

The Delta Variant: What You Need to Know



You may have heard about the new COVID-19 variant, Delta. Delta is the name for the B.1.617.2 variant, a SARS-CoV-2 mutation that originally surfaced in India. The first Delta case was identified in December 2020, and the strain continues to spread rapidly. Though this variant is more contagious, it doesn't seem to be more severe. This variant was first detected in the United States in March 2021, and now makes up more than half of the COVID-19 cases in the U.S. While Delta is still fairly new, the steps you should take to keep yourself and your family safe have not changed.

Do vaccines protect against the Delta variant?

Breakthrough cases, or cases in people who have gotten the vaccine, are uncommon, especially among those who have received the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. Both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines appear to be highly effective protection against the Delta variant, while recent research suggests the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may be less effective. However, those who do get the virus after getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are more likely to have a mild case, like a cold. In fact, even with the increase in the Delta variant, more than 97% of COVID-related hospitalizations are from people who did not get a vaccine.

What does this mean for you?

Getting the vaccine is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself from the Delta variant. If you are not vaccinated, you should continue to:



Wear a mask. In some cases, it's even recommended people who are vaccinated wear masks.



Keep your distance.



Quarantine if you are sick or are exposed to someone who is.

At A Glance



In December 2020, the Delta variant surfaced in India.



The Delta variant is more contagious, but does not seem to be more severe.



The Delta variant makes up more than half of the cases in the U.S.

97%

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