

France says first Moderna vaccine doses to arrive Monday

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France's health minister said Sunday that more than 50,000 doses of the coronavirus vaccine from US-based Moderna, newly authorised in Europe, would be ready for use this week in hard-hit regions.

Olivier Veran told Europe 1 radio that after arriving in France Monday,

the [vaccine](#) would be sent to towns and cities with the highest virus circulation, from Strasbourg on the German border to Nice on the Mediterranean.

Coming on top of ongoing distribution of Pfizer-BioNTech shots, the Moderna doses would reach vaccination centres by Wednesday, Veran added.

The health ministry said in a statement that almost eight million doses of Moderna's vaccine would arrive in France by July.

Like the Pfizer-BioNTech jab, it takes two injections spaced out over several weeks for Moderna's version to reach maximum effectiveness.

It poses fewer logistical challenges however as it requires storage only at -20 Celsius (-4 Fahrenheit) rather than around -80C for Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine.

After fierce criticism of the government for a halting start to its campaign, Veran said that by the end of the weekend over 100,000 people would have been vaccinated.

Neighbouring Germany has already topped half a million, while Britain says it is injecting 200,000 per day.

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