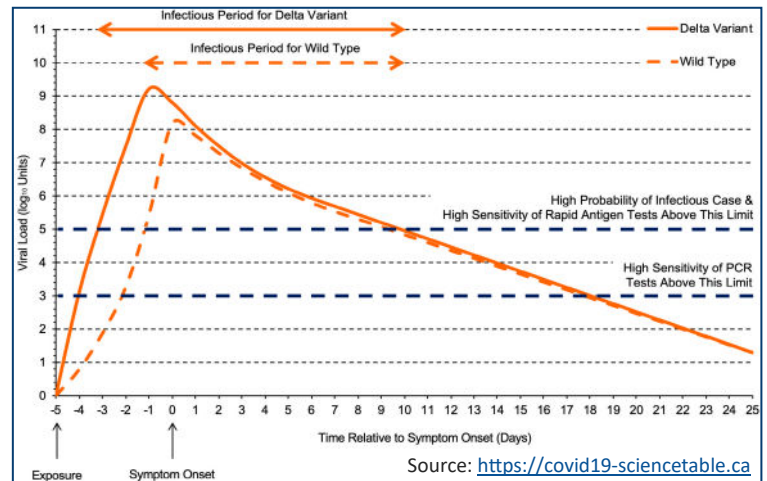


PROGRESSION OF VIRAL LOAD IN INDIVIDUALS INFECTED WITH THE DELTA VARIANT:

The amount of virus that builds up in someone's body is known as the viral load and could be used as a proxy to estimate how infectious a person is during an active infection. The data can also help in predicting when to expect a positive result in a rapid antigen and a RT-PCR test. At present, we do not have sufficient peer-reviewed data on the viral dynamics of the new Omicron variant. However, previous data available on Alpha and Delta variants does shed light on the incubation and infectious period of SARS-CoV-2 in general and the associated viral load in a person during active infection. Whether Omicron will follow a similar pattern remains to be seen.



USAGE OF RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS: The overall sensitivity of RAT for the Omicron variant is not yet known but may be lower compared to the Delta variant. Regardless of how faded the test (T) line is, if it shows up the result *is* positive. If a RAT for an individual is negative, it does not necessarily mean that there is no COVID-19 infection. It may mean the viral load is not high enough yet to be detected. A negative RAT result could also be due to technical issues or could be a false negative because of the possible low sensitivity of the test for Omicron. Thus, if an individual is symptomatic or has known exposure, a PCR test should be done even if the initial RAT is negative.

NEW COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY

- Residents of LTCH, RH, and high-risk congregate care living can now get their fourth dose of an mRNA vaccine if at least three months (**84 days**) have passed since their third dose.
- All staff, students, volunteers, support workers and caregivers in LTCH who were eligible on or before December 31, 2021 must provide proof for their third dose by **January 28, 2022**.
- The remainder of staff, students, volunteers, and support workers in LTCH have until **March 14, 2022** to show proof of their third dose if eligible.
- The remainder of caregivers in LTCH have until **May 23, 2022** to show proof of their third dose, as they need to be fully vaccinated by February 21, 2022.
- In extenuating circumstances, an individual 7-day extension may be granted and homes should connect with the MLTC to verify if they meet the criteria.

Source: <https://www.ontario.ca>

HELPFUL TIP



Take a photo of your RAT result with date as proof if visiting multiple homes in a single day or within 24 hours to avoid being retested.

3M™ AURA 1870+ N95 RESPIRATOR

The 3M Aura 1870+ N95 respirators are made in Canada and manufactured in Brockville, Ontario.



The domestic manufacturing of NIOSH-approved N95 respirators reduces the risk of supply chain interruptions and ensures adequate supply going forward.

Source: <https://news.ontario.ca>

