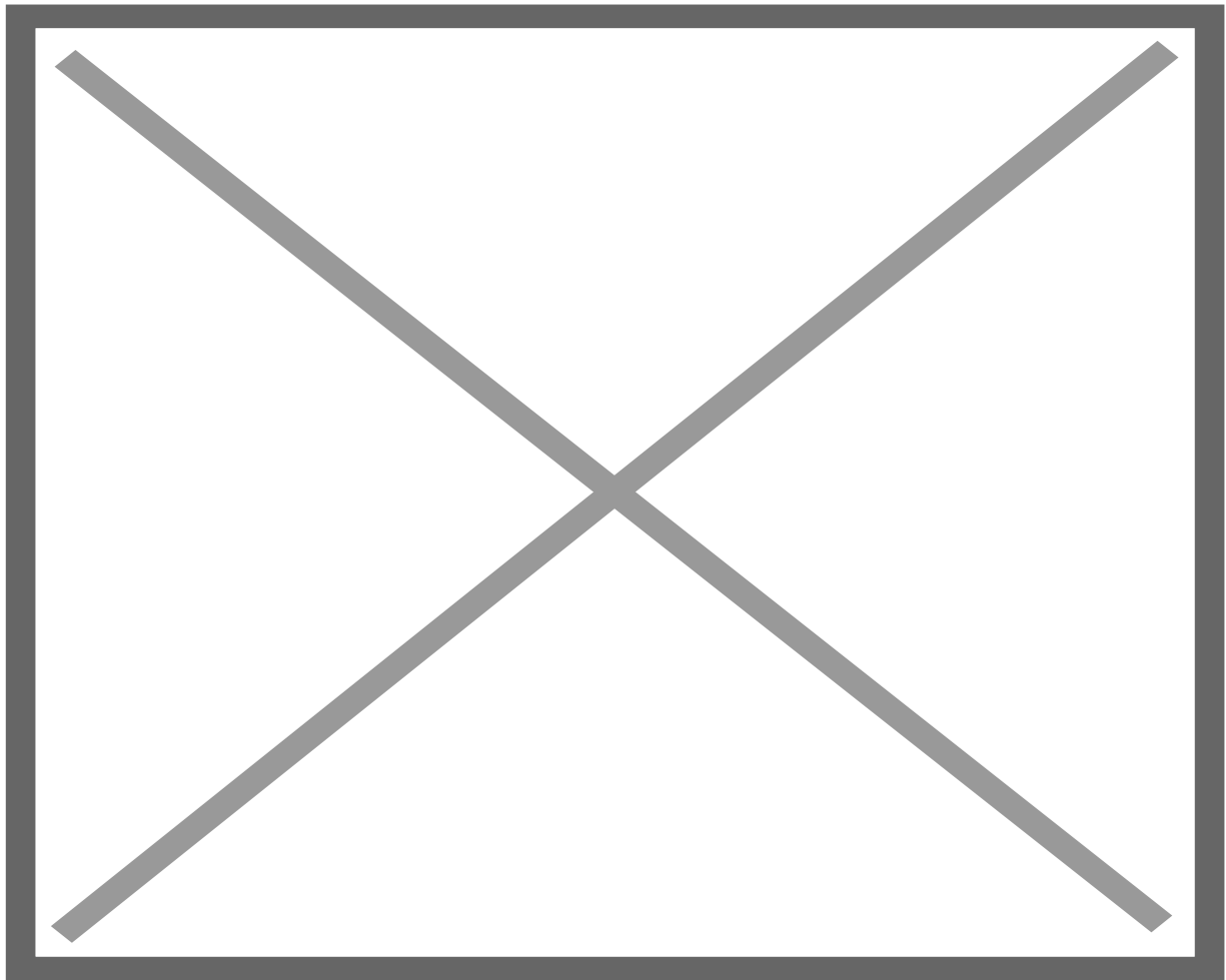


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Federal Panel Recommends Restart of Johnson & Johnson Vaccine With Blood Clot Warning Label

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A dose of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine is extracted into a syringe. By. GETTY IMAGES

The Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine on Friday won recommendation to resume use in the U.S. by a federal vaccine advisory committee, with the condition that a product label be added warning of a rare but severe blood clot the vaccine may cause. The blood clot reaction is believed to have killed two individuals to date.

The panel voted 10 to 4 in favor of the recommendation, and there was one abstention.

U.S. authorities are expected to follow the panel's recommendation. If they do, the vaccine could be back in use as soon as this weekend, after last week's pause impacted the U.S. vaccination drive. Some 7.2 million Americans had taken the vaccine, among them 481 Virgin Islanders.

Dept. of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion told the Consortium that D.O.H. would await the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendation before moving forward. "We were proactive and halted when recommended. Reinforce that only 6 out of 7 million who received the vaccine were affected however, VIDOH will await CDC's guidance to the use of J&J," she said. "The safety of community continues to remain top property."

The J&J vaccine was paused [last week Tuesday](#) by the Food and Drug Administration and the CDC after the agencies cited severe cases of blood clot in six women between the ages of 18 and 48, who developed the reaction after taking the vaccine.

"The benefits clearly outweigh the risks, though there are differences in age groups, and particularly for women less than 50 years of age," said Dr. Katherine Poehling (via the Wall Street Journal), a member of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices that made the recommendation, who is also a professor of pediatrics and epidemiology at Wake Forest School of Medicine.

According to WSJ, a CDC official said that if vaccinations with J&J's shot resumed, it could prevent up to 1,400 deaths from Covid-19 and up to 3,500 admissions to hospital intensive-care units over a six-month period, though there could be up to 45 cases of the rare blood-clot condition.