What is herd immunity?

Herd immunity happens when most of the people in a community are immune to an infectious disease, meaning they can be exposed to someone who has the disease and not get sick. People can become immune either by having the disease or by **getting vaccinated**.

Facts about herd immunity

- For a disease like COVID-19, herd immunity makes it **harder for the virus to find someone** to make sick.
- Vaccinating a lot of people is **the best way** to get this immunity.
- It will **protect people who can't get the vaccine**, such as people who are too young, have weak immune systems, or have an allergy to the vaccine.
- Some people can still get sick even with herd immunity. The **risk of outbreaks** is higher in areas **where fewer people** get the vaccine.
- Studies will continue to help us **learn more** about COVID-19 **over time**.

Get your vaccine

- The COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to be **safe and effective** at preventing serious illness.
- The **more people** who get a COVID-19 vaccine, the **better** it will be for everyone.
- It is not known how long a person stays immune after they have recovered from COVID-19 or received a vaccine.

Until we reach herd immunity

- Continue to **wear a mask inside and outside** when you are around people not in your own household.
- Stay **at least 6 feet apart** from other people.
- **Keep away** from large crowds.
- Wash your hands **often**.
- Get the COVID-19 vaccine **when it's your turn**.

Virginia's goal to help achieve herd immunity is to **vaccinate everyone who wants a vaccine and is eligible** to receive it and at least **75% of people aged 16 years or older**.

Sign up for your **free** COVID-19 vaccine. Learn more at **Vaccinate.Virginia.gov** or call **877-VAX-IN-VA**.

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