

What You Need to Know about the Delta Variant

Lisa Allgood, our trusted immunocytochemist and Executive Presbyter for Cincinnati Presbytery offers another update for us:

I've gotten notes or spoken to several pastors who are dealing with upcoming Session meetings about masks and the Delta variant and vaccines. A few things to consider:

- The Delta variant is in all 50 states and currently makes up more than 50% of new cases in the US and 80% of new cases in the Midwest
- The Delta variant is 60% more infectious than the original variant Alpha, and about twice as infectious (200%) as the original virus. That means it has and will continue to spread very rapidly, particularly in unvaccinated people.
- Those who have both doses of an mRNA vaccine are more than 80% covered against Delta. Those who only have one shot are about 30% covered. The J&J shot is also effective at about 65% coverage.
- The Delta variant has shown that it can evade certain elements of the vaccine.
- New COVID cases in the US are above 20,000 per week for the past several weeks. Hospitalizations and deaths are also increasing in 42 states.
- 99% of deaths are in unvaccinated people.
- The Delta variant has infected some vaccinated individuals. Generally symptoms are mild, but they can still be infectious.
- Globally, although this varies greatly by country and region, 12% have received one dose and 25% have received two doses.
- Spikes are beginning globally, again primarily in unvaccinated individuals.

CDC guidance continues to require masks for unvaccinated individuals and recommends all people stay masked when gathering with people indoors who are not family.

Stay safe and be blessed! Lisa