

Why it's a bad idea to try to get COVID

January 5 2022



(HealthDay)—COVID-19 infection isn't a game, and you shouldn't try to get it on purpose—not even the supposedly "mild" Omicron variant of the virus.

It's a high-risk strategy for yourself, for [public health](#) and the economy, medical experts agreed.

"You'd be crazy to try to get infected with this," said Dr. Robert Murphy, executive director of the Havey Institute for Global Health at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.

Murphy said [people](#) have called him and asked why they shouldn't just go out and try to get the virus, to get it over with.

"You don't know the long-term effects of the virus, even if you've been vaccinated," Murphy said in a school news release. "Some people are genetically predisposed to having worse disease.

"It's like playing with dynamite. Who needs that risk?" Murphy said.

Reports referring to the highly transmissible [Omicron](#) variant as being mild are fueling a sense of hopelessness about stopping transmission, said Mercedes Carnethon, vice chair of preventive medicine at the medical school.

"A more precise definition is that there appears to be less lung damage with infection from Omicron, and vaccinated people tolerate it very well," Carnethon said in the release.

"However, with rates of hospitalizations rising, there are a great number of people who aren't doing well with this 'mild' variant," she said. "The vast majority of those people hospitalized are unvaccinated; however, some of those cannot be vaccinated or are immune-compromised. Thus, the impact is substantial."

People who are paid by the hour are losing income over the spread of Omicron, Carnethon added. She recalled a time when she was in a

testing center next to a woman crying over a positive test result because she wasn't going to be paid if she couldn't go back to work.

"The social and economic implications are substantial and potentially damaging as people lose their livelihoods for short periods of time," Carnethon said.

To stay safe, Murphy recommends getting an [N95 mask](#) or wearing double [surgical masks](#) and staying 3 to 6 feet away from others.

"Make sure everyone takes a rapid COVID-19 test prior to an event or meeting with others," said Murphy. That's true even with a small group of vaccinated, boosted people if you are going to be maskless.

Although cloth [masks](#) are not as effective as surgical masks, they do have some protective effect if they have multiple layers, Murphy said.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [more on COVID-19](#).

Copyright © 2021 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Why it's a bad idea to try to get COVID (2022, January 5) retrieved 8 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-01-bad-idea-covid.html>

| |
|--|
| <p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p> |
|--|