



Guidance on vaccinated individuals visiting other vaccinated individuals in a household setting:

Version 1.0

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This guidance is for those who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. It has been informed by:

1. the [ECDC Technical Report](#) “Risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission from newly infected individuals with documented previous infection or vaccination”
2. the [CDC Science Brief](#) “Background Rationale and Evidence for Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People”.

This guidance is for visits in a household setting and applies only to people who are fully vaccinated.

This guidance does not apply to the healthcare setting, workplace or residential care facilities.

Individuals are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 as follows and as set out [here](#)

- 15 days after the second AstraZeneca dose
- 7 days after the second Pfizer-BioNTech dose
- 14 days after the second Moderna dose

Summary of evidence

There is evidence that vaccines are highly effective in protecting individuals who are fully vaccinated against symptomatic infection and severe disease. At this time, however, there is a lack of robust evidence on transmission of COVID-19 from fully vaccinated individuals to susceptible individuals.

The ECDC Report provides a summary of the available scientific evidence on the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission to susceptible contacts from infected individuals with documented previous infection

or vaccination. It is intended to support countries in producing their own guidance. ECDC notes however that the evidence was generated before the variants started circulating widely and therefore conclusions may be revised as more data becomes available in the future. [The CDC scientific brief](#) says that a growing body of evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and potentially less likely to transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others. CDC recommends that fully vaccinated people can visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing. For further summary information on these reports, see Appendix A.

The evidence suggests that the risks are likely to be low if fully vaccinated persons visit each other in a household setting, without other non-vaccinated persons being present.

Recommendations

1. Fully vaccinated asymptomatic people can visit other fully vaccinated asymptomatic people (from one other household only) in a household setting without wearing masks or physical distancing
2. Fully vaccinated persons **should not visit a household setting** where there are unvaccinated persons present.
3. Fully vaccinated people should continue to take precautions in all other settings, such as hand hygiene, physical distancing and wearing a well-fitted mask where indicated. Fully vaccinated people must also continue to follow all other public health restrictions along with the rest of the population.
4. If a fully vaccinated person has any symptoms of COVID-19 they must not visit others, including vaccinated people. They must self-isolate and seek medical assessment and testing for COVID-19.

These recommendations do not apply if any of the vaccinated asymptomatic people have travelled internationally within the previous 14 days, or if they have had contact with a person with a variant of concern (VOC). In these circumstances, visiting is not permitted.

Appendix A

ECDC Report

Transmission

The available evidence of COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness against transmission of SARS-CoV-2 is still limited. As per the ECDC Technical Report, only one study was identified that directly investigated and reported on the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccine against transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to susceptible contacts from vaccinated cases [1]. Findings from this study were “consistent with a substantial reduction in transmission risk from fully-vaccinated individuals to susceptible contacts”.

Ongoing and upcoming studies should add further evidence regarding transmission between fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals in the coming months. There are ongoing healthcare workers’ household studies in the UK. Household studies are also planned in Israel, involving close family contacts of vaccinated individuals.

Infection in Vaccinated Individuals

COVID-19 vaccines do not confer sterilising immunity to all individuals. Hence, vaccinated individuals might still be able to transmit SARS-CoV-2 infection to susceptible contacts.

There is evidence that vaccination significantly reduces infection in vaccinated individuals. A limited number of vaccine studies with prospective follow-up show reduced viral load and duration of virus shedding among vaccine recipients compared to placebo groups. Viral load is thought to be a leading indicator of SARS-CoV-2 transmission [2]. It is not currently known if these observed reductions in viral load and duration of shedding actually reduce transmission.

However, the ECDC report acknowledges the **limitations** below:

- The review was based on emerging evidence, much of it from the pre-print, non-peer reviewed literature.
- Vaccines have only been developed and tested very recently. Hence, there is limited data available regarding transmission.
- The situation concerning VOCs is evolving rapidly. Much of the evidence collected and presented here was generated before the variants started circulating widely and therefore conclusions may be revised as more data becomes available in the future.

CDC Science Brief

The CDC has produced [guidance](#) for fully vaccinated people based on their Science Brief. This guidance makes three recommendations for fully vaccinated people in non-healthcare settings.

Fully vaccinated people can:

- visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors, without wearing masks or physical distancing
- refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic.

The CDC notes that “the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection in fully vaccinated people cannot be completely eliminated in the setting of continued widespread community transmission of the virus. Vaccinated people could potentially still become infected and spread the virus to others. However, the benefits of avoiding disruptions such as unnecessary quarantine and social isolation may outweigh these potential residual risks. A balanced approach to phasing out certain prevention measures may be a powerful motivator for vaccination, and thus should be an important goal of the U.S. vaccination program.”

References:

1: Shah AS, Gribben C, Bishop J, Hanlon P, Caldwell D, Wood R, et al. Effect of vaccination on transmission of COVID-19: an observational study in healthcare workers and their households. medRxiv [Preprint]. 2021. DOI: 10.1101/2021.03.11.21253275. Available at: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.03.11.21253275v1>

2: Marks M, Millat-Martinez P, Ouchi D, Roberts Ch, Alemany A, Corbacho-Monné M, et al. Transmission of COVID-19 in 282 clusters in Catalonia, Spain: a cohort study. The Lancet Infectious Diseases [Preprint]. 2021. DOI: 10.1016/S1473-3099(20)30985-3. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1473309920309853>