

# COVID Variants

## What Are They & What's The Big Deal?

### What is a variant?

**A virus is constantly changing its structure, especially the longer it circulates among a population.** Once a virus has one or more new mutations, or changes to its genetic code, it becomes a variant. Viral variants are not a new discovery. In fact, we see variants of the flu virus every year, which is why there is a new flu vaccine each season.

### What's the big deal?

**Most variants do not cause major concern and are simply monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).** However, there are variants that cause a lot of trouble for the population including:

- More severe illness
- Increased ability to spread from person to person

### What can I do?



#### GET VACCINATED

If you have not been vaccinated for COVID-19, you can still protect yourself and get the vaccine. It lowers your risk of getting, spreading, or becoming seriously ill.



#### GET BOOSTED

If you have already been vaccinated, increase your protection against COVID and its variants by getting your booster. Boosters increase your immune response and help prevent severe disease.



#### STAY CAUTIOUS

Continue to wear a mask in public and practice social distancing and proper handwashing. If you have symptoms, call your doctor to determine next steps and call your dialysis facility to determine the safest way to dialyze.

**FIND A VACCINE  
NEAR YOU:**

Call: 1-800-232-0233

Text your zip code to: 438829

Visit: [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov)

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

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