1.4: Community Immunity

**Community immunity**, also known as **herd immunity**, is a concept referring to “protection from contagious disease that an individual benefits from as a result of living in a community where a **critical number of people are vaccinated**” (Boyd, 2016, para 2). This means that vaccination provides protection to the vaccinated person and also the whole community. In general, more than **90% of the population needs to be immune** in order to protect those who are not eligible to be vaccinated; however, the level of herd protection required also depends on the disease. For example, contagious diseases such as measles, which is spread through the air, requires more than 95% protection for community immunity. See **Image 1.2** illustrating **community immunity** through the visual of ‘group protection’ that is acquired when more than 90% of the population is immunized. **Video Clip 1.2** explains community immunity in further detail.

![Image 1.2: Community Immunity](https://med.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Nursing/Book%3A_Vaccine_Practice_for_Health_Professionals_(St-Amant_Lapum_D…)

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Community immunity makes it more difficult for contagious disease to enter and spread across a population, thereby significantly reducing the chances of an outbreak. It is important as it **affords some protection for vulnerable people who cannot receive vaccines** or do not have an effective immune response to certain vaccines. Certain people cannot receive vaccines, including infants, pregnant people, people with immuno-compromising conditions, people on immunosuppressants, and other vulnerable groups.

**Video Clip 1.2:** “Herd Immunity and Immunizations” by North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. CC-BY-NC-SA

![Vaccination icon](https://med.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Nursing/Book%3A_Vaccine_Practice_for_Health_Professionals_(St-Amant_Lapum_D…)

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