

1 **Vaccine coverage associated with ending a SARS-CoV-2 wave: a retrospective**  
2 **longitudinal analysis.**

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4 Aharona Glatman-Freedman<sup>1,2</sup>, Sarah F. Feldman<sup>3</sup>, Yael Hershkovitz<sup>1</sup>, Zalman Kaufman<sup>1</sup>, Rita  
5 Dichtiar<sup>1</sup>, Lital Keinan-Boker<sup>1,4</sup>, Michal Bromberg<sup>1,2</sup>

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7 Israel Center for Disease Control, Ministry of Health, Ramat Gan, Israel <sup>1</sup>

8 <sup>2</sup> Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, School of Public Health, Faculty of  
9 Medicine, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

10 <sup>3</sup> National Institute for Antibiotic Resistance and Infection Control, Ministry of Health, Tel Aviv,  
11 Israel

12 <sup>4</sup> School of Public Health, Haifa University, Haifa, Israel

13  
14 **#Corresponding author:** Aharona Glatman-Freedman, The Israel Center for Disease Control,  
15 Tel Hashomer, Ramat Gan, Israel. E mail: aharona.freedman@ moh.gov.il

16  
17 **Running title:** Vaccine-related end of SARS-CoV-2 wave

18

1 **ABSTRACT**

2 **Background.** Two SARS-CoV-2 waves in Israel ended while a substantial number of  
3 individuals remained unvaccinated or partially vaccinated. The indirect protective effect of the  
4 first BNT162b2 vaccination campaign in Israel was evaluated between 22 December 2020 and  
5 18 May 2021.

6 **Methods.** The daily percentage of new PCR-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 cases among unvaccinated  
7 individuals was analyzed for trends. Major shifts were identified using piecewise linear  
8 regression analysis. At these shifts, the percentage of naturally vaccinated (past SARS-CoV-2  
9 cases) and the percentage of actively vaccinated (by inoculation) individuals were weighted and  
10 summed to determine the percentage of natural and active vaccination (NAV).

11 **Results.** A first decline among unvaccinated individuals occurred during a lockdown period,  
12 when the percentage of NAV was 8.16%. The major decline occurred after the end of the  
13 lockdown when the percentage of NAV reached 52.05%. SARS-CoV-2 cases ultimately declined  
14 among unvaccinated individuals when the percentage of NAV reached 63.55%. During the study  
15 period, the Alpha variant was prevalent and the use of non-pharmaceutical intervention,  
16 including social distancing, existed to varying degrees.

17 **Conclusions.** The vaccination campaign played a major role in the decline of SARS-CoV-2  
18 infection among unvaccinated individuals, leading to the end of the first 2021 SARS-CoV-2  
19 wave (alpha variant) in Israel. The infection of unvaccinated individuals stopped when two thirds  
20 of the population were naturally or actively vaccinated. Any change in characteristics of the virus  
21 or the population can lead to a new outbreak.

22 **Key words:** Indirect protection; SARS-CoV-2; vaccination

## 1 INTRODUCTION

2 Large vaccination campaigns against Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2  
3 (SARS-CoV-2) have been carried out around the world since the end of 2020. However, despite  
4 considerable efforts, pandemic control has not been achieved. By 1 December 2021, Israel  
5 underwent two SARS-CoV-2 waves since national vaccination efforts began.. The end of these  
6 first and second waves was associated with increase in the second dose vaccine coverage, and  
7 with increase in the booster dose coverage, respectively. However, both waves subsided while a  
8 substantial number of individuals remained unvaccinated or partially vaccinated.

9 While direct protection consists of the reduction in infection among individuals vaccinated or  
10 naturally infected, indirect vaccine protection consists of the reduction of infection in the  
11 unvaccinated individuals of the same population (1). When a substantial share of the population  
12 becomes immune to an infectious disease through recovery from infection or through  
13 vaccination, and individuals who are not immune become indirectly protected, herd immunity  
14 occurs (2). Indirect vaccine protection exists when the vaccine protective effect in a population  
15 exceeds the expected protection, which depends on the level of vaccine coverage and protective  
16 efficacy (1).

17 The population vaccine coverage required to attain indirect protection varies by disease. While  
18 indirect protection for measles is attained once approximately 95% of the population  $\leq 5$  years  
19 old is vaccinated (3, 4), approximately 80% is required for mumps (5).

20 Israel SARS-CoV-2 vaccine campaign started on 20 December 2020 relying on the BNT162b2  
21 vaccine, which was shown to have high vaccine efficacy and effectiveness in two-dose recipients  
22 (6-10). Substantial reduction of SARS-CoV-2 wave, predominated by the B.1.1.7 (Alpha) variant

1 (11), was observed following vaccine introduction. On 18 May 2021, only 19 new SARS-CoV-2  
2 laboratory-confirmed cases were detected in Israel (2 cases per 1 million population), 4 SARS-  
3 CoV-2-positive patients were hospitalized and no death occurred. Thus, population-level  
4 protection from SARS-CoV-2 in Israel, was apparently achieved. The protective effect was short  
5 as a new SARS-CoV-2 wave, predominated by the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant (11), started in the  
6 third week of June 2021, associated with waning of vaccine-induced protection (12, 13).  
7 We sought to characterize the indirect effect of the BNT162b2 vaccine during the first SARS-  
8 CoV-2 wave (Alpha variant) that occurred while vaccines were available in Israel. Such  
9 characterization is important for understanding what percentage of the population needs to be  
10 ‘freshly’ vaccinated to end a SARS-CoV-2 wave.

