OMICRON: WHAT WE KNOW

What is the Omicron variant?
Viruses, like the one causing COVID-19, are always changing. A big change is called a variant. Some variants can be more dangerous and/or spread more easily. Omicron is a variant that spreads easily.

How can you protect yourself and your family?
The best way to protect yourself, family and community from COVID-19 is to wear a mask and have everyone 5 years and older in your family fully vaccinated as soon as possible. Those not vaccinated are much more likely to get infected with a variant, get seriously ill, and spread it to others.

What about boosters?
Scientists have found that with some vaccines a person’s protection decreases over time, and a booster shot helps them stay protected. COVID-19 boosters may also help protect you from new variants. You should get a booster if it has been:

- more than 6 months since your second dose of a two-shot vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer)
- 2 months since your first dose of a one-shot vaccine (Johnson & Johnson)
- More than 6 months since your last dose of a vaccine you got in another country

More ways to keep yourself and others safe:

- Wearing masks
- Practicing social/physical distancing
- Avoiding large gatherings
- Washing hands frequently
- Staying home when sick
- Getting tested immediately for COVID-19 if you have symptoms

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