



Dear Employees, Residents & Family Members,

We wanted to reach out as soon as possible given today's announcement of the federal recommendation to pause use of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine. This development is a precaution following reports of a rare, severe blood clot in the days after vaccination in six individuals in the U.S. This occurrence is extremely rare, as 6.8 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine have been administered nationwide to date.

Out of an abundance of caution, these cases will be reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) this Wednesday. Altercare will immediately halt continued vaccine clinic programs involving the administration of the J&J vaccine until it is determined safe to resume.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has been used at one Altercare facility in Michigan, Altercare Big Rapids, during a recent vaccine clinic. Initial Phase 1a vaccination clinics at Altercare Big Rapids administered the Moderna vaccine, while all Ohio locations were allocated Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

On April 9, 2021, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was administered at Altercare Big Rapids. During this one-day clinic, two staff members and six residents received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in collaboration with the federal retail pharmacy program. It is important that these individuals be aware of this recent development, and we are reaching out directly to provide support.

If you or a loved one has received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and develop severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after vaccination, the CDC advises that you should contact your healthcare provider.

Of the six cases of rare blood clots documented in the United States, a type of blood clot called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) was seen in combination with low levels of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia). All six cases occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48, and symptoms occurred 6 to 13 days after vaccination.

While offering extraordinary disease prevention benefits, it is important to note that all vaccines carry some risk of side effects. Vaccines remain an important part of the COVID-19 defense strategy, and we continue to encourage and prioritize vaccination efforts as our experience with this deadly virus continues. Altercare's team remains dedicated in supporting both our residents and staff as this situation evolves.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of our team.

Sincerely,

Brian McClain, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Deanna Hatfield, MSN, RN
Chief Nursing Officer