11

## 12 **METHODS**

### 13 **Study design and data collection**

14 We performed a retrospective population-based analysis, using two national data repositories.  
15 The national SARS-CoV-2 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests repository includes the  
16 following information for each individual: swab date, results date, and test result. The national  
17 SARS-CoV-2 vaccine repository includes the following information for each vaccinated  
18 individual: Vaccine name, lot number and administration date. Both repositories also include  
19 personal identifiers and demographic data.

20 The unique personal identity number (UPIN) of each Israeli resident was used to match the  
21 repositories. UPINs were twice encrypted. The number of Israeli residents (all ages  
22 n=9,053,200, and by age group) was based on the 2020 Central Bureau of Statistics statistical  
23 abstract(14).

1 ***Vaccination and SARS-CoV-2 status***

2 Daily number of individuals vaccinated with one or two doses and individuals who were SARS-  
3 CoV-2-positive by PCR between 22 December 2020 and 18 May 2021, for the entire Israeli  
4 population and for the following age groups: 0-11, 12-15, 16-18, 19-34, 35-49, 50-59, 60-79 and  
5  $\geq 80$  years old were retrieved from the repositories.

6 Individuals who received their first vaccine dose were considered to be one-dose recipients.  
7 Once they received a second dose, they were not considered one-dose recipients anymore, but  
8 second-dose recipients only.

9 Individuals were considered to be SARS-CoV-2-positive from the date of their first positive  
10 laboratory PCR result for SARS-CoV-2. A SARS-CoV-2-positive individual that previously  
11 received one or two vaccine doses was considered to be SARS-CoV-2-positive from the date of  
12 the positive PCR test result, and not considered anymore to be one- or two-dose recipient from  
13 this date. For individuals having more than one SARS-CoV-2-positive PCR test, only the first  
14 one was considered in the analysis. The number of unvaccinated individuals for each study date  
15 was calculated by omitting the number of Israeli residents who received the relevant (first or  
16 second) BNT162b2 vaccine dose from the total number of Israeli residents that did not have a  
17 documented SARS-CoV-2-positive test by that date.

18 ***Assessment of vaccination coverage***

19 To assess the level of partial or full protection against SARS-CoV-2 of Israeli residents, we  
20 calculated the cumulative percentage of individuals who had received one BNT162b2 vaccine  
21 dose, two BNT162b2 vaccine doses, or who had a positive PCR test by the date of evaluation.

22

1 ***Dynamics of new SARS-CoV-2 cases***

2 Daily percentages and seven-day moving average of percentages of new SARS-CoV-2 cases  
3 among individuals who received one vaccine dose, two vaccine doses or among unvaccinated  
4 individuals were calculated. Significant changes in daily percentage of new SARS-CoV-2 cases  
5 among unvaccinated individuals were detected using piecewise linear regression models (15).  
6 The date when a significant change occurred was called a breakpoint. The 'first breakpoint' was  
7 the breakpoint preceding the first significant change in slope. The 'major decline breakpoint' was  
8 the breakpoint preceding the steepest negative slope. The 'End of decline' was the last date before  
9 a negative value for the percentage of daily SARS-CoV-2 cases was fitted.

10 ***Determination of indirect protection***

11 To determine the percentage of likely protected individuals due to natural and active vaccination  
12 (NAV) resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection or vaccination, respectively, on a particular  
13 breakpoint date, we used the following parameters:

14 Percentage of individuals who had received two doses of the BNT162b2 vaccine at least .A  
15 days prior to the particular breakpoint date. This percentage was based upon studies 7  
16 days after receipt of the second dose (6). 7that demonstrated vaccine efficacy of 95%

17 Percentage of individuals who had received one dose of the BNT162b2 vaccine at least .B  
18 14 days prior to the particular breakpoint date. This percentage was based upon studies  
19 that demonstrated vaccine effectiveness (VE) of around 50% 14-20 days after receipt of  
20 the first dose (9).

1 Percentage of individuals who had a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test at least 14 days .C  
2 prior to the particular breakpoint date. This percentage was based on the detection of  
3 robust neutralizing antibodies 14 days after the onset of symptoms (16).  
4 Based on these parameters we designed a formula to determine the percentage of likely protected  
5 individuals due to NAV, on a particular date:

$$\%NAV(t) = \%VAC2(t-7) + \%VAC1(t-14)/2 + \%SARS-CoV-2-pos(t-14)$$

9 Where t represents the day of NAV determination,  $\%VAC2(t-7)$  is the percentage of 2<sup>nd</sup> dose  
10 recipients 7 days prior to day t,  $\%VAC1(t-14)$  is the percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> dose recipients 14 days  
11 prior to day t,  $\%SARS-CoV-2-pos(t-14)$  is the percentage of SARS-CoV-2 PCR-positive  
12 individuals 14 days prior to day t.

