



Omicron Variant Fast Facts

(Updated December 17, 2021)

Omicron has been detected in Oregon and is expected to cause a surge in the coming weeks because it appears to spread much more quickly and easily than other COVID-19 variants.

The Omicron variant is being studied by scientists all over the world.

- **Transmissibility:** It is becoming increasingly clear that the Omicron variant spreads much more quickly and easily than the Delta variant, although we do not yet know how much more.
- **Disease severity:** Early data indicate that the Omicron variant may result in less severe disease than the Delta variant, but this remains under study.
- **Vaccine effectiveness:** It appears that the COVID-19 vaccines continue to protect against severe disease, and boosters provide an additional layer of protection against infection and severe disease.
- **Treatment:** It is unknown at this time how effective treatments will be against infection caused by Omicron. This is actively being investigated by scientists worldwide.

We know how to protect ourselves and others.

- Get vaccinated now if you're not. Vaccination remains the best protection against serious illness and spread of disease.
- If you're eligible for a booster, make your appointment today. Boosters provide an extra layer of protection.
- Wear a mask when away from home.
- Keep a physical distance from people outside your home if you don't know their vaccination status.
- Wash hands frequently.

Viruses like SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, mutate or change constantly.

On Nov. 24, 2021, the World Health Organization named Omicron a variant of concern. The Omicron variant appears to be more transmissible than the Delta variant and contains many mutations that raised concern for reduced vaccine effectiveness.

Oregon Health Authority is monitoring Omicron closely.

Oregon has one of the most robust variant surveillance systems in the United States.

As we learn more, we will quickly share information on how you can best protect yourself and keep your loved ones and your community safe.

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