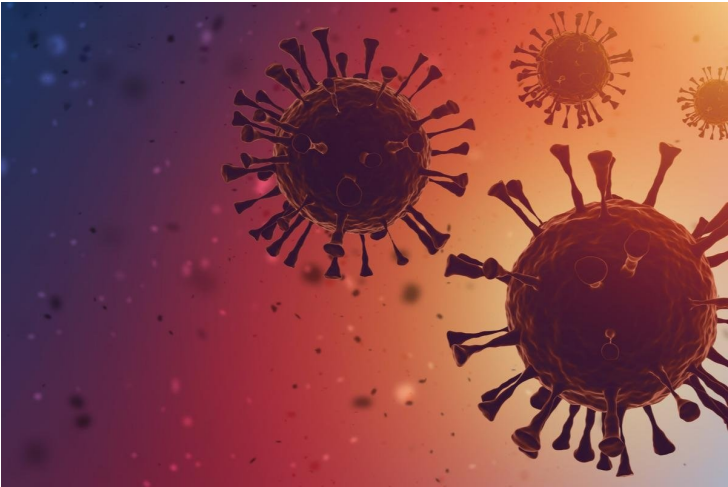


## Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation forecasts enormous spread of Omicron

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**Given the immune escape and transmissibility, eventually Omicron will reach all countries soon: IHME report**



Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), an independent global health research centre at the University of Washington has released a research report on Omicron, a variant of SARS-CoV-2.

Comparing the Omicron variant with the Delta variant IHME research says that the Omicron is more transmissible and with 40-60% immune escape combine to lead to rapid increases in reported case counts.

A much larger fraction of infections is symptomatic – likely up from 40% for Delta and prior variants to 90-95% for Omicron.

However, it also shared that based on the best available data, the infection-hospitalization rate is dramatically lower (note the infection-hospitalization rate is not the case-hospitalization rate), likely 90-96% lower than for Delta. The infection-fatality rate is dramatically lower, likely 97-99% lower than for Delta.

The research also forecasts around 3 billion infections to occur in the next 2 months. That's as many infections as was seen in the first 2 years of the pandemic.

Peak transmission should be in mid-January with over 35 million global infections a day, nearly three times the Delta wave peak in April.