13  $\%VAC1(t-14)$  is divided by 2 to represent the fact-based assumption that a single BNT162b2  
14 vaccine dose leads to about half of the two-dose VE (50%) against SARS-CoV-2 infection 14  
15 days after administration (9).

## 17 **Statistical analysis**

18 SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals, one-dose recipients and two-dose recipients were expressed  
19 as daily cumulative percentage of total population. Seven-day moving average of daily  
20 percentage of SARS-CoV-2-positive cases was calculated among unvaccinated, one-dose and  
21 two-dose recipients. Seven-day moving average of percentage of hospitalization and death

1 among SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals was calculated for unvaccinated individuals and two-  
2 dose recipients.

3 Significant changes in daily percentage of confirmed SARS-CoV-2 cases among unvaccinated  
4 individuals throughout the study period were detected using Piecewise linear regression analysis  
5 (15) applied to the daily percentage (without smoothing) of new PCR-confirmed SARS-CoV-2-  
6 positive cases among unvaccinated individuals, using the R package segmented and R version  
7 3.6.1. The number and positions of breakpoints were selected based on the Bayesian information  
8 criterion with a maximum of five breakpoints. The percentage of NAV was computed as  
9 described above, for each breakpoint and for the 'end of decline'.

10 The analyses were carried out for all Israeli residents and by age group.

11

## 12 **Ethical consideration**

13 The use of individual data from the two national data repositories was approved by the superior  
14 ethical committee of the Israel Ministry of Health (MOH).

15

## 16 **RESULTS**

### 17 *Progress of vaccination status*

18 Figure 1 demonstrates the evolution of percentage of vaccination coverage and percentage of  
19 SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals throughout the study period for the entire population and by  
20 age groups. Specifically, it shows the cumulative two-dose vaccination coverage and the  
21 cumulative percentage of SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals that increases over time. The one-



1 dose vaccination coverage is cumulative until one-dose recipients receive their second vaccine  
2 dose or became SARS-CoV-2-positive, at which point they are no longer counted as one-dose  
3 vaccine recipients.

4 By 18 May 2021, of the study population, only 35 individuals remained with only one vaccine  
5 dose (0.004%), and 36.4% were not vaccinated, nor had a past SARS-CoV-2 infection (Figure 1  
6 panel A).

### 7 *Dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 cases*

8 Figure 2 demonstrates the seven-day moving average of the percentage of new SARS-CoV-2-  
9 positive cases (Figure 2A) and the seven-day moving average of the percentage of  
10 hospitalizations (Figure 2B) and deaths (Figure 3C) among SARS-CoV-2 positive individuals,  
11 by vaccination status. The percentages of cases, hospitalizations and deaths were higher among  
12 unvaccinated individuals as compared with two-dose vaccine recipients. The percentage of cases,  
13 hospitalizations and deaths reached a nadir by the end of the evaluation period, both among  
14 unvaccinated and two-dose vaccine recipients. Figure S1 of the supplementary material  
15 demonstrates the daily numbers of SARS-CoV-2 cases as well as hospitalizations and deaths  
16 among SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals of all ages, by vaccination status.

17 Figure 3 demonstrates the seven-day moving average of the percentage of new SARS-CoV-2-  
18 positive individuals by vaccination status, in all ages (Figure 3A), and by age group (Figure 3 B-  
19 D). The lowest SARS-CoV-2-positive percentage was observed among individuals who received  
20 two vaccine doses (Figure 3 A-G). The percentages among unvaccinated  $\geq 19$  year old  
21 individuals were higher as compared with one-dose and two-dose vaccine recipients (Figure 3 A-  
22 F).

1 Figure 4 shows the results of the piecewise regression analysis. Three breakpoints were  
2 identified in the all-ages analysis (Figure 4A), and two to three in the age group analyses. An end  
3 of decline was observed in all age groups prior to 18 May 2021 except for the 12-15 years-old  
4 group.

5 In all analyses, a substantial rise in the percentage of daily SARS-CoV-2 cases prior to the 'first  
6 breakpoint' was apparent. After the 'first breakpoint', the percentage of daily cases either  
7 plateaued, decreased or demonstrated a mild rise. All analyses demonstrated a 'major decline  
8 breakpoint' after which a steep decline was observed. This steep decline was followed by  
9 another breakpoint that led to the 'end of decline' (Figure 4).

10 For all-ages and for each age group the 'first breakpoint' was different from the 'major decline  
11 breakpoint', with the exception of the 12-15 and the 16-18 age groups, where the 'first  
12 breakpoint' was also the 'major decline breakpoint'.

13 For all age groups, the 'first breakpoint' occurred between 7 January and 13 January 2021. For  
14 all age groups, with the exception of the 16-18 and the 12-15 age groups, the 'major decline  
15 breakpoint' occurred between 3 March and 10 March 2021. For all age groups, with the  
16 exception of the 12-15 age group, 'end of decline' occurred between 7 May and 13 May 2021.  
17 For specific dates, see Table 1.

