

## ‘Absolute race’: Will the US vaccine effort outrun mutant COVID strains?

With multiple [new coronavirus strains spreading](#) across the country, the US is in an “absolute race” to vaccinate Americans before those variants overwhelm the country, health experts say.

“What concerns me most is that we already know that they’re more transmissible, which means it’s much easier for them to infect people,” said emergency physician Dr. Megan Ranney, director of the [Brown-Lifespan Center for Digital Health](#) in Rhode Island.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other ‘disruptive’ innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

The US just suffered its [deadliest month of the entire pandemic](#), with more than 95,300 Covid-19 deaths in January. That’s an average of more than 3,070 deaths a day.

The better news: New Covid-19 [case numbers are decreasing in most states](#). And for the first time in almost two months, Covid-19 hospitalizations finally [dipped below 100,000](#) after [a catastrophic post-holiday surge](#).

“Despite the falling numbers, now is not the time to let up on the basic precautions,” Ranney warned. “Wear a mask, avoid indoor unmasked gatherings, and of course, wash your hands and try to maintain a distance from others when possible.”

“We have a little breathing room right now,” she said. “But if these new variants become dominant in our country, we are going to be right back where we were in November and December — and perhaps even worse.”

[Read the original post](#)