

## The delta COVID variant is now in almost 100 countries. Who is most vulnerable?

The highly contagious delta variant is the fastest and fittest coronavirus strain yet, and it will “pick off” the most vulnerable people, especially in places with low [Covid-19](#) vaccination rates, World Health Organization officials warned [June 21, 2021].

Delta, first identified in India, has the potential “to be more lethal because it’s more efficient in the way it transmits between humans and it will eventually find those vulnerable individuals who will become severely ill, have to be hospitalized and potentially die,” Dr. Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO’s health emergencies program, said during a news conference.

Ryan said world leaders and public health officials can help defend the most vulnerable through the donation and distribution of Covid vaccines.

“We can protect those vulnerable people, those front-line workers,” Ryan said, “and the fact that we haven’t, as Director-General [Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus] has said, again and again, is a catastrophic moral failure at a global level.”

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The WHO has been urging wealthy nations, including the U.S. to donate doses. The Biden administration earlier [June 21] detailed where it will send 55 million vaccine doses, the majority of which will be distributed through COVAX, the WHO-backed immunization program.

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