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Oxford vaccine AZD1222 resumes clinical trial

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Trials of AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine will resume after being paused due to a reported side effect in a patient in the UK.



Oxford university and AstraZeneca are to resume the international clinical trial of their proposed coronavirus vaccine candidate. Speculation that there might be a significant delay in the much-watched study turns out to have been unjustified. AstraZeneca's study was paused while it investigated whether the adverse reaction was linked with the vaccine.

Late-stage trials briefly halted last Sunday to allow independent committee to review safety data when a volunteer fell ill. A rapid review by the trial's independent safety review committee and national regulators has now concluded that it is safe to resume inoculating new participants. All follow-up appointments with people already vaccinated continued as normal during the week's pause, the university said. Altogether 18,000 individuals have received the AZD1222 vaccine as part of the trial, which is taking place in the UK, US, South Africa and Brazil. "In large trials such as this, it is expected that some participants will become unwell and every case must be carefully evaluated to ensure careful assessment of safety," Oxford said in a statement.

Altogether Oxford and AstraZeneca expect to enrol up to 50,000 participants globally in phase 3 trials of AZD1222. In addition to the UK, US, Brazil and South Africa, the testing will extend to Japan and Russia.