

What do you think of when you hear the word mutation?

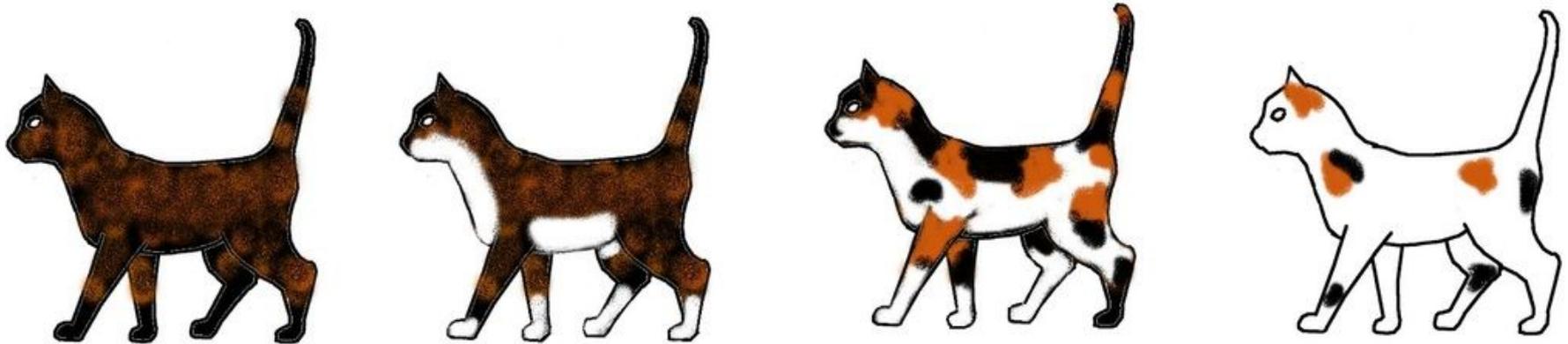


## Basically mutation is just a fancy word for saying something has changed

Sometimes when things change, it is a good thing

Sometimes, a mutation can be bad

Sometimes, it is not a big deal



**When viruses change or there is a mutation we end up with different kinds of a virus or we call it variants?**



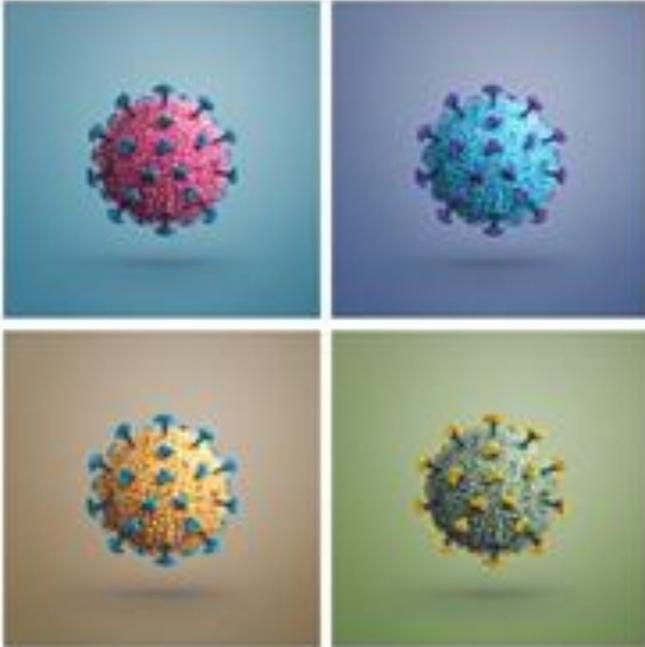
Variants are like  
snowflakes  
a little different  
a little the same

# What are variants?



Or another way to say it  
is Variants are like  
fingerprints  
a little different  
a little the same

# What are COVID-19 variants?

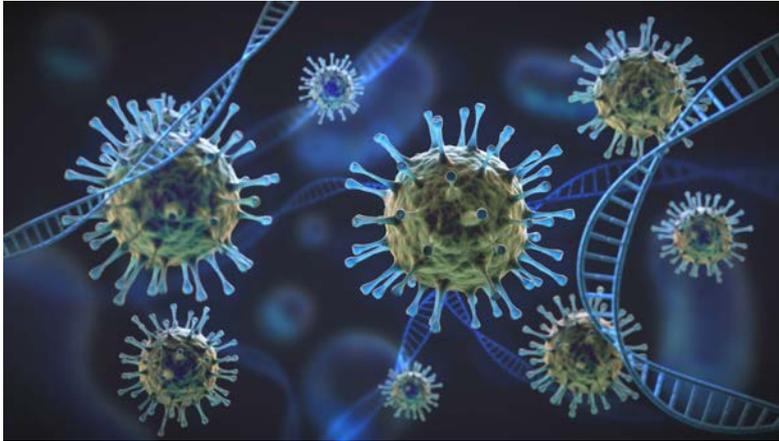


COVID-19 is a virus. Viruses change all the time. It is common for this to happen with a virus. For example, the flu is a virus and it changes each year.

