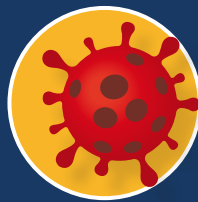


# How can you stay safe from COVID-19 variants



**Multiple variants** of the virus that cause COVID-19 have been identified in the United States and globally during this pandemic, **including in Virginia.**

## What you need to know:



- These COVID-19 variants **spread more rapidly** and might cause **more severe** illness
- Rapid spread could lead to **more cases, more deaths, and could overwhelm hospitals and healthcare resources**
- The more the COVID-19 virus circulates, the greater the chances that new mutations or variants can arise/develop
- **A variant** could arise that could **make** current **vaccines less effective**

It's more important than ever to keep taking steps to protect yourself and others.

## Masks can help stop variants

Public health recommendations (such as wearing a mask) will help slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, including new variants.

- Wear your mask properly so that it covers **both your nose and mouth**
- Choose a fabric mask with **multiple layers of tightly woven fabric**
- Make sure your **mask fits snugly** with no gaps
- **Knot and tuck ear loops** of a 3-ply mask for a better fit



## Keep yourself and others safe

To keep the pandemic from going on longer, prevention measures need to be continued.

- **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**



Sign up for your **free** COVID-19 vaccine. Learn more at [Vaccinate.Virginia.gov](https://www.vaccinate.virginia.gov) or call **877-VAX-IN-VA.**



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