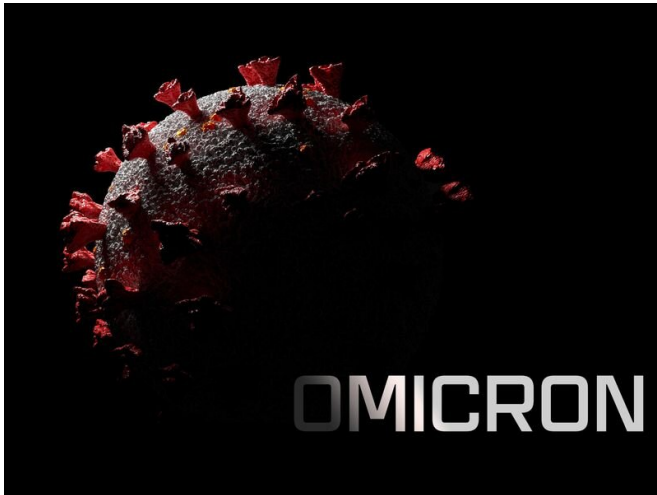


# Too soon to tell if Omicron will end pandemic, says Dr. Fauci

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It's too soon to determine whether Omicron's rapid spread will turn a pandemic virus into an endemic disease, America's top infectious disease expert says.

That "would only be the case if we don't get another variant that eludes the immune response to the prior variant," Dr. Anthony Fauci said this week during the Davos Agenda, a virtual event being held this week by the World Economic Forum, CNN reported.

An [endemic disease](#) is constantly present in a population but doesn't cause the massive numbers of infections or societal upheaval typically seen in a pandemic.

Because the Omicron variant is highly transmissible but appears less likely to cause [severe disease](#) than previous variants, there are suggestions that it could result in COVID-19 transitioning from a pandemic to an endemic situation, CNN reported.

"It is an open question as to whether or not Omicron is going to be the live virus vaccination that everyone is hoping for because you have such a great deal of variability with new variants emerging," Fauci said.

And doctors and experts warn that it's a bad idea for people to intentionally try to get Omicron, and that the fight against COVID-19 is far from over, CNN reported.

Facing critical staffing shortages, hospitals have treated more COVID-19 patients in recent weeks than ever. At least 156,676 COVID-19 patients in the United States were hospitalized on Monday, according to data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

According to data from Johns Hopkins University, 1 in 5 Americans have been infected with COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, with just over 680,000 daily cases reported yesterday. An average of 1,695 Americans died from COVID-19 every day over the past week.

**More information:** Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on the [Omicron variant](#).

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