### 18 *Determination of indirect protection*

19 Table 1 demonstrates the percentage of NAV in individuals of all ages and by age groups at the  
20 following points of interest: 'first breakpoint', 'major decline breakpoint' and 'end of decline'.  
21 Specifically, it shows that in 'all ages' the first breakpoint occurred when the percentage of NAV  
22 was 8.16%, the 'major decline breakpoint' occurred when the percentage of NAV was 52.05%

1 and the 'end of decline' occurred when the percentage of NAV reached 63.55%. Figure S2 of  
2 the supplementary material shows daily NAV superimposed on the data presented in Figure 3.

### 3 *Use of non-pharmaceutical interventions during the study period*

4 Various non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) were implemented during the vaccination  
5 campaign (Table 2). The vaccination campaign started during a rise in the number of SARS-  
6 CoV-2 cases, which resulted in lockdown on 27 December 2020 and its enhancement on 8  
7 January 2021. As the rise in the number of cases was halted, gradual lifting of limitation  
8 occurred overtime. By 18 May 2021, several limitations were still in place (Table 2).

9

## 10 **DISCUSSION**

11 By 18 May 2021, only 19 new SARS-CoV-2 cases were identified in Israel. Our study suggests  
12 that indirect protection against SARS-CoV-2 was achieved by that point, as the number of new  
13 cases reached a very low level despite the fact that 36.4% of the population were not vaccinated,  
14 nor had a documented past SARS-CoV-2 infection.

15 Our study demonstrated that SARS-CoV-2 cases declined among unvaccinated individuals of all  
16 age groups. Furthermore, the key time points in which the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic wave shifted  
17 its course during the BNT162b2 vaccine campaign were demonstrated.

18 Although the role of lockdowns cannot be quantified, the 'first breakpoint' occurred during a  
19 lockdown period, when the percentage of NAV individuals of all ages was less than 10%,  
20 indicating that vaccination alone was most probably not the primary reason for the beginning of  
21 the shift in trend.

1 The ‘major decline breakpoint’ occurred after the lockdown ended and about half of the  
2 population of all ages was NAV, indicating that the vaccination campaign had a major role in the  
3 sustainable decline that started at this time point.

4 Of exception are the 12-15 and 16-18 years old age groups, for which the ‘major decline  
5 breakpoint’, which occurred on 11 January 2021, was also the ‘first breakpoint’. The  
6 vaccination campaign for the 16-18 years old age group started at the end of January 2021, and  
7 individuals aged 12-15 years old were vaccinated at that time only in extreme circumstances,  
8 with special MOH approval. Therefore, the early start of the sustainable decline among these age  
9 groups resulted, most likely, from vaccination of older individuals, with the addition of  
10 lockdown that lasted until 7 February 2021.

11 The end of decline was observed for all ages during the month of May 2021, when the NAV  
12 coverage was 63.55% for all ages.

13 The degree of the indirect vaccine effect can be affected by several factors: pathogen  
14 transmissibility, vaccine efficacy, pattern of population mixing, vaccine coverage and vaccine  
15 distribution in the population (5, 17-20).

16 The BNT162b2 vaccine efficacy was found to be 95% (6), thus providing this vaccine with an  
17 advantage towards reaching indirect vaccine effect. However, waning of the BNT162b2 vaccine-  
18 induced protection against infection (21) prevented the development of a long-standing herd  
19 protection and led into the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant wave that started in Israel at the end of June  
20 2021(22 ,21 ,13 ,12). A fresh BNT162b2 vaccine and a booster were found highly effective (10,  
21 23, 24).

1 Transmissibility can vary among different SARS-CoV-2 variants (25-27). In this regard, the  
2 Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant, which was found to have increased transmissibility as compared to  
3 previous variants, was first detected in Israel at the end of November 2021 (28). It quickly  
4 became the predominant variant, reaching more than 90% of circulating SARS-CoV-2 viruses by  
5 10 January, 2022 (11). Recent evaluations suggested a decreased BNT162b2 (including booster)  
6 VE against the Omicron variant (29, 30), thus affecting the potential to achieve vaccine indirect  
7 protection.

8 Pathogen transmissibility can be affected also by the use of NPIs, such as social distancing  
9 measures and the use of facial masks (26). In this regard, the early stages of the vaccine  
10 campaign took place while lockdown was in place. Furthermore, social distancing to various  
11 degrees was in effect in Israel until 31 May 2021, and the use of masks in closed spaces was in  
12 effect until 15 June 2021. Therefore, it is possible that the indirect protection achieved in Israel  
13 was aided by the use of NPI.

14 Basic mathematical models of pathogen transmission assume that populations mix  
15 homogeneously, and that disease transmission between any two individuals is equally probable,  
16 irrespective of their age, their residence or work location, their activity level, or other behavior  
17 characteristics (31). However, more recent pathogen transmission models take into consideration  
18 the heterogeneous mixing patterns of populations (31). In this regard, children are likely to have  
19 closer physical contact with their parents than other adults, and their ability to develop indirect  
20 protection can be strongly affected by their parents' vaccination (32). Therefore, some of the  
21 SARS-CoV-2 cases decline among Israeli children could have been driven by their parents'  
22 vaccination status.

