

## UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

15 October 2021

### COVID-19 RESPONSE TASK TEAM WEEKLY STATEMENT

Dear staff and students

It's not too late to **#SaveYourSummer**. If you get vaccinated against COVID-19 by 20 October 2021, you will be fully vaccinated in time for the end-of-year holiday season. That will allow you to enjoy a far safer festive period, knowing that you are much less likely to get seriously ill with COVID-19, or pass it on to others, or be hospitalised and importantly, less likely to die from the disease.

#### COVID-19 is not “just a flu”

Even if you do not have co-morbidities such as diabetes and hypertension, being ill with COVID-19 is very often an extremely unpleasant experience. According to many who have described the experience of suffering with COVID-19, it is not “just a flu.” For many people, it is a long-lasting, severely debilitating illness that can sometimes take months for them to feel better again, with some people suffering “long COVID” for many months and extreme long-term ill effects.

However, when you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you are unlikely to become severely ill and suffer extreme debilitation. To avoid becoming unpleasantly sick, vaccination is a good idea. And to reduce your chances of dying from the disease, must surely be the most compelling reason of all to get fully vaccinated.

For DUT, having a fully vaccinated university community would mean being able to return to some of our favourite activities, such as in-person graduation and mask-to-mask contact teaching and learning sessions. It would mean a return to some kind of “normal” – a routine that is closer to pre-COVID times.

For all these reasons, DUT Senior Management and the DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team strongly encourages the unvaccinated members of the DUT community to please participate in Vaccination Thursdays, for the rest of this month.

## DUT's Vaccine Thursdays continues to draw students and staff in numbers

Vaccination against COVID-19 is being offered by professional nurses at the Isolempilo Clinic on the Steve Biko campus every Thursday from 08h30 to 15h00 until the end of October. It's a quick and convenient way of getting vaccinated right on your doorstep. No appointment is necessary. Just take your staff/student card and ID.

The Clinic is administering the *Johnson & Johnson* vaccine but anyone who would prefer the Pfizer vaccine is welcome to call the Clinic during office hours on 031 373 2223 to make a firm appointment. If you have any questions or seek further clarity, please email: [covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za](mailto:covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za).



# MYTH OR TRUTH?

## MYTH:

The mRNA vaccines such as Pfizer change your DNA.

## TRUTH:

These vaccines do not enter the nucleus of human cells, which is where our DNA is stored. It is impossible for them to alter our DNA. The vaccine is eliminated from the body within 72 hours, after it has taught your immune system to fight off COVID-19.

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## Pfizer 2<sup>nd</sup> dose appointments

If you are due for your second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, please contact the DUT Isolempilo Clinic during office hours on 031 373 2223, to make an appointment.

## Do you have questions about the vaccines or need further information?

There is a lot of information circulating about the COVID-19 vaccines, their after-effects, efficacy, longevity and much more. Some of this 'information' is incorrect and sometimes downright dangerous. For accurate, reliable information about the vaccines, please consult the following resources:

- <https://www.gov.za/covid-19/vaccine/vaccine>
- <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/vaccine-updates/>
- <https://dut-cdn2.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CORONAVIRUS-AND-VACCINE-BOOKLET.pdf>

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# VACCINES SAVE LIVES STOP THE SPREAD

**Don't hesitate. Vaccinate!**

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## Here are the latest COVID-19 statistics for the DUT community for the past week:

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIVE CASES:	313
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF WHO TESTED POSITIVE:	168
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO TESTED POSITIVE:	145
NUMBER OF NEW CASES TO REPORT:	2
NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Students):	2
NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Staff):	0
LOCATION OF NEW CASES:	Durban 2 & PMB 0
NUMBER OF RECOVERIES:	298 (Student 137, Staff 161)
Total Number of Deaths:	11 (8 staff & 3 students)
Total Number of Active cases:	4 (4 students & 0 staff)
HAS CONTACT TRACING COMMENCED FOR NEW CASES:	Yes
HAS DISINFECTION OF AREAS COMMENCED FOR NEW CASES:	Yes

We pray for the safe return to good health for all those who are fighting the infection.

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## KZN leads infections in South Africa

On Tuesday 12 October 2021, KwaZulu-Natal accounted for nearly half of the active COVID-19 cases in South Africa. It remains obvious that we cannot lower our guard and we must continue to practice the non-pharmaceutical precautions of wearing a face mask, physical distancing and good hand hygiene. Avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated venues is still essential. However, yet again, we must emphasise that vaccination remains the single most powerful tool that we currently have to break the chain of infection. If we can do that, DUT will then be able to resume more contact sessions and possibly, events such as graduation. Let's get **#DUTBackToNormal** by being as careful as possible and getting fully vaccinated.

In conclusion, please continue to observe the DUT COVID-19 regulations: **wear a mask** covering your nose and mouth securely when you are in public, including DUT property; **stay a minimum of 1.5 metres apart from all other persons**; and **clean your hands** frequently with soap and water or with a minimum 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser. We also urge all members of the DUT community to get fully vaccinated as soon as possible.

Please take care, stay safe and mask up.

Sincerely

**DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team**

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