

# What if vaccines do not prevent infection?

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## Abstract

**Aims of the study** Vaccines are considered to be our greatest hope of defeating SARS-CoV-2. However, before we claim victory, there are some important questions that are in need of an urgent answer. In this paper we address a particularly relevant one, which unfortunately has not attracted much attention: whether approved vaccines provide us with sterilizing immunity (or to what concrete level). **Methods used to conduct the study** This study was based on the revision of the existing academic literature. **Results of the study** The capacity of approved vaccines to provide sterilizing immunity is key to designing our vaccination policies in an optimal way. We propose ways to obtain this knowledge and we assess the consequences that a lack of sufficient immunity would bring to public health policies. **Conclusions drawn from the study and clinical implications** If further evidence proves that vaccines do not provide sterilizing immunity, prioritization strategies should introduce changes by providing preferential access to vulnerable populations instead of health care professionals or caregivers working in nursing homes. Policies aimed at promoting adherence to vaccination should consider that altruistic incentives would clearly diminish. In addition, policy makers should be aware that, in general, reaching herd immunity could take much longer than expected.

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