



IMA Public Health Committee – December 3, 2021

Updated February 18, 2022

Is it True that Vaccinated Persons Spread the Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) just as much as the Unvaccinated?

The short answer is no.

Why are those who are fully vaccinated less likely to transmit this coronavirus to others?

1. You can't transmit the virus if you aren't infected.

The CDC reported that unvaccinated persons are nearly five times more likely to get infected with COVID-19 than vaccinated persons based on a [2021 study in Los Angeles County](#) when cases of infection with the Delta variant were on the rise prior to booster shots being widely available.

Limiting your close contacts to persons who are fully vaccinated* means that your chances of being exposed to someone who is infected are reduced on the order of [80 percent compared to having close contacts with those who are unvaccinated](#).

2. If you are fully vaccinated and then become infected, you are significantly less likely to infect other members of your household than if you were not vaccinated.

A number of studies in countries including the [U.K.](#) and the [Netherlands](#) earlier this year have demonstrated that if a member of a household has even just had their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine before getting infected with COVID-19, they are less likely than unvaccinated people to infect other household family members.

3. If you are fully vaccinated prior to getting COVID-19, some studies show that your body clears the infection from your nose and throat much more quickly compared to people who are unvaccinated.

What this means is that if a person is infected with COVID-19 after having been fully vaccinated, [they may be infectious to others for fewer days than someone who has COVID-19 but was unvaccinated](#).

None of the above is meant to suggest that someone who is fully vaccinated, but gets infected, cannot infect someone else. However, if someone is fully vaccinated and gets infected, they are less likely to infect others in their household and they are likely to be

infectious for a shorter period of time than someone who is infected but not previously vaccinated.

Protecting your family and close contacts is another reason to get vaccinated today. The vaccines are safe and effective, and free!

*According to the CDC, people are considered fully vaccinated:

2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or

2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

Note that [the CDC still recommends booster doses](#) for fully vaccinated people in order to be up to date.