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The Delta Covid Variant is Infecting Vaccinated People; None Yet Detected in USVI but It's Spreading in US

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The Covid-19 variant that was first detected in India has been spreading rapidly around the world — including in the U.S. — and new data emerging from Israel show the virus infecting people who have been vaccinated.

According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), about half of adults infected in an outbreak of the Delta variant of Covid-19 in Israel were fully inoculated with the Pfizer Inc. vaccine. This reality prompted the Israeli government to reimpose an indoor mask requirement and other measures to contain the highly transmissible strain.

WSJ said preliminary findings by Israeli health officials suggest about 90 percent of new infections were likely caused by the Delta variant, according to Ran Balicer, who leads an expert

advisory panel on Covid-19 for the government. Children under 16, most of whom haven't been vaccinated, accounted for about half of those infected, he said.

About a week ago, Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health said 20.6 percent of new cases in the U.S. were from the Delta variant, with other scientists projecting that the variant will become the dominant strain in the U.S.

"The Delta variant is currently the greatest threat in the U.S. to our attempt to eliminate Covid-19," Dr. Fauci said during a White House briefing on the virus on Tuesday.

Scientists say the Delta Covid strain, or B.1.617.2 variant, appears to have two advantages over earlier forms of the virus: it is more infectious and appears to be more effective at evading vaccines, though people who are fully vaccinated have significant protection against Covid.

In the U.S. Virgin Islands, health officials said they have identified [19 fully confirmed](#) cases of another strain: the U.K. variant (B.1.1.7.), and another 27 samples that tested positive for the U.K. strain in preliminary examinations were awaiting final results.

Speaking of the UK strain, the V.I. Dept. of Health said last week, "B.1.1.7 is estimated to be 40%–80% (with most estimates occupying the middle to higher end of this range) more transmissible than the wild-type SARS-CoV-2, the original strain," stated the health department. Fortunately, we do not have the Delta strain in the territory yet. It has been identified in Puerto Rico in a traveler."

As of Saturday, the territory had [46 active Covid cases](#): 27 on St. Thomas, 19 on St. Croix and none on St. John, according to D.O.H. data.