

Latest COVID variant Omicron proving ‘formidable, but not unstoppable’

A sobering portrait of the [omicron variant](#) is emerging from the first burst of laboratory studies on the [coronavirus](#)’s latest incarnation, showing that the mutated virus can [slip past a shield of protection](#) provided by the standard two-shot vaccine regimen.

But the studies, including one released [December 8] by [Pfizer and its vaccine partner BioNTech](#), point to a potential path for slowing omicron’s march: [Booster shots](#) could help control the variant by raising virus-fighting antibodies high enough to block the pathogen.

The data is preliminary, and leaves some of the most urgent questions about omicron — including how it will behave in the real world outside of laboratories — unanswered. Collectively, the new research suggests omicron can dodge some of the most important immune defenses triggered by vaccines, but only partially.

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“With omicron, with these data over the past 24 hours, I’d say it’s unequivocal that boosting for the winter is important,” said Shane Crotty, an immunologist at La Jolla Institute for Immunology who was not involved in the studies released this week. “For the general public, the good news is the boosters are going to work, full stop.”

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.**](#)