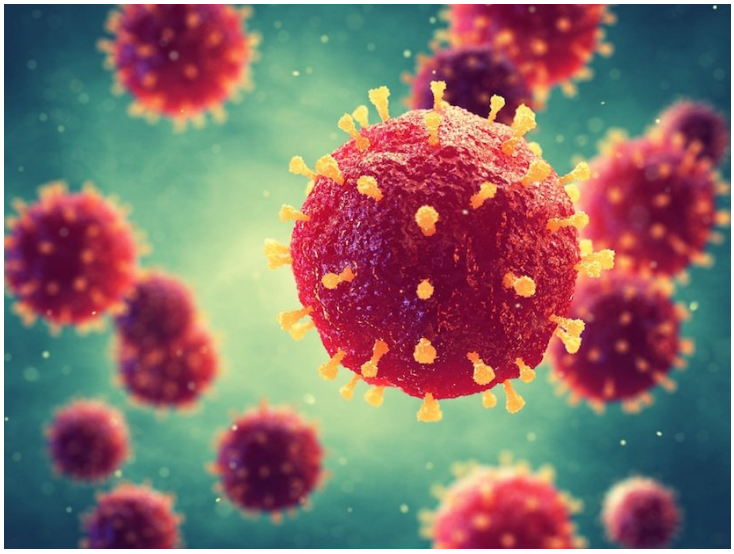
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Be selective in COVID-19 vaccination without panicking about new strain: Experts

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Moving Towards Herd Immunity as Cases in India are Coming Down



HEAL Health had recently organised episode-14 of HEAL-Thy Samvaad, in association with The International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD) to discuss the new COVID-19 strain and the vaccine conundrum.

“Less virulent strains spread wide, bringing asymptomatic and mild cases wherein herd immunity can develop faster. Therefore, in India, we need to wait and watch and be selective in terms of vaccination and no need to panic because of the new strain of Covid-19", said Dr (Prof) Amitav Banerjee, Professor & Head of Community Medicine, Dr DY Patil Medical College, Pune, elaborating on the new strain and vaccination, at the Samvaad.

While speaking on the nature of the virus and its mutation tendencies, Dr Samiran Panda, Head, Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases Division & Director and Scientist of ICMR-National AIDS Research Institute (NARI) said, “High transmissibility does not necessarily go hand in hand with high virulence. A balanced symbiotic relationship thus evolves over a period of time in which a virus goes from an epidemic existence to an endemic one and with less virulence potential.”

Dr Sanjay Rai, Professor, Dept of Community Medicine, AIIMS, President, (IPHA) said, “Over a period of time, our natural infection will also help protect us. Vaccines in India are about to be placed. Perhaps, we are moving towards herd immunity because in India the cases are coming down.”

Elaborating on the new COVID strain and the vaccine conundrum, Dr JC Suri, Director, Dept of Pulmonary, Critical Care & Sleep Medicine, Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi said, “As the new COVID strain is concerned, it would be more transferable. People should go for institutional quarantine. This variant is not virulent. If it is spreading fast with virulence, it will help India in developing herd immunity.”