



Shoppers and shopkeepers wait for their booster vaccine shots at Tanah Abang market in Jakarta on April 4, 2022. (B1 Photo/Joanito de Saojoao)

# 99 in 100 People in Indonesia Have Covid-19 Antibodies

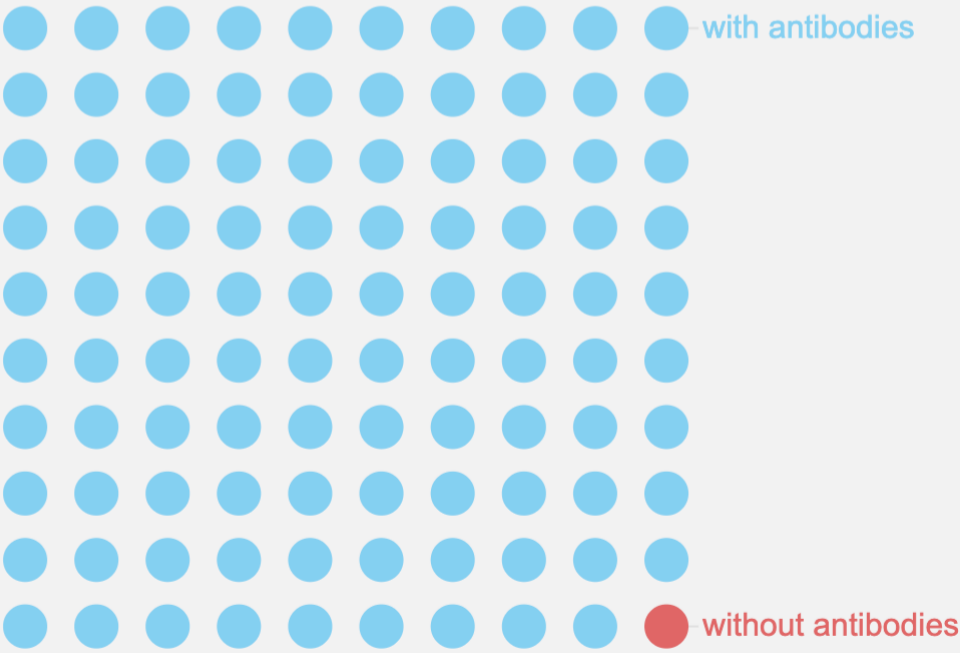
BY :JAKARTA GLOBE  
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**Jakarta.** More than 99 percent of the Indonesian population already has antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, from vaccination and natural infections, a government serology survey in March finds.

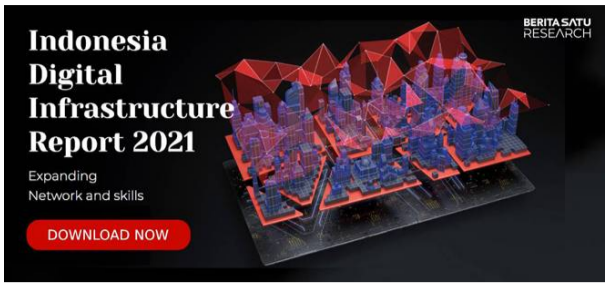
The survey result reflects the significant immune protection the country's population now has against the existing variants of the virus. It also lends support to the government policies for loosening its pandemic restrictions ahead of the weeklong Idul Fitri holiday.

## An Immune Population

Only one in 100 people in Indonesia is without Covid-19 antibodies, a government's serology survey in March finds.



Source: Ministry of Health JG Chart/D. Bisara



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Minister of Health Budi Gunadi Sadikin said that a serology survey conducted in March found that almost all of the country's 273 million population already have antibodies that can protect them against Covid-19.

"This means that 99.2 percent of the Indonesian population already has antibodies. It can come from vaccination or infection," Budi said in a press conference.

That increased from 88.6 percent in December, when the government first conducted the nationwide survey.

Furthermore, Budi said that antibodies level also increased to a titler of between 7,000 and 8,000 — meaning the antibodies can still be detected even when the blood is diluted 7000 to 8000 fold — from 500 and 600 previously.

Budi said the survey provided a scientific foundation for policies that the government will take to deal with this year's Idul Fitri holiday. The government has decided the year's holiday would fall between April 29 to May 5 and allow people to travel during the holiday for the first time in two years.

Still, Budi said Indonesia does not need to rush to follow other countries that are too aggressive in easing the implementation of health protocols.

Until today, the government still requires people to wear masks in public places and enforces a capacity cap for offices, houses of worship, or shopping arcades in some regions.

"The momentum for improving Indonesia's Covid-19 pandemic conditions has been achieved and needs to be maintained," he said.

Even with a high proportion of people in the population with antibodies at the beginning of this year, Indonesia still had to face another Covid-19 wave driven by the Omicron variant.

At the Omicron's peak in February, the country saw about 64,000 new cases a day, exceeding the previous Delta's peak. Fortunately, the number of deaths remained below 400 a day, just a fifth of the last wave.

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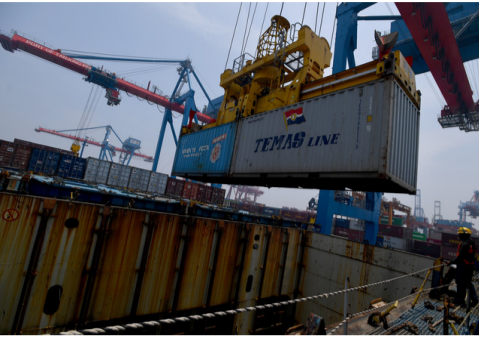
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