



National Indian Health Board NATIONAL TRIBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

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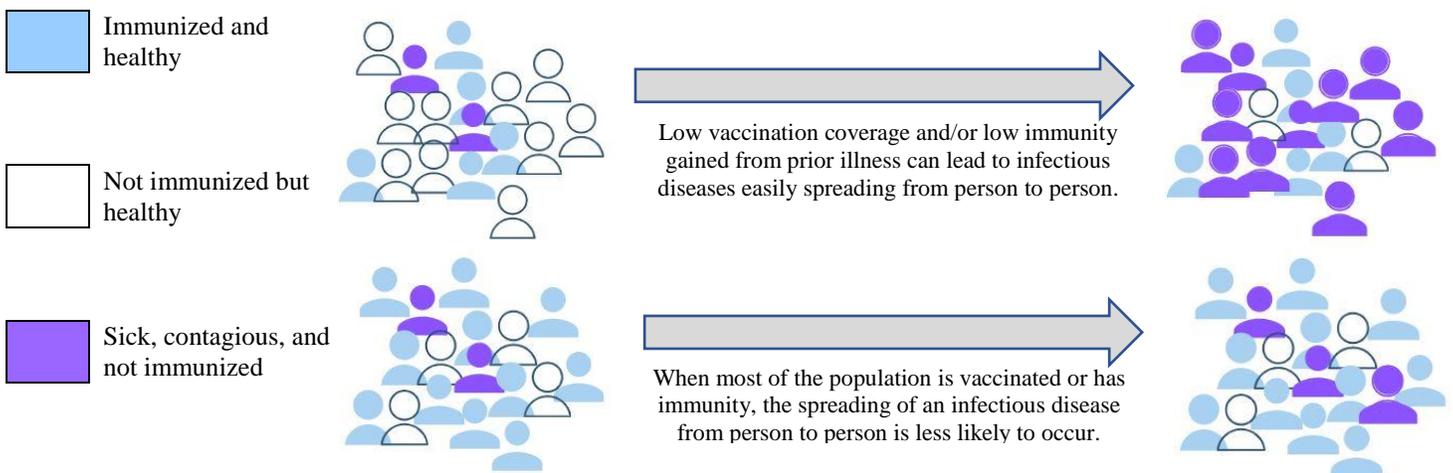
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Herd Immunity

What is Herd Immunity?

Herd immunity, sometimes called community immunity, occurs when a high percentage of the population is immune to a disease. This immunity can happen through vaccination and/or prior illness thus making the spread of the infectious disease from person to person unlikely. Even individuals not vaccinated (such as newborns and the immunocompromised) are offered some protection because the disease has little opportunity to spread within the population.

How Does Herd Immunity Work?



Why Build Herd Immunity?

Herd immunity protects the most vulnerable members of the population. Those who are considered vulnerable include babies who have not received vaccinations, pregnant women and the immunocompromised (e.g., those who have organ transplants or undergoing chemotherapy). If enough people are vaccinated or have immunity against diseases, individuals that are at higher risk and cannot get vaccinated have some protection against infection.

Herd Immunity and COVID-19

There currently is not a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. For herd immunity to occur the majority of the population would need to be vaccinated. Therefore, it may not be the best way to prevent the spread of the disease at this time. We are still learning about this new virus. For instance, it is still unknown whether a person can become re-infected and develop COVID-19 more than once. Until a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 is a reality, practicing social/physical distancing and other prevention methods is still recommended.¹

¹Herd immunity. Retrieved from https://apic.org/monthly_alerts/herd-immunity/

² What Is Herd Immunity and Could It Help Prevent COVID-19? Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/herd-immunity>

³ What is Herd Immunity and How Can We Achieve It With COVID-19? Retrieved from <https://www.jhsph.edu/covid-19/articles/achieving-herd-immunity-with-covid19.html>