

Covishield-Covaxin mix gives better protection, says ICMR

18 persons from U.P., who inadvertently got the combination, were studied

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A combination of Covishield and Covaxin elicits better immunogenicity than two doses of the same vaccine, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said on Sunday.

The council released its findings which suggest that immunisation with a combination of an adenovirus vector platform-based vaccine followed by an inactivated whole virus vaccine was not only safe but also elicited better immunogenicity.

The immunisation programme against COVID-19 in India started with two vaccines – AstraZeneca's ChAdOx1-nCov-19 (named Covishield in India) and inactivated whole virion BBV152 (Covaxin). A homologous prime-boost approach was followed.

However, 18 individuals in Uttar Pradesh, under the national programme, inadvertently received Covishield as the first jab and Covaxin as the second. In its study, the ICMR compared the safety

Mix and match |

A look at key points from the pre-print ICMR report on the immune response generated by mixing doses of Covishield and Covaxin



Shot ready: A health worker preparing a jab of Covaxin during a vaccination camp in Ahmedabad on Sunday. ■ AFP

■ The study was conducted on 18 people who inadvertently received Covishield as the first dose and Covaxin as the second

■ It compared the safety and immune response generated in them with that in individuals who received both doses of the same vaccine. 40

persons were a part of both groups

■ Neutralising antibody response of the group which received the two different vaccines was significantly higher compared to that in groups that received two doses of the same vaccine

Those who received different vaccines also showed superior immunogenicity against the Delta variants

and immunogenicity profile of these persons against that of individuals receiving only one of the vaccines – either Covishield or Covaxin.

Pre-print report

The pre-print report titled “Serendipitous COVID-19 Vaccine-Mix in Uttar Pradesh, India: Safety and Immunogenicity Assessment of a Heterologous Regime,” has not been certified by peer review and should not be used

to guide clinical practice, the council said.

It, however, maintained that the findings have an important implication for the COVID-19 vaccination programme wherein heterologous immunisation will pave the way for induction of improved and better protection against the variant strains of SARS-CoV-2.

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