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## Is Omicron Bringing the End of the Pandemic?

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Dear Editor,

Omicron: It is the last variant of SARS-CoV-2 to be detected in South Africa. It has more different mutations compared to other variants. The virus contagion multiplies in the bronchi more faster than Delta and the original SARS-CoV-2 virus. South Africa and other countries indicate that the quick-disseminating Omicron alteration of SARS-CoV-2 is much less worrisome than its prede, Delta. Compared to previous variants, Omicron has been reported to be present in low concentrations in lung tissue. The Omicron variant replicates more within upper airway system than in the small respiratory tract of the human tissue.

Analogous reductions in the severity of Omicron infection have been reported compared to infection by other SARS-CoV-2 variants. Estimated reductions in the risk of hospitalization with Omicron variant infection range from 20 to 80% (1).

Omicron variant infections were associated with a 52%, 53%, 74%, and 91% reduction in threat of hospitalization, characteristic hospitalization, intensive care unit admission, and mortality compared to Delta variant infections (2).

The course of infection with the variant of Omicron can vary in different goods on children. Youthful children have fairly small nasal passages. Babies only breathe through their noses. Similar negative factors can make the upper respiratory tract more serious for children than for adults. Still, it has been reported that there are no data pointing to an increase in the number of youthful children being hospitalized for conditions that could indicate a serious infection in the upper respiratory tract (3).

Despite the rapid increase in the number of cases in the Omicron wave in South Africa, the number of hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 remained lower for Omicron wave than for previous waves. The high rate of immunity in the community has been considered to contribute to this situation since a large number of people have become ill in the previous COVID-19 waves in most countries. Immunoprotecting against Omicron infection is thought to be short-lived. For this reason, the risk of hospitalization and death has not disappeared as it was before the Omicron. The high rate of people who had the disease or gained immunity by being vaccinated in societies has reduced the death rates. Hospitalizations are also less in those outside of this population.

Consequently, although healthy pandemic prevention plans could not be made, with the spread of the Omicron variant, the panic level of the countries of the world was relieved to some extent and decreased to the level of anxiety. Even if it is thought that the epidemic has come to an end, mask and distance measures should not be neglected together with the vaccine, which is the most powerful weapon in the fight against the virus.

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