

# Mixing of COVID vaccines

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**In news-** India is planning an exercise to investigate if it can immunise people using a “mix and match” of different Covid-19 vaccines.

## **More information-**

- It means **following up one dose of a particular vaccine with a second dose of a different vaccine.**
- This is called **“heterologous” immunisation.**
- At present, India in its vaccination programme is currently using **Covishield, Covaxin and Sputnik V vaccines** and this practice has not been approved yet.
- Mix and match of Covid-19 vaccines have **benefits** like better immune response, provide wider protection against certain mutations or variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and plug the shortage in vaccine supply.
- The **concerns** include the safety of mix and match, untested combinations, differences in the shelf life of vaccines, their shipment and storage conditions and contraindications like their side-effects.
- Though **mixing and matching of vaccines has been tested for decades, especially for viruses like Ebola**, most combinations had initially been restricted to vaccines that use the same technology.
- **In India, combinations of rotavirus vaccines** have also been used and tested out.
- In the **US**, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in January allowed a mix and match of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for COVID (both mRNA jabs), under “exceptional” circumstances.
- **Canada, the UK and countries in the EU** have offered their younger population the **Pfizer or Moderna vaccine as an alternative to AstraZeneca.**
- **Spain and South Korea** have also been looking into a mix

and match of these vaccines.

- **Russia** has been planning on testing a combination of the AstraZeneca and Sputnik V vaccines.