

Clozapine Strategic Management Group

Clozapine and COVID-19 Vaccination

Clozapine, COVID-19 Vaccination and Myocarditis

Clozapine is known to cause myocarditis, which typically presents within the first 14-28 days of commencement. During the initial 4 weeks of treatment, people are advised to monitor for signs and symptoms of myocarditis, as well as weekly monitoring of hs-CRP and Troponin during the commencement period.

The CSMG draw attention to the rare risk of myocarditis post administration of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines which includes Comirnaty (Pfizer) and Spikevax (Moderna).

- The risk of myocarditis may be greatest in young males
- Symptoms typically appear within 1-5 days of vaccination (median 2 days).
- Cases have primarily occurred within 14 days of vaccination
- The risk of myocarditis or pericarditis appears to be higher following the second dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) in conjunction with the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand emphasise the overwhelming benefits of vaccination using mRNA vaccine greatly outweigh the rare risk of myocarditis or pericarditis after vaccination. [Guidance on Myocarditis and Pericarditis after mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

In view of this, the CSMG suggest factoring this into the decision regarding when to commence clozapine. Delaying clozapine commencement where possible until 14 - 21 days post the second dose of an mRNA vaccine may avoid uncertainty as to which agent is responsible for emergent myocarditis.

Clozapine toxicity and COVID-19 Vaccination

Cases of clozapine toxicity following COVID-19 Vaccination have been reported to the CSMG and reported in the literature. The CSMG recommend actively following up people post their vaccination and educating them about signs and symptoms of clozapine toxicity. Please refer to the [Clozapine toxicity and Therapeutic Drug Monitoring Fact Sheet](#) which outlines signs and symptoms of toxicity and management. A serum clozapine level is recommended should signs of toxicity be evident.

Any adverse events, including raised serum clozapine levels following COVID-19 Vaccination must be reported to CPMS and Therapeutic Goods Administration.

For more information

Lisa Wilton
Advanced Nurse Consultant MH GP Shared Care
lisa.wilton@sa.gov.au
Telephone: 0411224904

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/clozapine
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

