US experts recommend resuming J&J COVID vaccinations

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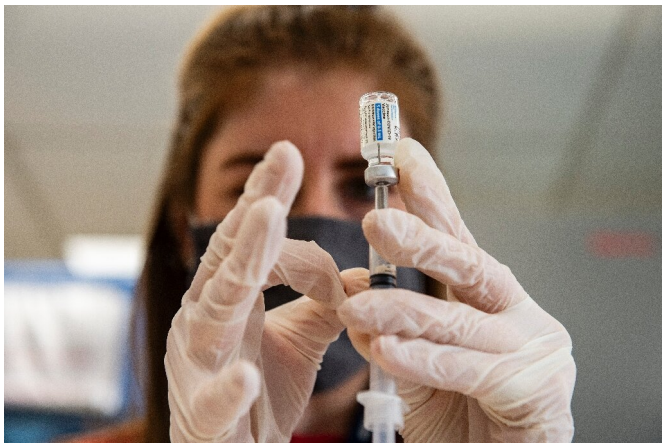

US experts say the Johnson & Johnson Covid vaccine should be administered

The United States should resume Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccinations, an expert panel recommended to health authorities on Friday, after a pause prompted by blood clot concerns.

Health authorities in the United States on April 14 proposed a halt on the vaccine following instances of severe blood clots among the millions of Americans who received the vaccine.

The panel was 10 to 4 in favor of recommending the lifting of the pause, but the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Rochelle Walensky will make the final decision.

"The Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for persons 18 years of age and older in the US population under the FDA, emergency use authorization," the experts convened by the CDC said.

According to data presented Friday, of 3.9 million women who got the Johnson & Johnson shot, 15 developed serious blood clots and three died.

The majority of the confirmed cases, 13 of the 15, was aged under 50 years old. There were no reported cases among men.

Experts voiced support for the vaccine in a nation where over 570,000 people have died from the virus, the largest reported absolute death toll in the world.

"Removing a vaccine that can be given as a single dose and is a preference among Latinos in our communities, would be a detriment," said Dr. Jose Romero, chairman of CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Johnson & Johnson's chief scientific officer Paul Stoffels welcomed the recommendation, saying it "is an essential step toward continuing urgently needed vaccinations in a safe way for millions of people in the US".

Europe's medicines regulator said Tuesday that blood clots should be listed as a "very rare" side effect of Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine.

The regulator said its safety committee "concluded that a warning about unusual blood clots with low blood platelets should be added to the product information" for the J&J shot.