



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR No.: 01/21

Singapore, 22 July 2021

National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) Media Statement on the Effect of Age and Vaccination on COVID-19 Positive Patients

1. The National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) has analysed the effect of age and vaccination on COVID-19 positive patients. The study examined 1,165 unvaccinated COVID-19 positive patients who were admitted to NCID from February to December 2020 and compared them to 328 COVID-19 positive patients who were admitted to NCID between 28 April to 27 June 2021. Among the 328 COVID-19 positive patients in 2021, 192 were unvaccinated, 38 were partially vaccinated¹ and 98 were fully vaccinated².
2. A higher proportion of non-fully (unvaccinated and partially) vaccinated COVID-19 positive patients above the age of 50 years in the 2021 group required supplemental oxygen (33.0%) compared with the unvaccinated patients of the same age group in 2020 (13.6%). Vaccines were only available in December 2020. Of the 328 patients admitted in 2021, 247 (75.3%) had data on variants and the vast majority (99.6%) were infected with the Delta variant. This observation suggests that the Delta variant is associated with increased need for supplemental oxygen in unvaccinated patients as compared to the wild type in 2020. When compared with non-fully vaccinated patients, only 1 fully vaccinated COVID-19 positive patient required supplemental oxygen and this was a 98-year-old patient.
3. Among the 153 COVID-19 positive patients aged 50 years and older who were admitted to NCID from 28 April to 27 June 2021, the proportion of patients who required supplemental oxygen was highest in the unvaccinated group (41.8%) compared with 11.1% of the partially vaccinated group and 1.7% of the fully vaccinated group. The findings show the beneficial effects of vaccine, in addition there may be partial protection with one dose of vaccine before completion of the 2-dose regimen. However, it should be stressed that one should complete full vaccination of 2 doses for maximum protective effectiveness.
4. Additionally, none of the fully vaccinated patients above age of 50 years required high dependency/ICU care compared with 10.6% among the unvaccinated or partially

¹ Received 1 dose only of the 2-dose vaccine or COVID-19 positive within 14 days of completing vaccination regime.

² More than 14 days after completing vaccination regime.

vaccinated COVID-19 patients of the same age group in 2021. Generally, fully vaccinated patients had milder illness and all survived.

5. The Delta variant is highly transmissible and associated with more severe disease among unvaccinated and partially vaccinated patients. Hence, NCID urges everyone especially the seniors to be vaccinated as soon as possible.
6. No vaccine thus far can confer 100% protection. Fully vaccinated people can still be infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, particularly with the prevalent Delta strain. A local study estimated around 60% of vaccine effectiveness in preventing infection. Infected individuals regardless of vaccination status are infectious to varying degrees and can still transmit the virus to others, including your loved ones, family members and friends. In essence, vaccine has shown to reduce infection and reduce disease severity in the local setting. Hence we should aim for very high vaccination coverage in Singapore and continue wearing masks, keep up good hygiene practices and abide by safe management measures.

– END –

About the National Centre for Infectious Diseases

The National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) is a purpose-built facility designed to strengthen Singapore's capabilities in infectious disease management and prevention. NCID houses clinical services, public health, research, training and education and community engagement functions under one overarching structure. In addition to the clinical treatment of infectious diseases and outbreak management, the expanded roles and functional units of NCID include the National Public Health and Epidemiology Unit, the National Public Health Laboratory, the Infectious Disease Research and Training Office, the Antimicrobial Resistance Coordinating Office, and the National Public Health programmes for HIV and Tuberculosis. Benchmarked to international standards and best practices, NCID will enhance Singapore's ability to effectively manage infectious diseases.

Visit www.ncid.sg for more information.