

# COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS:

## Update on Omicron



### What is Omicron?

The new current dominant strain of COVID-19 in the US is Delta. In the last month or so we have seen a new strain called Omicron. Since Omicron is new, we are learning more information daily. What do we know about Omicron?

- Omicron is highly transmissible with cases doubling every 3-4 days
- Omicron has been confirmed in 30 states but is believed to be in every state.
- Omicron will be the dominant strain in the coming weeks in the US.
- A South African study reported a week ago found reinfection rates (people who had a previous case of COVID-19) of 3-8 times higher than Delta.
- In a UK report, vaccine effectiveness against Omicron infection was 30-40% after two doses. After the booster this increased to 70-80%.
- In South Africa where this was first reported, the hospitalization rates remain low. We are not sure if immunity works against severe disease or if Omicron induces more mild disease.
- A report from the Kaiser Family Foundation reported that 163,000 COVID-19 deaths since June 2021 would have been prevented with vaccination.

### How Can I Help Prevent the Spread of the Omicron Variant?

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, the following safety measures are encouraged:

- Get Vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19.
- Get your Booster if you had the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) two months or more ago, and if you had the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine six months or more ago. This will increase your protection from 30-40% pre-booster to 70-80% after a booster.

### More Information

For additional information about the Omicron variant and to find where you can get vaccinated, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html>