23

1 Our study has several limitations. As this study addressed the development of indirect protection  
2 of the Israeli population, it did not address indirect protection in subpopulations other than age  
3 groups. A study in 177 communities in Israel during the first SARS-CoV-2 wave in which  
4 vaccine was available for  $\geq 16$  year old individuals, found that increase in vaccination rates in  
5 these communities was associated with infection rates decline among  $< 16$  years old individuals  
6 (33). However, that study did not take into account the natural immunity (which resulted from  
7 SARS-CoV-2 exposure) in these communities, nor did it establish the vaccination coverage  
8 required to reach the end of SARS-CoV-2 cases decline (33). A study from Spain suggested the  
9 development of indirect protection against SARS-CoV-2 in unvaccinated residents of long-term  
10 care facilities (34). Both studies were published before waning vaccine protection became  
11 evident.

12 An additional limitation stems from the fact that, despite our efforts, the real number of  
13 individuals who were infected with SARS-CoV-2 and developed natural immunity from SARS-  
14 CoV-2 exposure is unknown, and largely depends on the motivation to perform PCR testing,  
15 which may vary considerably among individuals. Two serological surveys from Israel showed  
16 that IgG antibodies against SARS-CoV-2-receptor binding domain were detected among 7.7%  
17 and 8.1% of samples from 0-15 and  $\geq 16$  year old individuals, respectively, in the month of  
18 December 2020 (35, 36), while 4.2% of Israeli residents of all ages were SARS-CoV-2-PCR-  
19 positive on day 1 of our study. Thus, our calculation of the percent NAV individuals required to  
20 achieve indirect protection may be underestimated.

21 In conclusion, indirect protection against SARS-CoV-2 was provided by the BNT162b2 vaccine  
22 and helped end the Alpha variant wave. However, the level of natural and active vaccination

1 required to achieve indirect protection depends on an equilibrium of factors including NPI use,  
2 circulating variants and waning immunity.

3

#### 4 **Contributors**

5 AG-F conceived and designed the study, led data analysis and wrote the first draft of the  
6 manuscript. MB oversaw the study design and analysis. YH and RD retrieved the data. YH, SFF,  
7 ZK and RD performed data analysis. AG-F, SFF, LK-B and MB interpreted the data and edited  
8 the final manuscript. YH and RD verified the underlying data. All authors revised the manuscript  
9 critically for important intellectual content and approved the final version of the manuscript.

10

#### 11 **Declaration of interests**

12 We declare no conflict of interest

13

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1 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

2 **Figure 1.** Progress of the percentage of vaccination coverage (actively vaccinated population)  
3 and the percentage of SARS-CoV-2-positive cases (naturally vaccinated population) for all ages  
4 (Panel A) and by age groups (Panels B-I). The panels show the cumulative two-dose vaccination  
5 coverage (green bars) and the cumulative percentage of SARS-CoV-2-positive individuals (blue  
6 bars). The one-dose vaccination coverage (orange bars) shown is cumulative until one-dose  
7 recipients receive their second vaccine dose or became SARS-CoV-2 positive, at which point  
8 they are no longer counted as one-dose vaccine recipients. The non-colored area above the bars  
9 represents the daily percentage of Israeli residents who were neither vaccinated nor having been  
10 documented by that date to be SARS-COV-2 infected. yo - years old

11 **Figure 2.** Seven-day moving average of the percentage of new PCR-confirmed SARS-CoV-2-  
12 positive cases (Panel A), hospitalizations (Panel B) and deaths (Panel C) of individuals of all  
13 ages among two-dose vaccine recipients and unvaccinated individuals.

14 **Figure 3.** Seven-day moving average of the percentage of new PCR-confirmed SARS-CoV-2-  
15 positive cases out of individuals of all ages (Panel A), and individuals belonging to specific age  
16 groups (Panels B-I) by vaccination status. yo - years old

17 **Figure 4.** Piecewise regression analysis applied to the daily percentage of new PCR-confirmed  
18 SARS-CoV-2-positive cases among unvaccinated individuals of all ages (Panel A) and by age  
19 groups (Panels B-I). The 'first breakpoint', the 'major decline breakpoint' and the 'end of decline'  
20 are marked in Panel A. yo - years old.

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**Table 1.** Calculation of the percentage of naturally and actively vaccinated individuals in the population and by age groups at points of interest, Israel, December 2020 – May 2021.

