

UW-Health: Omicron subvariant spreading in Wisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – This week, a subvariant of the omicron COVID-19 variant was detected in Dane County raising questions about the current state of the pandemic.

The new subvariant, known as BA.2, appears to be 1.5 times more contagious than its original form, according to a pre-print Danish observational [study](#).

This new threat comes as case counts and hospitalization rates are slowly improving, and to keep from deterring this progress, vaccination and good public health practices will be critical to shortening this omicron-fueled phase of the pandemic, according to Dr. Nasia Safdar, infectious disease physician, UW Health, and associate dean for clinical trials at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

“We can’t use a crystal ball to see what COVID-19 will bring us next, but we do know the now approved vaccines for COVID-19 work against these variants when we are fully vaccinated,” she said. “We can do our parts to prevent prolonging this pandemic by getting vaccinated and getting our booster shots.”

Safdar is available for interviews today.