

Norway to send 216,000 AstraZeneca doses to Sweden, Iceland

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Norway, which has suspended the use of AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine until further notice, will send 216,000 doses to Sweden and Iceland at their request, the Norwegian health ministry said Thursday.

"I'm happy that the vaccines we have in stock can be put to use even if the AstraZeneca vaccine has been paused in Norway," Health Minister

Bent Hoie said in a statement.

The 216,000 doses, which are currently stored in Norwegian fridges, have to be used before their expiry dates in June and July.

Sweden will receive 200,000 shots and Iceland 16,000 under the expectation they will return the favour at some point.

"If we do resume the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine, we will get the doses back as soon as we ask," Hoie said.

Like neighbouring Denmark, Norway suspended the use of the AstraZeneca jab on March 11 in order to examine rare but potentially [severe side effects](#), including blood clots.

Among the 134,000 AstraZeneca shots administered in Norway before the suspension, five cases of severe thrombosis—including three fatal ones—had been registered among relatively young people in otherwise [good health](#). One other person died of a brain haemorrhage.

On April 15, Norway's government ignored a recommendation from the Institute of Public Health to drop the AstraZeneca jab for good, saying it wanted more time to decide.

Oslo has therefore set up a committee of Norwegian and international experts tasked with studying all of the risks linked to the AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, which is also suspected of causing blood clots. Both are both based on adenovirus vector technology.

Denmark is the only European country to have dropped the AstraZeneca vaccine from its [vaccination campaign](#), and said on Tuesday it would "lend" 55,000 doses to the neighbouring German state of Schleswig-Holstein.

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