

- Vaccination

AstraZenca dose is effective for longer — study

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Two doses of the Pfizer/ BioNTech vaccine appears to have greater effectiveness initially against new Covid-19 infections associated with the Delta variant when compared to the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab, but its efficacy also declines faster, preliminary research in the UK suggests.

Scientists from the University of Oxford have said that after four to five months, the level of protection offered by both vaccines is similar, with the AstraZeneca jab maintaining its effectiveness throughout the duration.

The findings, which have not yet been peer reviewed, also suggest that those infected with the Delta variant after their second jab had similar peak levels of virus to unvaccinated people.

Based on their work, the researchers said that although jabs did not eliminate chances of getting Covid-19, they did reduce the risk and remained the most effective way to ensure protection against the Delta variant — which has now become dominant in many parts of the world.

Sarah Walker, professor of medical statistics and epidemiology at the University of Oxford, said: “We don’t yet know how much transmission can happen from people who get Covid-19 after being vaccinated — for example, they may have high levels of virus for shorter periods of time.

“But the fact that they can have high levels of virus suggests that people who aren’t yet vaccinated may not be as protected from the Delta variant as we hoped.

“This means it is essential for as many people as possible to get vaccinated — both here and worldwide.”