Age group (years)		2 <sup>nd</sup> dose	1 <sup>st</sup> dose	SARS-CoV-2+	Naturally and
		coverage	coverage	by PCR	actively
		-7d (%)	-14d (%)	-14d (%)	vaccinated (NAV)
					(%)
<b>First breakpoint</b>					
(Date)					
<b>All ages</b>	12 January 2021	0.00	7.26	4.53	8.16
<b>≥80</b>	12 January 2021	0.00	28.08	3.37	17.41
<b>60-79</b>	8 January 2021	0.00	12.87	3.30	9.73
<b>50-59</b>	12 January 2021	0.00	8.27	4.83	8.96
<b>35-49</b>	11 January 2021	0.00	3.63	4.75	6.56
<b>19-34</b>	7 January 2021	0.00	0.72	6.29	6.65
<b>16-18</b>	11 January 2021	0.00	0.18	4.75	4.84
<b>12-15*</b>	11 January 2021	0.00	0.00	4.87	4.87
<b>0-11</b>	13 January 2021	0.00	0.00	2.83	2.83
<b>Major decline</b>					
<b>breakpoint (Date)</b>					
<b>All ages</b>	8 March 2021	37.03	13.49	8.27	52.05
<b>≥80</b>	3 March 2021	76.68	5.11	5.58	84.82

<b>60-79</b>	3 March 2021	80.01	6.01	5.42	88.44
<b>50-59</b>	3 March 2021	63.73	12.81	7.94	78.07
<b>35-49</b>	3 March 2021	48.71	22.03	8.30	68.02
<b>19-34</b>	3 March 2021	27.98	29.94	11.57	54.52
<b>16-18</b>	11 January 2021	0.00	0.18	4.75	4.84
<b>12-15*</b>	11 January 2021	0.00	0.00	4.87	4.87
<b>0-11</b>	10 March 2021	0.00	0.00	6.38	6.38
<b>End of decline</b>					
(Date)					
<b>All ages</b>	10 May 2021	54.01	0.77	9.16	63.55
<b>≥80</b>	13 May 2021	85.01	0.50	6.02	91.28
<b>60-79</b>	10 May 2021	89.41	0.48	5.84	95.49
<b>50-59</b>	10 May 2021	81.65	0.65	8.63	90.60
<b>35-49</b>	11 May 2021	75.52	0.86	9.24	85.19
<b>19-34</b>	9 May 2021	74.13	1.88	12.91	87.98
<b>16-18</b>	9 May 2021	46.16	1.76	8.95	55.99
<b>12-15*</b>	After 18 May 2021	–	–	–	–
<b>0-11</b>	7 May 2021	0.00	0.00	7.44	7.44

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2 \*In rare cases, individuals 12-15 received the BNT162b2 vaccine prior to FDA approval for this age  
3 group. These individuals received the vaccine due to the presence of underlying diseases or due to being  
4 household members of immunocompromised patients. Special approvals for their vaccination were  
5 granted on a case-by-case basis.

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2 **Table 2.** Timeline of non-pharmaceutical interventions during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign, Israel  
3 December 2020 to June 2021.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Main directives</b>
<b>Start of vaccination campaign</b>	20 December, 2020	
<b>Initial lockdown</b>	27 December, 2020	1,000 meter mobility limit, gathering restrictions; private sector workplace attendance at 50% capacity (except essential workers); schools remain open (except for grades 5-10)
<b>Enhanced lockdown</b>	8 January, 2021	Addition of: school closure (except special education and no re-entry boarding schools), no workplace attendance (except essential workers), enhanced gathering restrictions
<b>Stage 1 reopening</b>	7 February, 2021	Mobility limit lifted
<b>Stage 2 reopening</b>	21 February, 2021	Beginning of non-essential commerce and activities for the public, under the 'green pass' (entry to fully vaccinated and recovered individuals) regulations; gradual school reopening;
<b>Stage 3 reopening</b>	7 March, 2021	Additional school reopening; additional non-essential commerce reopening.
<b>Stage 4 reopening</b>	19 March, 2021	5000 people allowed in open sports events; children allowed in open swimming pools.



<b>Stage 5 reopening</b>	18 April, 2021	No obligation to wear masks in outdoors except for gatherings.
<b>Stage 6 reopening</b>	27 May, 2021	Movie theaters re-open.
<b>Stage 7 reopening</b>	1 June, 2021	'Green pass' and 'Purple pass' (social distancing guidelines indoors) use cancelled
<b>Stage 8 reopening</b>	15 June, 2021	No obligation to wear masks in closed spaces, except for medical facilities, nursing homes and airplanes

