

# When will you get COVID again? If you haven't had the new Omicron yet, it could be any day now

Erin Prater

By now we know it. **COVID is, unfortunately, not a “one and done” thing.** Those who had the original strain of COVID were able to be reinfected with Delta. Those who had Delta were able to be reinfected with Omicron. And now, this: **If you've had COVID in the past but haven't had Omicron subvariants BA.5 or BA.4, coming down with one of the two is possible, if not likely—even if you've had another version of Omicron in the past,** experts tell *Fortune*.

In the early days of the pandemic, reinfections were reported as a rare phenomenon. **Now it's clear they are an inevitable fact of pandemic life—especially with new, more transmissible, increasingly immune-evading** variants evolving on the regular.

*Fortune* reported in May that you can expect to get COVID about once every year, based on modeling projections. At that time, the dominant variants in the U.S. were BA.2—or “stealth Omicron,” nicknamed for its ability to evade detection on PCR tests—and its spin-off BA.2.12.1. Just two months later, BA.2 has been all but banished by **stealth Omicron** spin-off **BA.5** along with its close sibling, BA.4. These are thought to be the most transmissible versions of COVID yet, with the ability to evade immunity from both prior infection and vaccination. It's a whole new ballgame for reinfection, experts say,

Those who had the original Omicron, BA.1, were unlikely to get reinfected with BA.2 because they were enough alike, says Dr. Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security. **But someone who had a previous version of Omicron is “very likely” to get reinfected with BA.4 or BA.5, he says.**

[Story continues](#)

# New Omicron subvariants are causing COVID rates to increase. These are the states where it's most contagious right now

Andrew Marquardt

COVID cases are on the rise again in many U.S. states, as new immune-evading Omicron subvariants are now dominating worldwide. **BA.4 and BA.5**, two of the newest versions of the so-called “**stealth Omicron**” variant that swept the U.S. this spring, have been circulating across the globe for months, thanks to their **ability to evade immunity from both prior infection and vaccination.** Last week, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced that **BA.5 had officially become the most dominant strain in the country, accounting for an estimated 54% of new COVID infections** in the previous week. Overall, the U.S. is averaging 107,533 new cases per day, a 5% increase over the last two weeks, according to data compiled by *The New York Times*. Hospitalizations from COVID are up as well across the country, with a daily average of **37,472 hospitalizations**—an **18% increase over two weeks ago**, according to the *Times'* data. And experts predict that the official tally of new cases is likely a severe undercount, as Americans are increasingly using at-home COVID tests and not reporting their results, if they're even aware they have the virus. Many states have closed testing sites altogether.

*“There's no question in my mind that we're missing a vast majority of infections right now,”* said White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Ashish Jha on NBC last week. *“The truth is, there are probably several hundred thousand, **four or five hundred thousand, infections** today happening across the country.”*

Now, a **new and potentially more immune-evading subvariant—BA.2.75, dubbed “Centaurus”** by some on Twitter—has arrived in the U.S. and approximately 10 other countries so far, further elevating expert’s concerns.

With cases steadily rising, here’s a look at the U.S. states that are experiencing some of the biggest upticks in COVID cases in the last two weeks.

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