Editorial

Pros and Cons of Covid-19 Vaccines – an editorial

Prof. Dr. HN Sarker[1]

The world is in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. Till now there is no effective treatment of this disease; what we have that is a magic tool- vaccine.

As of February 2021, ten vaccines are authorized by at least one national regulatory authority for public use: two RNA vaccines (the Pfizer–BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna vaccine), four conventional inactivated vaccines (BBIBP-CorV from Sinopharm, BBV152 from Bharat Biotech, CoronaVac from Sinovac, and WIBP from Sinopharm), three viral vector vaccines (Sputnik V from the Gamaleya Research Institute, the Oxford–AstraZeneca vaccine, and Ad5-nCoV from CanSino Biologics), and one peptide vaccine (EpiVacCorona from the Vector Institute).[1]

These COVID-19 vaccines varies in their efficacy. The Oxford–AstraZeneca vaccine used in Bangladesh was found to be about 52 percent effective after the first dose and 92% after second dose in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infections. However, the efficacy of Covid-19 vaccine is far better than the effectiveness of the annual flu shot (40%). So, immune response is excellent and expected to develop community or herd immunity after completion of vaccination.[2]

Side effects of vaccination are few including some pain at the site of injection, tiredness and headache; most side effects of the COVID-19 vaccination are mild and should not last longer than a week. Millions of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and report of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported.

But it is a great task to give vaccination to vast population of a country because 70-80% of population should be covered to develop herd immunity.

Till now, it is uncertain that how long this vaccination will give protection but at present it is claimed to protect for 6-8 months after a booster vaccination. This is an assumption and based on the available data suggesting that most of those people who recover from COVID-19 develop a protective antibody titers and cellular immune response which provides protection from re-infection for 6-8 months.[3]

Though serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, are very rare; it should be avoided in persons who have history of severe allergic reaction to vaccines or injections in the past. Health personnel must be trained

1. Professor and Head of department, Medicine, SSKMC, Gopalgonj

to handle anaphylactic reaction properly if happened.

WHO has advised people that those with some medical conditions should not get certain Covid-19 vaccines, or should wait before getting vaccine. Such warning conditions are chronic illnesses or treatments (like chemotherapy) that affect the immune system; severe and life-threatening allergies to vaccine ingredients, which are very rare; or those with severe illness and a high fever on the day of vaccination.[4]

With the hope of prevention of COVID-19, everybody should take the vaccine as well as maintain social distancing, frequent hand washing, wearing mask and avoiding social gathering till the eradication of the disease.

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