

Vaccines used at the CHEMPARK

"Highly effective and well tolerated"

CURRENTA had already announced at the beginning of March that it would make a vaccination offer to CHEMPARK companies and their employees. Now we can finally get started - even if the ordered quantities will probably not be fully available at first. Good reason for a conversation with Dr. med. Harald Bischof, Head of Medical Services at CHEMPARK, about vaccines.

Has it already been decided which vaccines will be used at CHEMPARK?

No. However, since we will be vaccinating in full compliance with the recommendations of the Standing Commission on Vaccination and have ordered the BioNTech preparation, it is very likely that we will receive exactly this vaccine - but perhaps not to the desired extent for the time being. It is



still conceivable that we could vaccinate employees over 60 with AstraZeneca.

So is AstraZeneca safe?

Of course, otherwise there would be no approval.

But first AstraZeneca was only allowed to give it to people under 65, then not at all and now only to those over 60. What should one believe?

I can understand why this recommendation back-and-forth causes confusion and skepticism. But let's look closely! At the beginning, there was simply too little data to make a recommendation for people over 65 because the clinical trial phase, which was important for approval, had included very few elderly people. In the meantime, AstraZeneca has been used to vaccinate many millions of times in Germany alone, and the European Medicines Agency concludes that the vaccination benefit of this preparation actually increases with age. Moreover, the benefit clearly outweighs the extremely low risk of rare blood clot formation, even in the younger age groups.

So no doubts with regard to Astra?

No. As a medical professional, however, I can say: AstraZeneca's vaccine is highly effective and well tolerated. It reliably protects against severe or life-threatening courses of disease and is much less complicated to handle - in terms of refrigeration requirements - than the vaccines from BioNTech and Moderna. There is slightly worse protection against mild courses of the

disease, but it will certainly keep you out of the hospital. The vaccine has an image problem, but quite wrongly.

Should we not talk more about the risk of complications?

We are in the very rare adverse event range for the severe cases of blood clots associated with AstraZeneca - so about 1 in 100,000. If this is too abstract for you, consider the following: In just over 4 million vaccinations with Astra in Germany, there have been nearly 60 serious complications, and 12 cases have been fatal. That's terrible, of course. I also don't want to downplay the individual suffering involved - but that's a little more than 0.0002 percent. The case fatality rate of coronavirus in Germany is currently just under 2.5 percent. Or to put it another way: If 4 million people get CoVid-19, 100,000 of them will die.

If I am under 60 years old, can I voluntarily opt for vaccination with AstraZeneca at CHEMPARK?

No. AstraZeneca's release for those of all ages wanting the vaccine does now exist. However, one's own individual health conditions and possible dispositions to blood clot formation should be considered. This can actually only be done with a manageable amount of effort by a general practitioner, who knows the respective medical history best, because you have to go a little deeper for this. At CHEMPARK, just a few of these intensive tests would completely eliminate the need to calculate the time required per vaccination. Therefore, there will be no AstraZeneca for under-60s in our vaccination centers. However, the vaccination offer still applies: If you are under 60 and are one of the higher priority employees, you will also be vaccinated if you choose to be, either with BioNTech or Moderna, depending on availability.

Can over-60s choose the vaccine?

No. This is no greater possibility of this at CHEMPARK than at the public vaccination centers.

And if someone would rather wait until they can choose the vaccine ...?

... that is, of course, his decision. We make an offer to vaccinate and anyone can choose not to. From a medical perspective, however, I strongly advise against letting the vaccination opportunity pass. One should ask whether it makes sense to forego certain protection against critical COVID-19 disease courses for the time being in a pandemic that is far from over. This can be a fatal mistake!

What about the side effects of BioNTech?

The BioNTech vaccine was the first to be approved in the EU and is the most widely vaccinated vaccine in Germany to date. Possible side effects include pain at the injection site, headache or muscle and joint pain, and rarely fever. There is basically a very small risk of a severe allergic reaction here, as with all other vaccinations. Anyone who has had a reaction with severe allergic symptoms from previous other vaccinations or has a known allergy to any of the ingredients should first consult with an allergist.