

Fast-jabbing Israel buys millions more Pfizer Covid shots

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Israel signed Monday an agreement with pharmaceutical giant Pfizer enabling the Jewish state to obtain millions more doses of vaccines, a government statement said.

Nearly five million Israelis, or over half the population, has received two doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, according to statistics published by Israel's health ministry.

"We have signed an agreement with Pfizer to acquire millions (more) doses of the vaccine which will allow us to continue our battle against coronavirus through to the end of 2022," a joint statement by the health ministry and the prime minister's office said.

Israel has since late December undertaken the most rapid per capita vaccination campaign in the world.

It began to emerge from a third lockdown in early February.

The requirement to wear a mask in public was lifted on Sunday.

The Jewish state sent its coronavirus caseload tumbling after striking a deal for a vast stock of Pfizer/BioNTech jabs.

In exchange, it agreed to pay above [market price](#) and share data it gathers on the recipients, using one of the world's most sophisticated medical data systems.

"If we are not confronted by a surprise with variants that the vaccine cannot fight, we will be in a position to vaccinate the entire population—adults and children," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in the statement.

Israel has recorded 837,199 [coronavirus](#) cases, including 6,340 fatalities.

Separately, 72,000 doses of the AstraZeneca [vaccine](#), donated through the Covax scheme, were handed on Monday to the Palestinian Authority, an Israeli official said on condition of anonymity.

Of that consignment, 28,000 jabs were transferred to the Gaza Strip, according to the same source.

The vaccination effort in the Palestinian territories has massively lagged that undertaken in Israel.

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