

## What Does the Delta Variant Mean for Your Business?

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### What is the Delta variant of COVID-19?

The Delta variant is one of many variants of concern of COVID-19 listed by the [CDC](#). The Delta variant was first seen in India in October 2020. Right now, it is the reason for the majority of the new cases of COVID-19 in [the United States](#). The variant is also the dominant strain [in Arizona](#). COVID-19 cases [began to rise again](#) in Arizona after mask mandates were lifted.

The Delta variant is spread in the same way as the original virus. Droplets and aerosols are exhaled from infected people.

### Is the Delta variant more contagious than the original strain of COVID-19 and other variants?

Yes. The Delta variant is about [two to three times more contagious](#) than the original virus or about [as contagious as the chicken pox](#). A person infected with Delta will shed about 1000 times more virus copies than the original virus. They will test positive, on [average, two days sooner](#) than people with the original virus. This means people become contagious faster after getting infected with the Delta variant. One person who is sick with the Delta variant can infect about 8 to 9 other people on average. Previous variants had an average transmission of 1 to 2 other people. Vaccinated persons are also capable of transmitting the Delta variant to other people, including other vaccinated people but are likely to have less severe illness or symptoms.

### Do I need to take any specific steps in my business for the Delta variant?

You should continue to follow COVID-19 safety precautions. This includes:

- Strongly encouraging workers and clients to wear facemasks inside your business regardless of vaccination status
- Limiting the number of customers and employees
- Improving indoor ventilation
- Regular disinfection and cleaning of workspaces
- Washing or sanitizing your hands often

For the top 10 actions you can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your business, [click here](#). You can also look at the "[Supporting Small Businesses During COVID-19](#)" page for other COVID-19 resources that may help you.

### What are symptoms of the Delta variant?

The Delta variant has [similar symptoms](#) to the original COVID-19. These include cough, fever, dry throat, loss of smell, headache, sore throat, and runny nose.

### Is there testing available for the Delta Variant?

You cannot get tested specifically for the Delta variant. It is still recommended that you take a [COVID-19 test](#) if you are experiencing symptoms.

If you get tested, your test sample may be sent to a lab that is able to determine its variant type. You would most likely not receive these results. Instead, they would go to [public health officials to monitor](#) the variants that are most common in the population.

### What if I'm vaccinated, will I be safe? Do I need to wear a mask?

Current research says the [COVID-19 vaccines are effective against most of the variants](#), including the Delta variant. No [vaccine](#) can provide 100% protection against COVID-19 or its variants.

A vaccinated person can still carry the Delta variant and spread it to other people. Because of this, the CDC has recommended that [that vaccinated people should wear a mask](#) when indoors with other people.

Some [people may still get sick after being vaccinated](#). The vaccine [does help prevent serious symptoms](#) that can lead to hospitalization or death. If infected, vaccinated people are also more likely to be asymptomatic and not know that they are infectious compared to unvaccinated people. Vaccines also provide [better protection](#) against these variants than the immunity from having been sick with COVID-19 before.

### Will there be other variants like Delta in the future?

Most likely. Since viruses are always changing, we expect variants to happen. This is also true for other viruses, like the common cold or the flu. Changes happen when the virus moves to a new person and begins to grow by making copies of itself. Sometimes the copies are not perfect, and these mistakes are considered variants.

Most of these changes usually make a virus weaker. Sometimes these changes can help a virus. For example, variations can let the virus spread more easily, or make it resistant to treatments or vaccines. Variants must be monitored more carefully because of this.

A list of the variants in the United States that are being monitored right now can be found [here](#).

### If the death rate is lower for the Delta variant, do I even need to worry about it?

It is misleading to compare the current number of deaths to that of the original virus. The Delta variant is causing illness in mostly [unvaccinated people](#). Unvaccinated people tend to be younger than 50 years old and are less likely to have serious symptoms. The lower death rate is likely from people getting vaccinated, not from a less serious virus.

### What is happening with new COVID-19 infections in Pima County?

As of July 27, the [CDC](#) recommends to wear a mask indoors in public if you are [in an area of substantial or high transmission](#) to give yourself the highest protection against the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others, even if you are vaccinated.

As of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, [Pima County](#) is considered a substantial area of transmission by the CDC and is currently seeing new COVID-19 cases [go up each week](#). Areas in South Tucson (and farther South) appear to have the highest rate of cases.