How Long do COVID-19 Vaccines Protect Against Omicron?

Vaccine effectiveness is how well the vaccine works in the real world.

Key Facts

COVID-19 vaccines are less effective against Omicron than other variants.

After the primary vaccination series:
- Protection against severe disease, like hospitalization and ICU admission, declines some over 6 months.
- Protection against symptomatic disease drops quickly.

After a booster shot:
- Protection against severe disease improves substantially but declines some over 6 months.
- Protection against symptomatic disease improves substantially but then drops quickly.

Evidence in this brief was provided by VIEW-hub, a publicly available resource made possible by support from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the World Health Organization. Additional COVID-19 vaccine briefs are available here.
Summary of Vaccine Effectiveness of 5 widely used vaccines
Vaccine effectiveness is how well the vaccine works in the real world

Average Vaccine Effectiveness Across 5 widely used vaccines

Severe Disease

Symptomatic Disease

Vaccine Effectiveness against SEVERE DISEASE:
Protection DECLINES SOME over time
• After the primary series, vaccine effectiveness against severe disease across all vaccines and all ages decreased on average by 8 percentage points over 6 months.
• After the booster dose, vaccine effectiveness improved to ~88% on average initially and then declined to ~75% over 6 months.

Vaccine Effectiveness against SYMPTOMATIC DISEASE:
Protection WANES rapidly
• After the primary series, vaccine effectiveness against symptomatic disease declined on average by 49 percentage points over 6 months.
• After the booster dose, vaccine effectiveness was restored back to peak levels initially, but then declined at a substantial, though somewhat slower, rate than after the primary series.

Vaccines Studied
Results are based on thirty studies that assessed the following COVID-19 vaccines: Comirnaty (Pfizer BioNTech), Spikevax (Moderna), Ad26.CoV2.S (Janssen), Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca), and CoronaVac (Sinovac). Study details and methods are available here. See also the publication in The Lancet Infectious Diseases for additional details on analysis methods.
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How good is the duration of protection from COVID-19 vaccination against Omicron compared to earlier strains of COVID-19 and compared to other commonly used vaccines?

PRE-OMICRON COVID-19 vaccines were, on average, more effective against earlier strains of the virus and the speed of decline in effectiveness was generally less pronounced (a study in *The Lancet* provides a good summary of the duration of protection after vaccination pre-Omicron).

COMPAARED TO MEASLES AND PERTUSSIS VACCINES COVID-19 vaccine protection against symptomatic disease and infection declines quickly compared to measles and pertussis vaccines, which provide protection over many years. But, it has yet to be seen how long protection against severe disease is maintained.

**SPECIFIC VACCINES:** Limited or no data are available on the duration of protection for inactivated and protein subunit vaccines. Particularly, no data are available for BBIBP-CorV (Sinopharm) and Covaxin (Bharat BioTech).

**BOOSTER DOSE:** Beyond 5 months, we’re not sure how long boosters protect against Omicron.

**PAST INFECTION:** Having had COVID-19 infection, with or without COVID-19 vaccination, provides some protection against re-infection and symptomatic disease and better protection against severe disease, but we’re not sure how long this protection lasts.

**OLDER ADULTS:** Only 2 of the studies analyzed, both of severe disease, evaluated protection in older adults but both showed similar protection and duration of protection as the general population.