

Delta variant led to most post-vaccine infections in Delhi

Strain more transmissible: CSIR, NCDC

Cause for concern | B.1.617.2, also known as the 'Delta' variant of the coronavirus, is now the most dominant one in India

- It has **12 mutations in its spike protein compared to SARS-CoV-2**, which was first discovered in Wuhan, China

- There appeared to be **more ACE2 enzymes aiding the entry of coronaviruses** around these mutations L452R and T478K that characterised the variant



- A study by Public Health England showed that the **Pfizer and Astra-Zeneca vaccines were only 33% effective against symptomatic disease from B.1.617.2 three weeks after the first dose**, whereas they were 50% effective against B.1.1.7

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Variant Delta (B.1.617.2), the most pervasive variant of the coronavirus in India, constituted nearly three in four breakthrough infections in Delhi, according to a research study by scientists in Delhi. **The variant was also characterised by high transmissibility, an accelerated surge in infections and, the scientists say, "...prior infections, high seropositivity and partial vaccination were insufficient impediments to its spread."**

Breakthrough infections are instances of people testing positive for the virus after getting vaccinated.

The study is yet to be

peer-reviewed and appears as a pre-print and was authored by scientists at the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and the National Centre of Disease Control – two key labs of the Indian Sars Cov-2 Genomic Consortium (INSACOG) that tracks the emergence of key variants of the coronavirus.

In 27 instances of breakthrough infections analysed, the scientists found that **two lineages dominated. B.1.617.1 (Kappa) comprised 8%, Delta was 76% and the remaining linked to variants that belonged to broader "B.1 lineages".**

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8