

COVID-19 VACCINE NEWS YOU CAN USE

January 20, 2021

New Perspective

To keep you well informed, over the coming weeks, you can expect to regularly receive an issue of Vaccine News You Can Use from us. We'll be sharing the latest vaccine news and updates, answering your questions, and dispelling myths and rumors about the vaccines. We'll also be sending around letters, videos, tips, and answers to frequently asked questions as we orchestrate vaccination for our residents and team members.

THE HEADLINE

Data suggests that the current vaccines will protect against COVID-19 variants.

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

What is a variant?

- Viruses constantly change through mutation. Most of us are familiar that the flu virus changes from year-to-year.
- New variants of a virus are expected to occur over time. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants emerge and persist. Public health experts have always expected COVID-19 variants to emerge.

What do we currently know about the COVID-19 variants?

- Variants emerging from the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Nigeria have been detected in numerous countries around the world, including the United States.
- The detected variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, but there is currently no evidence that any of these variants causes more severe illness or increased risk of death.
- Previously having COVID-19 may not protect you from the COVID-19 variants recently detected in the United States, whereas the vaccines are believed to be effective against the known variants.

Do tests for COVID-19 detect the variants?

- The FDA is taking additional actions to ensure authorized tests remain accurate by working with test developers and evaluating all currently authorized COVID-19 tests.
- The FDA has stated that the risk that these mutations will impact overall testing accuracy is low.

Are the current vaccines effective against the COVID-19 variants?

- Public health experts, including the FDA and NIH, believe that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are effective against the detected COVID-19 variants.
- On January 8, vaccine makers announced the results of a study regarding vaccine effectiveness against variants. The findings read, "We found that the mutation does not compromise the neutralizing activity of the vaccine."

If you have questions about Vaccine News You Can Use, please reach out to your executive director.