

An Update on Vaccine Distribution in Saudi Arabia

Schedule

- Saudi Arabia's coronavirus vaccination campaign began in December 2020 with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.
- According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the vaccination campaign schedule has three stages, each of which has target groups: ^{1 2}

First Stage

- Citizens and residents aged over 65
- People who are obese and have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of over 40
- People immune deficiency
- People with a history of strokes
- People with and those who have two or more chronic diseases including asthma, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease.

Second Stage

- Citizens and residents aged over 50
- Health practitioners
- People with asthma, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, chronic heart disease including coronary artery disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or active cancer
- People with a BMI between 30 and 40

Third Stage

- All citizens and residents wanting to take the vaccine

- COVID-19 vaccination centers have opened in Riyadh, Jeddah, Madinah, and the Eastern Province. According to Arab News, fifty clinics have been designated to receive patients and more than 1 million Saudi residents have registered to receive the vaccine.

- According to SPA, "registration for taking the vaccine is available for all citizens and residents through [the] Sehaty app."³

Approvals

- Saudi Pharmaceutical Industries and Medical Appliances Corp (SPIMACO) has signed agreements approving use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and most recently the AstraZeneca and Moderna vaccines.
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is already being actively administered at clinics in Saudi Arabia⁴.
 - Saudi Arabia is scheduled to receive three million AstraZeneca doses in early February from India with doses priced at \$5.25 each⁵.
 - SPIMACO is still testing Germany's CureVac and China's Sinovac shots and have not yet received approvals from the government.

Distribution

- According to statistics for the past month, the Ministry of Health is currently receiving 100,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine a week. It aims to reach at least 80 percent immunity among the population through vaccination.
- According to Arab News, 400,000 people in the Eastern Province have registered through the ministry's Sehaty health services app to receive vaccinations, and about 60,000 people have already been inoculated. Nationwide, more than 2 million people registered for the vaccine in the first month after the registration process was launched.



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<https://www.spa.gov.sa/viewstory.php?lang=en&newsid=2175202>

² <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1778756/saudi-arabia>

³ <https://sehaty.sa/en/home>

⁴ <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1794826/saudi-arabia>

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-india-saudi-exclus/exclusive-saudi-arabia-to-get-3-million-astrazeneca-shots-in-about-a-week-from-india-idUSKBN29U25W>