

# Germany makes AstraZeneca vaccine available to all adults

May 6 2021, by David Rising

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A man sits in his car as he is vaccinated with AstraZeneca in a tent on the parking lot of a supermarket in Pforzheim, southern Germany, Wednesday, May 5, 2021. A doctor who could not get rid of her AstraZeneca vaccine in her doctor's office decided to offer some 250 doses in drive-in location at the supermarket. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)

Germany is making the AstraZeneca vaccine available immediately to all adults in a push to get as many people inoculated against COVID-19 as quickly as possible, Health Minister Jens Spahn said Thursday.

Millions of doses of AstraZeneca have been safely administered in Europe, but concerns linger over a rare type of blood clot seen in an extremely small number of recipients. That has prompted some people in Germany, even those in [high-risk groups](#), to hold off on getting the shot, preferring to wait for another [vaccine](#).

Spahn said many people in lower-priority groups waiting for a vaccine appointment would be happy to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine. Therefore, the government has decided to allow doctors' offices to vaccinate any adults with it.

"It's very, very important to be more pragmatic and flexible," he said.

He suggested some people may have been deterred by the waiting time between AstraZeneca's two vaccine shots—currently 12 weeks in Germany, compared to half that for the Pfizer-BioNTech shot, the most popular in the country.

AstraZeneca says the second vaccine shot can be given between four to 12 weeks after the first. Spahn said the government would now leave it "in the hands of the doctors" to decide when to give the second vaccination within the four to 12 week timeframe.



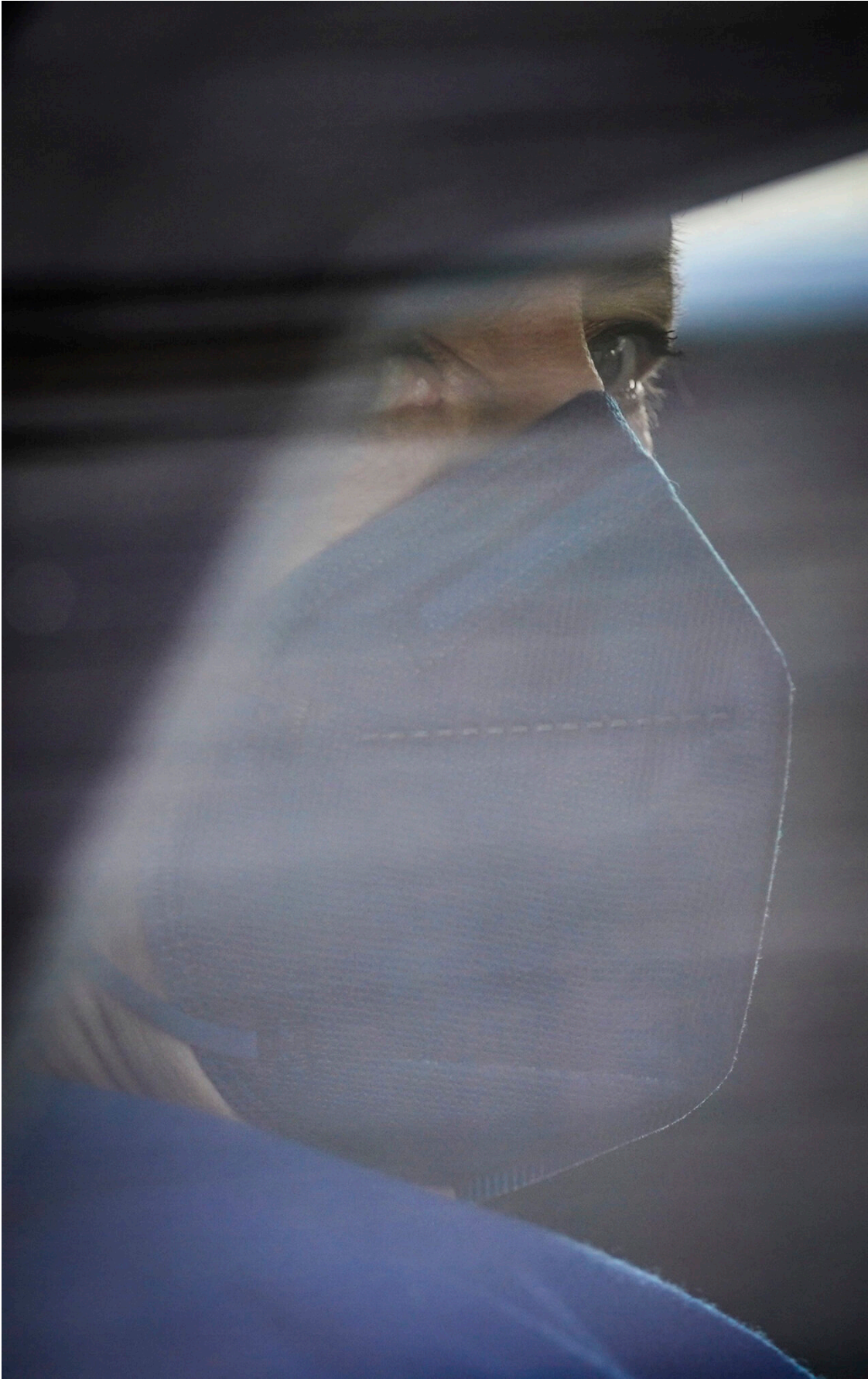
A woman sits in a car as she is vaccinated with AstraZeneca in a tent on the parking lot of a supermarket in Pforzheim, southern Germany, Wednesday, May 5, 2021. A doctor who could not get rid of her AstraZeneca vaccine in her doctor's office decided to offer some 250 doses in drive-in location at the supermarket. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)



Cars with people waiting for AstraZeneca vaccination queue in front of a tent on the parking lot of a supermarket in Pforzheim, southern Germany, Wednesday, May 5, 2021. A doctor who could not get rid of her AstraZeneca vaccine in her doctor's office decided to offer some 250 doses in drive-in location at the supermarket. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)



Medical staff prepares Moderna vaccination in a vaccination mobile on a square at the district Chorweiler in Cologne, Germany, Monday, May 3, 2021. The city of Cologne started a program to bring COVID-19 vaccination to people living in this neighborhood with a high corona incidence. (AP Photo/Martin Meissner)



Chancellor Angela Merkel is driven away in her limousine after her vote in the Bundestag in Berlin, Germany, Thursday, May 6, 2021. In a roll-call vote, one item of the amendment to the Infection Protection Act was voted on. Earlier, the Bundestag decided on relief for vaccinated and recovered persons. (Michael Kappeler/dpa via AP)

The European Union's drug regulator has approved four coronavirus vaccines: two-shot vaccines from AstraZeneca, Moderna and Pfizer and a one-shot vaccine from Johnson & Johnson.

Germany's vaccine rollout was much criticized for its slow start. but has dramatically picked up pace, with 15 million shots given in April, as many as in the three previous months combined, Spahn said.

On April 28, Germany administered more than 1 million doses in a single day for the first time.

Germany has counted over 84,000 COVID-19 deaths in the pandemic.

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