

this issue

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The virus is changing

Scientists know that viruses survive and thrive by multiplying. If they can't multiply, they die away.

Covid-19 multiplies best in the noses, mouths, throats, and lungs of human beings.

This virus spreads through air, so as we breathe near each other, we give the virus new places to multiply.

When viruses multiply, they can change and become more dangerous.

That is happening now with Covid-19. It is changing in ways that allow it to spread faster and maybe make people sicker.

The number of Covid cases from the holidays is finally coming down. But because of the new changes, (called *variants* or *mutations*) they could go back up again fast!



Best mask protection

Because the virus is changing, we need to continue to protect ourselves, our families, and community. This means being even more careful to mask, stay at least 6 ft away from people not in our household, and wash hands frequently. This is true even if you are vaccinated.

Now that the virus may spread even faster, scientists recommend that we **double mask**. One mask by itself can leak a lot of air and let the virus in and out. Doubling helps keep the inner mask tight around the nose and mouth. REMINDER: the nose must be covered!



Vaccination

- *Why is there such a rush to get people vaccinated?*

Once most of the population is vaccinated, the virus will not be able to spread and change.

- *I'm waiting to see how others do with the vaccine.*

So far, **more than 5 million** Californians have been vaccinated! Reactions to the vaccines have been extremely rare. Compare that with the 3 million Californians who have been infected with Covid with more than 10,000 hospitalized in intensive care each day. Over 45,000 died. The vaccines are highly effective – in the research studies, none of the people vaccinated were hospitalized or died due to Covid.

- *Why does it matter to anyone if I get vaccinated or not?*

If many people do not to get vaccinated, the virus has more chances to infect them, and to multiply and change. We get vaccinated not just for ourselves, but for our whole community.

- *How much does the vaccine cost?*

Nothing – the vaccine is free to everyone.



INFORMATION YOU CAN TRUST

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

California Department of Health Services

www.COVID19.CA.GOV

San Francisco Department of Public Health

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus.asp>



Vaccinations

- People age 65 and over are now eligible to get the vaccine in California. To find out if you are eligible, visit: <https://myturn.ca.gov/>
If you wait very long, other age groups will also be eligible, making it harder for older folks to get an appointment.
- Need help getting a vaccine appointment? visit: <https://www.vaccinateca.com/>
- Is the vaccine safe? <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/safety-of-vaccines.html>

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