

‘Breaking Through’ — States Report Growing Number of COVID Cases Among Fully Vaccinated

Washington, Florida, South Carolina, Texas, New York, California and Minnesota have all reported breakthrough cases of COVID.

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The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) [announced](#) Tuesday it is investigating reports of people who [tested positive](#) for COVID more than two weeks after being fully vaccinated against the disease.

According to [Kiro 7 News](#), a CBS affiliate in Washington, the DOH is investigating reports of the so-called “breakthrough cases,” which it said are expected with any vaccine. Each case was confirmed with a polymerase chain reaction ([PCR](#)) test or a positive antigen test more than two weeks after the person had been fully vaccinated.

A majority of people with confirmed vaccine breakthrough experienced mild symptoms, if any. However, since Feb. 1, eight people with vaccine breakthrough cases were hospitalized and the DOH “is investigating two potential vaccine breakthrough cases where the patients died. Both patients were more than 80 years old and suffered underlying health issues,” officials said in a [press release](#).

Washington isn’t the only state reporting breakthrough cases. Florida, South Carolina, Texas, New York, California and Minnesota have also reported cases of fully vaccinated people testing positive and becoming ill with COVID.

The Florida Department of Health in Volusia County had six documented breakthrough cases, Sumter County had six and Lake County had 26 cases, according to emails from each county spokespersons.

Dr. Sunil Joshi, president of the [Duval County Medical Foundation](#), compared the [COVID vaccine](#) to the [flu vaccine](#). “It’s like the [flu shot](#), for instance, right. We know, we encourage people to get the flu vaccine. That doesn’t mean that you’re not going to get the flu. But the disease is significantly lessened,” [Joshi said](#). “So remember, the whole goal for this, from the very beginning, has been to keep people out of the hospital. And so anything positive after the vaccine is not unusual, it can happen.”

In Charleston, South Carolina, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) identified [134 breakthrough cases](#) in those fully vaccinated across the state. In the past

month alone, Roper St. Francis Healthcare treated four patients in the hospital and were aware of 10 other “breakthrough” cases that did not need hospitalization.

The Medical University of South Carolina reported seven COVID cases in fully vaccinated people. Roper Hospital is working with DHEC to analyze positive test results to see if variants may play a role.

“All of these individuals we identify who get infected or even hospitalized despite receiving two doses, that virus will be sent on to DHEC for further analysis,” infectious disease physician [Dr. Kent Stock](#) said. “The question is, is that phenomenon influencing these numbers?”

In Wichita Falls, Texas, seven vaccine breakthrough cases were [reported](#) Monday in those fully vaccinated against COVID. Of the seven cases, six had the [Pfizer](#) vaccine and one had [Moderna](#).

“We’ve been watching that since the very beginning, since vaccinations started and so we started noticing it was just maybe one per week, two per week, now we are currently at seven,” **Amy Fagan**, assistant health director of the Wichita Falls Wichita County Public Health District, [said](#).

As of March 24, Minnesota had identified 89 “breakthrough” COVID infections with a small number resulting in hospitalization, [according to Star Tribune](#).

Out of caution, the state is reviewing the cases to see if they have anything in common, state infectious disease director **Kris Ehresmann** said. “A cluster of cases vaccinated at the same site could suggest a handling problem with the vaccine, or that a lot was tainted,” she said.

When asked about Minnesota’s vaccine breakthrough cases during a White House [press briefing](#) on March 26, [Dr. Anthony Fauci](#), President Biden’s chief medical advisor, said: “This is something we take seriously and follow closely. You will see breakthrough infections in any vaccination when you’re vaccinating literally tens and tens and tens of millions of people. So in some respects, that’s not surprising.”

According to [Fox News](#), a Long Island, New York woman tested positive for COVID Tuesday — more than a month after receiving her second dose of the Moderna vaccine meant to protect against the virus. “I was shocked,” Rosen said. “I’m the 4.9% that got Moderna and actually got COVID.”

In a March 23 [letter to the editor](#) of the New England Journal of Medicine, eight physicians reported on a study they conducted on breakthrough cases at the University of California, San Diego and University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) health systems.

According to the letter, UCLA instituted an optional testing program on Dec. 26, 2020, for asymptomatic healthcare workers using PCR nasal testing in an effort to detect asymptomatic [SARS-CoV-2](#) infections after vaccination.

From Dec. 16, 2020, through Feb. 9, 2021, a total of 36,659 healthcare workers received the first dose of a COVID vaccine, and 28,184 of these persons (77%) received the second dose. Among those vaccinated, 379 people tested positive for COVID at least one day after

vaccination, and the majority (71%) tested positive within the first two weeks after the first dose. After receiving both vaccinations, 37 healthcare workers tested positive.

According to [the study](#), the risk of testing positive for COVID after vaccination was between 0.97% and 1.19% -- rates higher than the risks reported in the Moderna and Pfizer vaccine trials.

As [The Defender reported](#) in December 2020, one explanation for “breakthrough cases” in the fully vaccinated may be the use of [polyethylene glycol](#) (PEG) in [mRNA COVID vaccines](#) like Moderna and Pfizer.

Studies [have found](#) approximately 72% of people may have PEG antibodies. In those people, the antibodies may cause an [anaphylactic reaction](#) to the vaccine. Or, the antibodies may [break down and degrade](#) the PEG-coated mRNA in the vaccine before it gets a chance to get into the cell and start programming the production of spike proteins, resulting in the vaccine being less effective.

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