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Figure 1

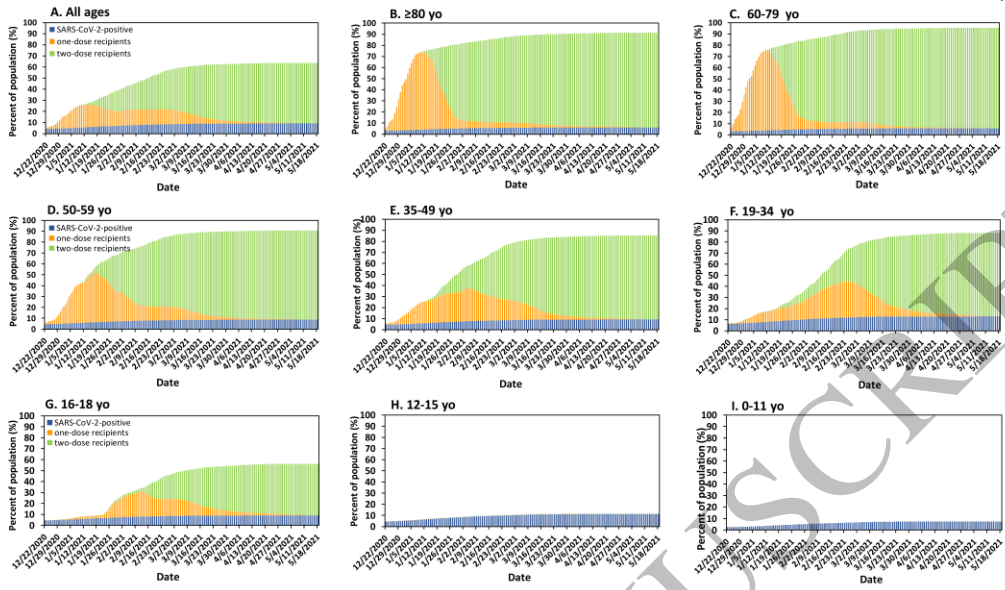


Figure 1  
147x82 mm (.25 x DPI)

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Figure 2

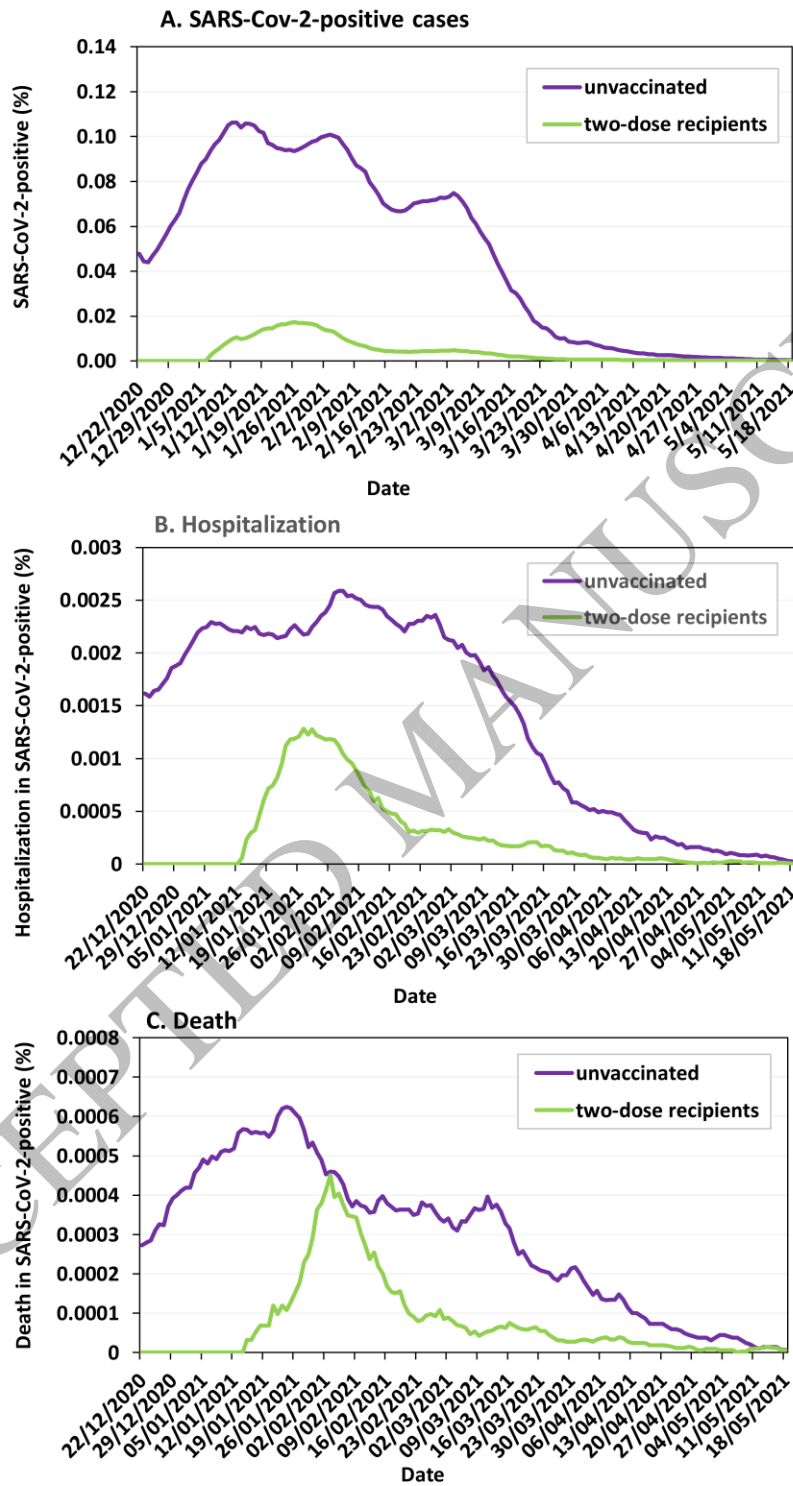


Figure 2  
147x207 mm (.25 x DPI)

