



Vaccinated? “Yes”.

Does it Mean I Am Safe?

In a recent WHO “**Science in 5**” online talk, Dr Katherine O’Brien, Director of the immunisation, vaccines, and biologicals department at WHO, answered several pertinent questions on people’s immunity after they are vaccinated.

Q. WHEN DOES IMMUNITY KICK IN?

A. Right now, we have two-dose vaccines with a good immune response kicking in within two weeks of the first dose. After the second dose, the immunity will get even stronger in a shorter period.

Q. HOW LONG DOES VACCINATION IMMUNITY LAST?

A. We don’t know how long immunity lasts from these vaccines. We are currently tracing people who have received the vaccine to find out whether their immune response is durable and to see how long it lasts against the disease.

Q. AFTER YOU’VE BEEN VACCINATED CAN YOU STILL INFECT OTHERS?

A. The clinical trials demonstrated that these vaccines protect people against the disease. What we don’t know yet is whether they protect people from transmitting it to someone else (even if vaccinated person has no symptoms) which is an important part of our understanding around what these vaccines do.

Q. ONCE WE ARE VACCINATED, HOW LONG DO WE STILL NEED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS?

A. Until we fully understand what the vaccines can or can’t do, we need to take precautions. In some countries, there’s very broad transmission and in others, it’s totally out of control. It’s really going to depend on what communities and countries can do to crush the virus and the transmission. In that way, the vaccines can do their best job at preventing this disease.

The other danger is simply not having enough vaccines to protect everyone. So, we must continue wearing masks, physical distancing, sanitising, handwashing and not gathering in big groups. Only time will tell how long this will go on. Once we get broad vaccination in the community and know more about what the vaccine can do to prevent infection, we can slowly start taking our foot off the pedal. But right now, we just need to make sure this dreadful pandemic doesn’t escalate again.

Source: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-23---i-am-vaccinated-what-next>