A virus looks like a ball with spikes coming out of it.

There is more than one kind of COVID-19. The different kinds are called variants. They are a little the same and a little different.

# Viruses have DNA or Genetic Material



Genetic material - controls how a cell grows, how it acts, how it works, how it reacts and how it eventually dies.

## Here is how it works



The COVID virus is in one person.

They spit it out of their mouth and the virus wants to live. If it just floats around in the air it will eventually die.

The virus is kinda like a person or an animal. It needs to eat or it will die. So instead of going into a restaurant to get food like we would, it jumps to a new person where it can grow.

## Here is how it works



When it goes inside a person's body  
it mixes with the cells in the body  
And it grows or reproduces.

When it reproduces, sometimes it's sloppy .  
You don't get the exact same kind of virus.

When the virus grows or reproduces you can get  
something slightly different.

When it changes that is what we call a mutation.  
This happens all the time. It's typical.

# The best way to stop the pandemic is to get vaccinated



Think about it. If you are a virus you want to stay alive and are looking for a place you can grow.

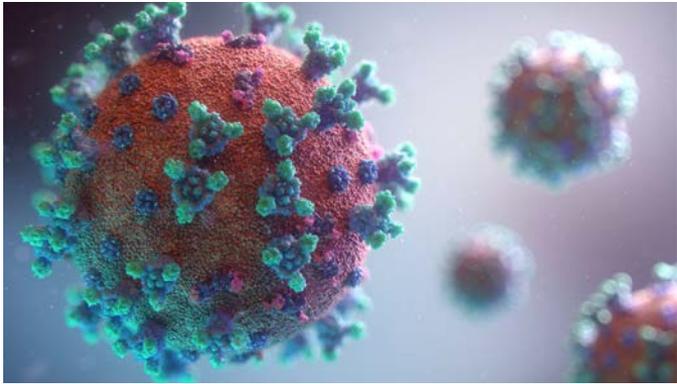
If you come to a body that is protected by a vaccine **and a Booster** - it will make it harder for the virus to grow inside your body. It is like saying to the virus "no" - this restaurant is closed. There is nothing for you to eat here.

## Getting a booster helps block the variants



A scientist from the University of Texas Medical Branch. "After the third dose of the vaccine, our antibody profile inside our body becomes more capable of blocking the variants," he says. "Our bodies create different antibodies that are much more able to push back on the variants." - NPR

# What are COVID-19 variants?



Scientists watch for changes in the virus, like changes in the spikes.

More than one kind of COVID-19 is going around the world. You might have heard in the news people talking about the Delta Variant and of course now they are talking about Omicron in the United States.

## Why do COVID-19 variants, like the Omicron Variant, matter?



It is important to know about COVID-19 variants. Some kinds of COVID-19 are easier to get. Some kinds of COVID can make people more sick than others.

## Why do COVID-19 variants, like the Omicron Variant, matter?



The Omicron Variant of COVID-19 can spread from person to person very easily. It is spreading quickly across the country.

People who did not get a vaccine are getting sick. In Vermont - check weekly numbers.

On December 1, 2021, more than 1,600 people from all states died from Covid-19.

# What vaccines



There are 3 kinds of COVID-19 vaccines. Two of the vaccines have two shots. They are called Moderna and Pfizer. One of the vaccines has one shot. It's called 'Johnson and Johnson' or 'J and J'.

# What are COVID-19 vaccine booster shots?



Scientists watch and test the vaccines to make sure they keep people safe over time. Now scientists found that people over the age of 18 who got a vaccine need another shot to stay safe because of the Delta Variant.

# What are COVID-19 vaccine booster shots?



This extra shot is called a booster shot. Over time your body needs more vaccine to keep fighting off the virus. Lots of other vaccines have booster shots, too. For example, you get a flu booster shot to keep you safe from the flu each year.

The COVID-19 booster shot is safe. It keeps you from getting very sick and dying from COVID-19.

## How do I know which COVID-19 booster shot to get?

You can get the same kind of shot for your booster. Or you can get a different one. Talk to your doctor if you need help deciding. You can check your vaccine card to see which kind you got before.

For your booster, you can get Pfizer or Moderna or Johnson and Johnson.

# Where can I get a COVID-19 booster shot?

You can get your COVID-19 booster shot at many places. You can go to doctor's office, pharmacies, like CVS or Walgreens. You can go to some grocery stores. Many states [will also come to your home to give you a vaccine](#). If you are not sure where to get your shot, you can:

1. Call the DIAL help line at 888-677-1199 for free help
2. Look online at [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov)
3. Ask a trusted family member, friend, support staff, or your doctor's office for help

## What will happen if I choose to not get a COVID-19 booster shot?

You might catch COVID-19 and get sick or spread it to other people.

The vaccine gave your body lots of protection from COVID-19. Over time, it wears out. It is like running low on gas. A booster shot is like filling up your tank. You need more vaccine to avoid getting COVID-19. The booster protects you from getting very sick and spreading COVID-19 to others.

For example, you get your flu shot each year to keep protection from getting sick from the flu.