 doses of the vaccine have been administered in Phase 1. Staff will receive their second booster dose in three weeks.

"Our goal is to be transparent with Alaskans and the public," Alaska's Chief Medical Officer Anne Zink said today. "We have no plans to change our vaccine schedule, dosing or regimen."

According to the latest story on this incident in the [New York Times](#), "F.D.A. officials have said they would require Pfizer to increase its monitoring for anaphylaxis and submit data on it once the vaccine comes into use. Pfizer also said that the vaccine is recommended to be administered in settings that have access to equipment to manage anaphylaxis."

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