

Omicron Symptoms Usually Appear Like This

Michael Martin

The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has surged worldwide in record time—it was only three weeks ago that the first case was identified in South Africa. Last week, it accounted for 73% of new COVID infections in the United States, according to the latest CDC data. It's highly contagious—scientists estimate it's twice as transmissible as the Delta variant, which itself was twice as transmissible as the original COVID strain—which calls for an abundance of caution. How do you know if you've been infected with Omicron, how severe is it, and what should you do? Read on to find out more—and to ensure your health and the health of others, don't miss these **Sure Signs You've Already Had COVID.**

1. These May Be The Primary Symptoms of Omicron

The prominent symptoms of an Omicron infection are:

- Cough
- Fatigue or tiredness
- Congestion and runny nose

Unlike previous variants, loss **of taste and smell seems to be uncommon**, she said.

2. Omicron Symptoms In Country Where It Originated

An Omicron infection often develop

- scratchy or sore throat
- nasal congestion
- dry cough
- muscle pain, especially low back pain

3. Symptoms May Vary Based on Vaccination Status

Experts tentatively say that Omicron seems to be producing milder symptoms than previous variants. "It is clear that if you're vaccinated, particularly if you've had a booster, Omicron tends to produce milder infections," Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center," told NBC. "What we haven't seen yet is a substantial body of information about what Omicron will do in unvaccinated people," he added.

4. But Research Isn't Conclusive

But experts warn that more data needs to be gathered before it can be conclusively said that Omicron causes different symptoms. "It's still too early to say that there's any difference in symptoms between the Omicron variant and previous versions," Ashley Z. Ritter, an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania told the *New York Times* on Wednesday.

5. Another Potential Difference

Early data indicates that Omicron's incubation period—the time it takes for an infected person to develop symptoms after exposure to the virus—may be significantly shorter than with previous variants: Previously, it was about a week, while Omicron may develop in three days or less.

6. Other Common COVID Symptoms

According to the CDC, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

7. Is It Omicron?

So how do you tell if your cough or sore throat is a cold or COVID? You really can't, experts say.

Their advice: If you're having any symptoms that are out of the ordinary, get tested for COVID ASAP—even if you've been fully vaccinated or boosted—and self-isolate until you know the results.

"Even if you think it's just allergies, it would be best for you to go ahead and get a COVID test and make sure you don't have it before you go to work or school or church, because those symptoms can be very mild," said S. Wesley Long, medical director of diagnostic microbiology at Houston Methodist hospital, this week.

If you test positive for COVID, the CDC advises that you isolate for 10 days after the date any symptoms started (as long as your symptoms are improving and you've been fever-free for at least 24 hours without using any fever-reducing medications). If you test positive but don't have symptoms, you should isolate for 10 days from the date of your COVID test.

8. How to Stay Safe Out There

Follow the fundamentals and help end this pandemic, no matter where you live—get vaccinated ASAP; if you live in an area with low vaccination rates, wear an N95 face mask, don't travel, social distance, avoid large crowds, don't go indoors with people you're not sheltering with (especially in bars), practice good hand hygiene, and to protect your life and the lives of others, don't visit any of these **35 Places You're Most Likely to Catch COVID**