

Key facts about the Delta variant & health anxiety

People across the UK are eagerly awaiting updates on the new Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus and how it will affect our plans to return to some form of normality. It has already started spreading in the UK which has triggered a new wave of anxiety for many people.

Beginning to understand more about the latest COVID-19 variant will help to reduce any anxiety you may be feeling. Below are some of the things we know about it so far.

What is the Delta Variant?

The Delta variant is a mutation of the COVID-19 virus. Mutations of viruses happen all the time so this is not unusual. Virus' can mutate multiple times a year and become different variations of the same virus and can sometimes be more or less contagious or dangerous.

It is not yet clear whether the Delta variant is more infectious or resistant to vaccines but experts don't think it is any worse than the variants previously detected in the UK and South Africa,

Will the vaccines still work?

Scientists believe that the vaccines will still be effective against the Delta variant by preventing severe disease and preventing further spread of the virus.

What are the Delta variant symptoms?

Delta variant symptoms are no different to the usual COVID-19 symptoms. Younger people who contract the virus have been reporting feeling as if they have a bit of a cold with symptoms such as:

- runny nose
- headache
- cough
- fever
- loss of smell or taste

How to help ease health anxiety

There are things we can do and some of these tips are quite straightforward to follow

- **Avoid sensationalised media outlets** – Filling yourself with sensationalised and doomsday like information will not help you deal with the anxiety around COVID-19.
- **Wash your hands** – Know that you're doing all you can to protect yourself from catching it.

- **Stay as active as you can within the restrictions** – Maintain a good life balance during lockdowns/social distancing.
- **Own your worry but don't succumb to it** – Accept that you are worried, trying to avoid it or suppress it will only make it worse.
- **Try not to seek unnecessary medical advice** – Try to remain relaxed and monitor the symptoms you have in line with guidance, if your symptoms worsen or you are concerned seek medical advice where needed.
- **Self-isolate** — but don't cut yourself off from the world, you need to feel like life is still moving. Being completely cut off will only magnify any health anxiety you may be feeling.

Health Anxiety is very real for many and living with it during the pandemic may be distressing. Care first is there to support you 24/7. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

Useful links

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-56844925>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-57431420>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-57467051>

More information

If you would like to view the Webinar on '**Key facts about the Delta variant & health anxiety**' this is being delivered live on **Tuesday 29th June at 12:00pm**, please use the following link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5739997569955631120>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.