

Those infected with the Delta variant may be carrying more than a thousand times more viral particles than prior variants

People infected with the delta variant of the novel coronavirus may be carrying more than a thousand times more [virus](#) particles and may test positive two days earlier than those infected with the original SARS-CoV-2, according to an early new study. The study has not been peer reviewed and looked at only a small number of cases in China, but if the results can be confirmed, they may explain, at least in part, why the delta variant is so much more infectious.

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The most “striking” aspect of this report was that it takes a much shorter time from being exposed to the delta variant to showing significant levels of virus, said John Connor, a researcher at Boston University’s National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories who was not involved in the study. That changes the “window” of when people are infectious, Connor told Live Science.

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“Knowing when an infected person can spread viruses is essential for designing intervention strategies to break chains of transmission,” [researchers wrote.] In other words, contact tracing would have to work more quickly to stop people from transmitting delta.

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