

Key Messages - COVID-19 Vaccine Breakthroughs

- COVID-19 vaccines are effective. However, a small percentage of people who are fully vaccinated will still get COVID-19 if they are exposed to the virus that causes it. These are called “vaccine breakthrough cases.”
- A vaccine breakthrough case of COVID-19 is when a person tests positive 14 or more days after their final dose of vaccine, and the person has not previously tested positive for COVID-19.
- It is normal to see a percent of vaccinated people still get sick—no vaccine is 100% effective.
- Vaccine breakthrough can happen with any vaccine and is not a measure of efficacy. Rather, it’s an indicator of the progression of disease in relationship to vaccination rates and other factors.
- Vaccination continues to be the best prevention measure against COVID-19. There are many benefits to vaccination.
- Vaccination can make illness less severe in people who get vaccinated but still get sick. Despite this, some fully vaccinated people will still be hospitalized and die. However, fully vaccinated people are much less likely to be hospitalized or die than people with similar risk factors who are not vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough data

- COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases have been uncommon. Less than 0.2% of people who were fully vaccinated, meaning 14 days since their final dose, later became infected with the virus.
 - In other words, 99.8% of people fully vaccinated have not gotten COVID-19.
- COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths among people who were fully vaccinated are even less common with 0.02% of people who were fully vaccinated being hospitalized and 0.002% of them dying of COVID-19.
- We identify COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases by matching Minnesota case records (people who test positive for COVID-19) with Minnesota vaccination records. We also receive and follow up on reports from health care providers, long term care, and corrections.
- We are studying COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases to better understand what is happening in Minnesota and better fight the virus.