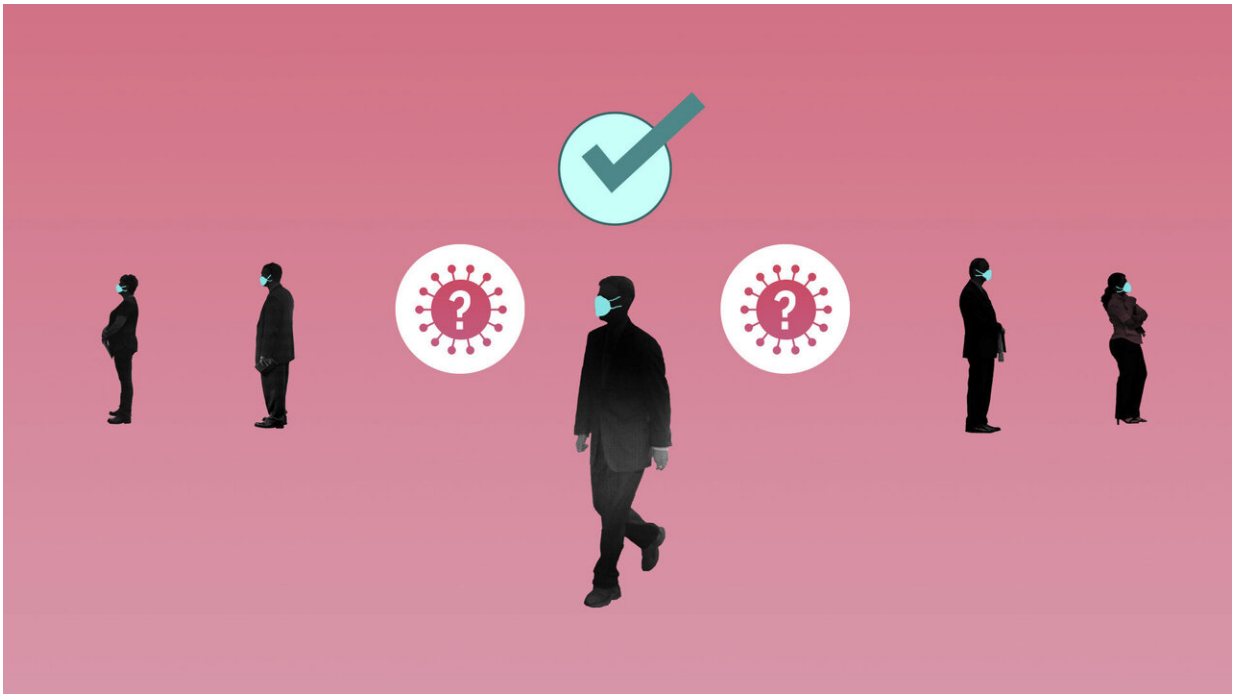


Can I still spread the coronavirus after I'm vaccinated?

April 1 2021, by Marion Renault



Can I still spread the coronavirus after I'm vaccinated? (AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin)

Can I still spread the coronavirus after I'm vaccinated?

It's possible. Experts say the risk is low, but are still studying how well the shots blunt the spread of the virus.

The current vaccines are highly effective at preventing people from getting seriously sick with COVID-19.

But even if vaccinated people don't get sick, they might still get infected without showing any symptoms. Experts think the [vaccine](#) would also curb the chances of those people spreading the virus.

"A vaccinated person controls the virus better, so the chances of transmitting will be greatly reduced," said Dr. Robert Gallo a virus [expert](#) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Among the evidence so far: Studies suggesting if people do get infected despite vaccination, they harbor less [coronavirus](#) in the nose than the unvaccinated. That makes it harder to spread.

Trying to settle the question, the U.S. is starting a study of college students willing to undergo daily nasal swab testing.

Given the uncertainty and the arrival of more contagious variants, experts say fully vaccinated people should continue to wear masks and social distance in public and when visiting with unvaccinated people at high risk for [severe illness](#) if infected.

"We still have to be cautious," Gallo said. "The vaccine is essential. But it is not a cure-all that ends the epidemic tomorrow."

Other factors can also affect the likelihood of a vaccinated person spreading the [virus](#), including vaccination rates in the community and whether there's an ongoing surge in cases locally.

"We want to think it's all or none, but it's very situation-specific," said Dr. Laraine Lynn Washer, an infectious disease expert at the University of Michigan.

More information: [I got the COVID-19 vaccine. What can I safely do?](#)

[Will the coronavirus ever go away?](#)

[When will children be able to get COVID-19 vaccines?](#)

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