

NOVIDS: Why do some people never catch COVID despite frequent exposures?

While the exact number of people who have remained uninfected isn't known with certainty, a review of comprehensive serologic data shows about [15%](#) of Americans may not have gotten infected with COVID, Eric Topol, MD, editor-in-chief of Medscape (WebMD's sister site for medical professionals) [wrote in his substack](#) Ground Truths.

But some scientists bristle at the term NOVIDs. They prefer the term “resisters,” according to Elena Hsieh, MD, associate professor of pediatrics and immunology at the University of Colorado Anschutz School of Medicine in Aurora. Currently, she said, there is much more information on who is more susceptible to contracting severe COVID than who is resistant.

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What [has been found](#) “is that some people might have a mutation in a gene that encodes for what’s called human leukocyte antigen (HLA),” [researcher Sabrina] Assoumou said. HLA, a molecule found on the surface of most cells, has a crucial role in the immune response to foreign substances. “A mutation in HLA can make people less likely to have symptoms if they get infected. Individuals still get infected, but they are less likely to have symptoms.”

[This is an excerpt. Read the full article here](#)