

COVID-19 vaccination relatively safe in autoimmune diseases

COVID-19 vaccination appears to be relatively safe in patients with systemic autoimmune and inflammatory diseases (SAIDs), according to findings of the COVID-19 Vaccination in Autoimmune Diseases (COVAD) study published in *Rheumatology*.

Data from a patient self-reported survey circulated in 94 countries in early 2021 were used to investigate short-term adverse drug events (ADEs) 7-days after COVID-19 vaccination in patients with SAIDs compared with healthy controls (HCs).

In total, 5867 patients with SAIDs and 5033 controls, mostly from Turkey, Mexico, India and USA, responded to the survey. Most respondents received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine [tozinameran; BNT162b2], Sinopharm vaccine [BBIBP-CorV], AstraZeneca vaccine [AZD-1222; ChAdOx1] or the Moderna vaccine [elasomeran; mRNA-1273] (39%, 17%, 13% and 8%, respectively).

Minor ADEs which were reported more frequently by patients with SAIDs than in controls included injection-site pain, headache, fever, chills, myalgia, fatigue, abdominal pain, dizziness, diarrhoea, palpitations, erythema, and nausea and vomiting. Major ADEs included anaphylaxis, throat closure and severe rashes. The risk of post-vaccination ADEs was significantly greater after the Moderna vaccine and AstraZeneca vaccine than after other COVID-19 vaccines ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively).

"Vaccination against COVID-19 is relatively safe and tolerable in SAID patients with a small absolute increased risk of 2% in major ADEs as compared to HCs," concluded the authors.