

AstraZeneca promises virus vaccine at cost price worldwide

November 23 2020, by Marie-Morgane Le Moel



UK pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca and its partner the University of Oxford are seeking regulatory approval for their vaccine after it showed an average 70-percent effectiveness, and up to 90 percent depending on the dosage

Hopes of an effective vaccine against coronavirus becoming available

rose again on Monday with AstraZeneca and Oxford University claiming success with their product, becoming the third team to do so.

The head of AstraZeneca in France, Olivier Nataf, answered questions from AFP in an interview, saying that the data were very encouraging.

Question: The AstraZeneca [vaccine](#) is said to be 70 percent effective, a lower figure than those previously announced by Pfizer and Moderna. Could you explain the data?

The 70 percent rate is the result of a combined analysis.

Using a regimen of first injecting half a dose of the vaccine and then a full dose a month later the effectiveness was 90 percent.

Another system, of one [full dose](#) first and another a month later the effectiveness is 62 percent.

This is an interesting lesson: the half-dose plus one dose scheme can become something that we follow, there is an opportunity for availability for the population, where it would take fewer doses to vaccinate more people.

The second point to remember is that there is 100 percent protection against the occurrence of severe forms of illness and hospitalisations in participants who received the vaccine. And the last point is the confirmation of safety: no serious side effects have been reported, the vaccine is well tolerated in both dosing regimens.

Finally, there is greater simplicity in storage, transport, handling, under normal refrigeration conditions of 2 to 8 degrees. This is a very interesting element from the public health standpoint.

Q: What is your calendar for rolling out the vaccine to the public?

We will be producing three billion doses worldwide in 2021.

Parallel and independent supply chains were set up very early on: in the United States, in several European countries and in the rest of the world.

Production is underway. We have announced the first agreements with various governments and non-governmental organisations.

It will be possible to provide the vaccine as soon as the final results of clinical trials, and especially the evaluations by health authorities, are available.

Production is ramping up, there are already 50 million doses of active substances available and capacity is being increased almost weekly.

Q: AstraZeneca has said that the vaccine will be made available at cost price. This is a different strategy from some of your competitors. What's the thinking behind your strategy?

It's more than a strategy, it's a commitment.

The price is around 2.50 euros (\$3) per dose. This is the main subject of our agreement with Oxford, in order to be able to provide this vaccine to the widest possible population, under the most equitable conditions of access possible.

We are committed to these three billion doses at cost price for 2021. We must not forget that this is a race against the virus rather than a race for the vaccine between competitors.

As an industrialist, I hear this a lot, but in fact there are a lot of

collaborations in this race against the virus: Pfizer has partnered with BioNtech, Sanofi with GSK, AstraZeneca with the University of Oxford.

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