

# COVID-19 : VACCINATIONS AND INFECTION RATES

As the world looks on with both concern and sadness as to what is happening with the spread of the virus in India, this must serve as a lesson to Africa which could end up in a similar situation. India considered themselves to be past the danger zone with infections. Masks were not worn, social distancing ignored and massive political rallies and religious festivals were held with millions of people attending. There has been limited vaccine rollout in India and when the next wave exploded India now faces soaring infection rates of over 400 000 lives per day and an oxygen crisis.

At this point South Africa is now entering the important Phase 2 of the vaccination rollout. The first batch of Pfizer vaccines arrived in the country on Sunday night. **Phase 2 which covers anyone over the age of 60 is scheduled to start in the middle of May.** If you are 60 and over and have not yet registered please remember this is a simple process and **we have a helpline to provide assistance.**

Recorded infection rates in the country have been at low levels in March and the first two weeks of April. Over the last 2 weeks there has been an upturn in infection rates in the Free State, Northern Cape and North West. Gauteng is now also showing a disturbing up tick. All these factors need to be considered when making the decision to vaccinate or not. Fears over vaccines have to be weighed up against the benefits. Vaccinations are not a new means to control a viral disease that rapidly spreads.

**There are many major vaccine success stories.**

- **Smallpox** was officially eradicated in 1980 largely through a vaccine programme, together with surveillance and other protection measures started in the late 1950s. Smallpox is estimated to have killed 500 million people in the last 100 years of its existence. In 1967 there were still 15 million cases a year, with a fatality rate of 30%.



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- **Poliomyelitis** – the effective vaccine for polio was seen as one of the major medical breakthroughs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over 5 million people have escaped paralysis since the World Health Organisation launched its eradication initiative in 1988.
- Routine childhood vaccinations, that most parents are happy for their infant to have prevent the serious side effects of measles; meningitis; polio; diphtheria; hepatitis B and tuberculosis.
- With all of this in mind you need to consider the importance of vaccinating in an effort to fight the Corona Virus pandemic.
- **REMEMBER YOUR MEDICAL SCHEME IS PAYING FOR YOUR VACCINATION.**

If you need help with registration please phone the dedicated number below. Click on this link to register : <https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za/#/>

**Our helpline for vaccination registration is 021 937 8494.**

**STAY SAFE AND WEAR  
YOUR MASK.**

