



HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF SPORTS MEDICINE & SPORTS SCIENCE

香港運動醫學及科學學會

Member of

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Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC)

The Federation of Medical Societies of Hong Kong (FMSHK)

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HKASMSS Position Statement: Sports and COVID-19 Vaccination (March 21, 2021)

This statement is established by HKASMSS, the leading professional body in the field of Sports Medicine and Sports Science in Hong Kong since 1988, as a guide for COVID-19 vaccination among the elite athletes and recreational sports enthusiasts in Hong Kong. The position statement will be updated when new information is available.

Whilst public health measures and restrictions were implemented by HKSAR Government in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic, the newly launched **vaccination program plays an important role in preventing the spread of infection** caused by the coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The vaccination reduces the risk of transmission of infection in the community among the sports teams and users of sports facilities. A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination is crucial to the resumption of the normal pre-pandemic life, which in other words the active and joyful life to the athletes and sports enthusiasts in Hong Kong. It also allows the elite athletes to continue their local and overseas training and competition schedule, as well as individuals to perform regular physical activities. As a result, the detrimental effects of one's health and wellness from the possible prolonged duration of physical inactivity under different restriction policies are greatly minimized.

According to the currently available information, **the vaccines provided by the HKSAR Government are effective and safe in providing protection against COVID-19**. Common side effects are usually mild and temporary while severe side effects and extreme complications are rare. There is no unexpected or untoward increase in the all-cause mortality rate with the current data.

However, as the development period of COVID-19 vaccines is greatly compressed for the emergency use worldwide, we should be very cautious about the occurrence of rare or unpredictable severe adverse event after



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widespread vaccination on the population, especially to the special groups in people with comorbidity. The Sports Medicine Doctors Commission in HKASMSS is responsible to promote the safety to the high-risk individuals during the risk mitigation procedures to the spread of COVID-19. We are now closely monitoring the rapidly evolving landscape of COVID-19 vaccines and their impacts in different subpopulation, including the senior athletes, para-athletes and recreational sports enthusiasts who suffered from chronic diseases including Diabetes, Hypertension, history of recent Heart Attack, Stroke and/or any Thrombotic Event. Clinical data are not yet available to support evidence-based recommendations on the implications of vaccination for these specific groups. Therefore, **we recommend persons in these subgroups should seek advice from medical doctors and conduct health assessment before receiving COVID-19 vaccination.**

It is not yet known how long the antibodies or cellular immunity induced by the vaccine can last. Therefore, it is important that personal hygiene measures and Government restrictions for social distancing should be adopted continuously, even after vaccination as part of the social responsibility.

Last but not least, HKASMSS has developed the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about Sports and COVID-19 Vaccination, for athletes and sports enthusiasts in Hong Kong. To access the FAQ, please visit www.hkasmss.org.hk/position-statement