

# *Mexico approves emergency use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID vaccine*

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Mexico City, December 12 (RHC)-- Mexico has approved the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. "Mexico is the fourth country whose health agency, Cofepris, has given authorisation for emergency use of the Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine," Deputy Health Minister Hugo Lopez-Gatell told a news conference on in Mexico City. "This is a source of hope and tranquillity."

The United Kingdom, Bahrain and Canada have already approved the vaccine, while the United State's Food and Drug Administration also authorized its emergency use late on Friday. Earlier this week, the

Mexican government announced it would begin a vaccination drive against the coronavirus by the end of this month. It ordered the first batch of 250,000 doses to immunize 125,000 people, since the vaccine requires two shots.

Authorities said priority will be given to medical staff battling on the front lines of the pandemic, and that the doses will be administered only in Mexico City and in the northern state of Coahuila, due to the specialist deep freeze and logistics requirements of the vaccine.

Mexico has agreed to purchase 34.4 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. After the initial round of vaccinations, it hopes to reach a rate of one million a month between January and March, and 12 million in April, the government said.

Mexico also has preliminary purchase agreements with the Chinese-Canadian project, CanSinoBio, for 35 million doses of its vaccine candidate, and with the UK firm AstraZeneca for 77.4 million doses of its candidate. It is also part of the international Covax mechanism, which allows it to buy another 51.6 million doses.

With more than 113,019 deaths and 1.22 million COVID-19 cases as of Friday, Mexico – a country of 128 million people – is the fourth worst-hit country in the world.

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