



## + COVID-19: Delta Variant

### OVERVIEW AND FAQ

The Delta variant of the coronavirus has continued to raise concerns among health experts because it seems to spread more easily and is harder to detect. The good news so far is that the COVID-19 vaccines work well against this strain of the virus.

We've pulled together some recent information that was distributed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona. We thought it was good information to pass along to help keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy.

#### **What is the Delta variant?**

Many viruses mutate over time. The Delta variant is a new mutation of the coronavirus that was first found in India. It has now spread to more than 60 countries. In some, it has become the dominant strain. Around 60% of new coronavirus cases in the United Kingdom are caused by this strain. In the United States, about 26% of new cases are associated with the Delta variant. But that number has been rising. The Delta variant is here in Arizona.

#### **Why is it a potential problem?**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention calls Delta a "variant of concern." That means it has some qualities that require close monitoring. In Delta's case:

- *It appears to be more contagious.*
- *It may be harder to detect, even in people who are vaccinated.*
- *It may cause more severe illness.*
- *It may be resistant to some treatments.*

It is affecting more young people. This could be due to lower vaccination rates among young people and vaccine ineligibility for children younger than 12 years of age.

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## Why is it important to be fully vaccinated?

If you are fully vaccinated, you are less likely to get severely ill—from Delta or other variants. According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, research suggests that vaccines are effective against the Delta variant—the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been found to be 88% effective at preventing serious illness after both doses, but only 33% effective after one dose. **This highlights how the second shot is crucial to achieve full protection against the coronavirus.**

## The Bottom Line.

To prevent Delta from taking over as the dominant strain in the U.S., it's important for everyone to be fully vaccinated as soon as they can be and follow the CDC guidelines to help slow the spread of the virus.

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*This information about the COVID-19 Delta Variant is courtesy of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona. For more information, you can visit*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant-info.html>