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Figure 3

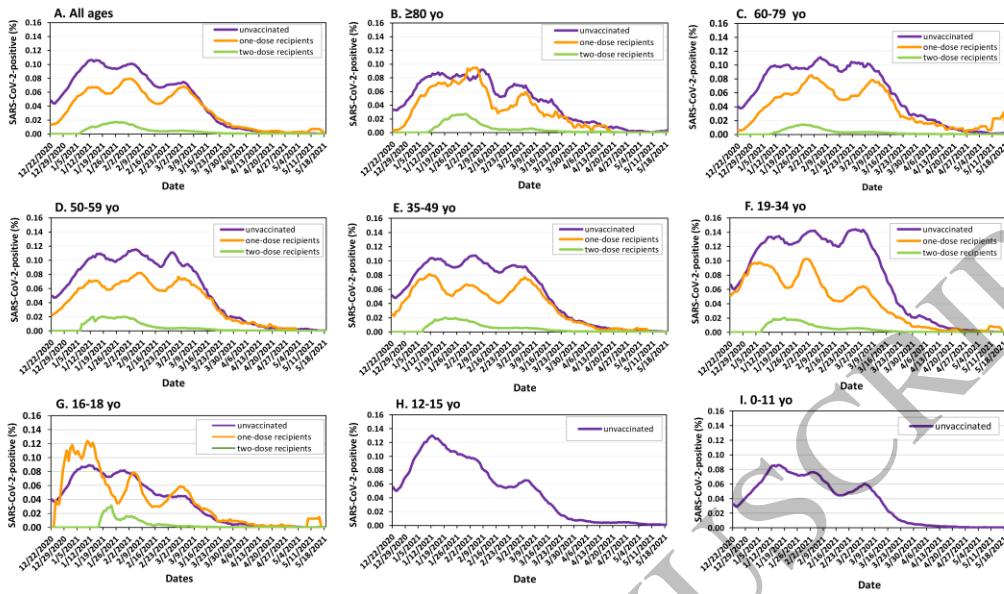
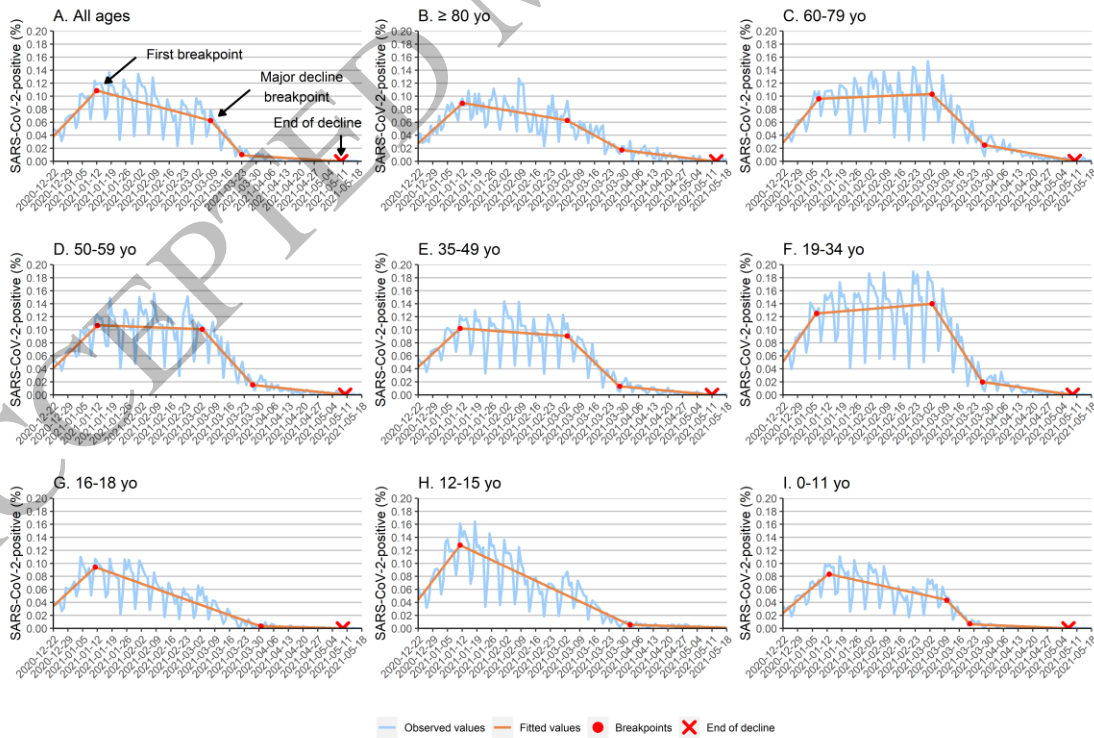


Figure 3  
147x82 mm (.25 x DPI)

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— Observed values — Fitted values ● Breakpoints ✗ End of decline

Figure 4  
147x101 mm (.25 x DPI)

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