

Dear Team,

In the present times, we are inundated with social media hype and news from multiple channels about the latest Coronavirus Variant, i.e. Omicron. By now we have already been informed that some variants are of 'Concern' and some are of 'Interest' and none have been of 'Consequence' yet.

At the same time we are receiving information about the importance of getting vaccinated, and may even come across news reports or social media 'viral messages' that tell us that the current vaccines are not as effective against the variants.

All of this is confusing and conflicting no doubt. So what is one supposed to do? What does a common person make of all of this hullabaloo? Each time a new variant crops up, there is panic and indiscriminate over reaction all around!

**Firstly**, keep in mind that the single important principle of pandemic control is "we all will be safe, when everyone is safe!" Hence to **vaccinate** with whatever are the vaccines that are available presently, is the only logical choice we have at this juncture. Especially, those at higher risk; along with adherence to **COVID Appropriate Behaviour**.

**Next**, we must remind ourselves that 'some' protection is better than 'no' protection. Hence, while there may be reduced efficacy of existing vaccines against variants of the coronavirus, all evidence is still pointing to the unassailable fact that vaccines are definitely providing protection against severe disease.

**About a Booster Dose:** whether we may require a booster shot, or may require another vaccine altogether, only time shall tell. Scientists are still analysing the existing and evolving evidence, and will soon reach a consensus on timing of a booster dose (if at all). Let us believe in science for now, and leave conjecture for another time.

In the meantime, also continue to practice COVID Appropriate Behaviour, irrespective of whether you have been vaccinated or not, and whether you have been infected in the past or not. Your health is indeed, in your hands.

### **Bottomline**

*Vaccinate, Don't Hesitate! Existing coronavirus vaccines provide protection against severe disease, even for Variants of Concern. Don't rush to get a booster dose, without waiting for evidence to settle and for official governmental guidelines for the same.*

Please do share the following info sheet with your family, friends and colleagues. And do suitably translate and convey verbally to those around you who will benefit from it.

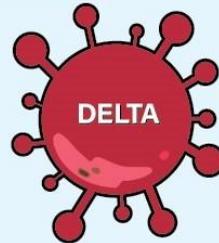
Stay safe!



# Coronavirus Vaccines and the Variants An update on effectiveness!

All viruses - including SARS-CoV-2 evolve over time 'mutations' and this results in 'variants'.

## SARS-Cov-2 Variants of Concern



COVID-19 vaccines that are currently in development or have been approved are expected to provide at least **some protection against new virus variants**, because these vaccines elicit a broad immune response, involving a range of antibodies and cells.

Changes or mutations in the virus will not make existing vaccines completely ineffective.

Scientists across the world are closely monitoring coronavirus mutations and studies are underway to study vaccine effectiveness against the variants.



With the current state of scientific expertise, if any of these vaccines prove to be less effective against one or more variants, it will be possible to change the composition of the vaccines to protect us against these variants.

For those already vaccinated, it may imply a booster dose with an updated vaccine, if it is found that there is less efficacy against variants.

**Time. Patience. Science. Common Sense.**

## Recognise the risk!

Coronavirus transmission modalities are known to all of us by now.

**Stay away from Crowds, Crowded Places and Close Contact.**

COVID Appropriate Behaviour with vaccination is what will keep us safe.



Keep hands clean & cover coughs & sneezes



Avoid crowded places & limit in enclosed spaces



When possible, open windows & doors for ventilation

Vaccines are a critical tool in the battle against COVID-19, and there are clear public health and life-saving benefits to using the tools we already have.

You must not put off getting vaccinated because of your concerns about new variants, and you must proceed with vaccination even if the vaccines may be somewhat less effective against some of the COVID-19 virus variants.

**We are all safe only if everyone is safe.**