

# Your friendly neighborhood PFIZER-MAN: US pharma giant partners with Marvel

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[Pfizer](#) has partnered with Marvel to create a comic book to urge people to get their Covid booster vaccines and be an 'everyday hero'.

The PR stunt comes amid a sluggish autumn jab rollout that has seen less than one in 20 eligible Americans receive their Omicron-specific shot.

Pfizer is also pushing for its new bivalent booster vaccine to be approved for children aged five to 11.

The plot of the new comic centers around a grandfather waiting for his jab at a clinic that comes under attack by the Avengers villain Ultron.

Ultron — a maniacal robot that constantly evolves and comes back stronger — is used to represent Covid, which is constantly mutating into new strains.

Captain America arrives at the scene and is pushed to the brink of defeat before Iron Man — who is supposed to represent Pfizer's new jab — arrives with a brand-new cannon that blasts Ultron into the sky.

The grandfather tells the reader that even superheroes have to keep 'adapting' to fight off Ultron — a clear reference to the updated vaccines.

Pfizer said the comic book has been released to encourage people to 'protect themselves' by 'staying up to date' with their Covid jabs.

It comes as officials plead with Americans over 50 years old to get their second booster jabs.

Just 7.6million Americans have got the new bivalent vaccine that works better against the dominant Omicron subvariants so far.





Pfizer has released a Marvel-themed story to explain how its Covid vaccine works. It features a grandfather and his family who get a Covid vaccine (bottom), the Avengers who represent the Covid vaccines (middle) and Ironman (in red, shown above) who represents the new Covid vaccine, and Ultron (top left) who represents Covid's evolution





The comic ends with the grandpa smiling after receiving his updated booster vaccine, with the Avengers in the background being cheered by crowds

Publishing the comic book yesterday, Pfizer said: 'When Ultron wreaks havoc, the Avengers act as the first line of defense.'

'People can help protect themselves by staying up to date with Covid vaccinations.'

The comic can be viewed [online](#) on the Marvel website. It is not clear how much Pfizer paid for the promotion.

The story begins with a grandfather waiting at a Covid vaccine clinic with his family when a news alert flashes on the television screen that Ultron has returned.

Explaining how the villain mirrors Covid, the grandfather says he 'keeps changing and evolving' so the Avengers — who represent Pfizer's jabs — 'keep adapting and re-strategising'.

The comic book then shows the Avengers — who mirror each of

### **How a fresh Covid surge in the UK could be a warning to the US**

An autumn Covid resurgence in the UK has fueled concerns that the US could be on course for another wave.

Officials are pleading for people to get the new Omicron-specific booster as figures show just four per cent of eligible Americans have taken up the offer.

Covid cases, hospitalizations and deaths have been trending downwards in the US for

Pfizer's shots — doing battle with Ultron.

But they struggle to beat him — because he has 'evolved' — leading to the fight coming to just outside the vaccine clinic.

But in the nick of time Ironman — who represents the updated booster shot — arrives and blasts Ultron into space using an 'ionized energy cannon'.

Ironman then comes to the clinic and tells the grandfather that he 'looks good' and that retirement agrees with him.

When the grandfather asks if the Avengers will retire, Ironman says: 'We're just getting started'.

After the battle, the grandfather is then called for his Covid vaccine, and later is shown smiling with a plaster on his left arm indicating that he has had the vaccine.

At the end we see builders, nurses, window cleaners, students and a grandmother with the slogan: 'Everyday heroes don't wear capes!'

'But they do wear a small bandage on their upper arm after they get their latest Covid vaccination — because everyday heroes are concerned about their health.'

America lags behind most other western countries in its Covid vaccine roll out with just 67 per cent of people having turned up for their first two

months after the last wave peaked in August.

But an uptick in the UK has been blamed on new Omicron subvariants that are feared to be more resistant to immunity than their predecessors.

Hospitalizations there have risen 23 per cent in a month to 7,024 people on wards while cases are also up 12 per cent in a week.

The US' Covid situation has mirrored Britain's several times in the past — in the Alpha wave it followed the surge two weeks later on October 14, and in the Omicron wave it also followed about two weeks later on December 13.

UK scientists are particularly worried about subvariants BA.2.75.2 and BQ1.1 which are both better at evading immunity. Only BA.2.75.2 is known in the US, where its cases are now rising.

The current dominant Omicron variant — BA.5 — took just six weeks to become the main type in the UK, before becoming dominant in the US about two weeks later.

However, new waves are not expected to reach the crisis level seen earlier in the pandemic because Omicron strains are milder, and far many more people have immunity now thanks to vaccines and previous infections.

doses.

It began rolling out updated booster shots this September, which can protect against Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5.

All over-12s who have received at least the first two doses of the Covid vaccine are eligible.

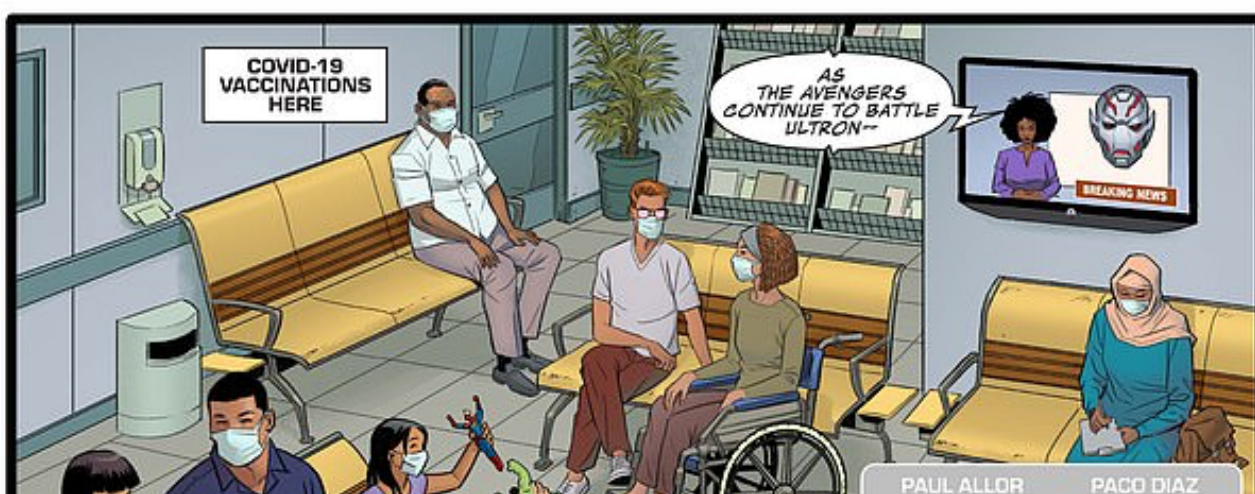
But uptake has been sluggish, with just 7.6million out of the 215million eligible having got the jab more than a month since the roll out began.

Controversy was sparked over the Covid vaccine drive when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) extended eligibility to children who are six months old.

Many experts cautioned against the move at the time, saying children face a very low risk from the virus and warned it could interfere with other inoculations they need such as against polio or measles.

There is also now a prevailing sense that the Covid pandemic has come to an end, after President Joe Biden declared it was over on television last month.

He has since attempted to walk back from his words, but many are still under the impression that Covid no longer poses a threat.





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The grandpa is shown waiting at a clinic for his Covid vaccine with his family when a newsflash comes on warning over Ultron — or Omicron

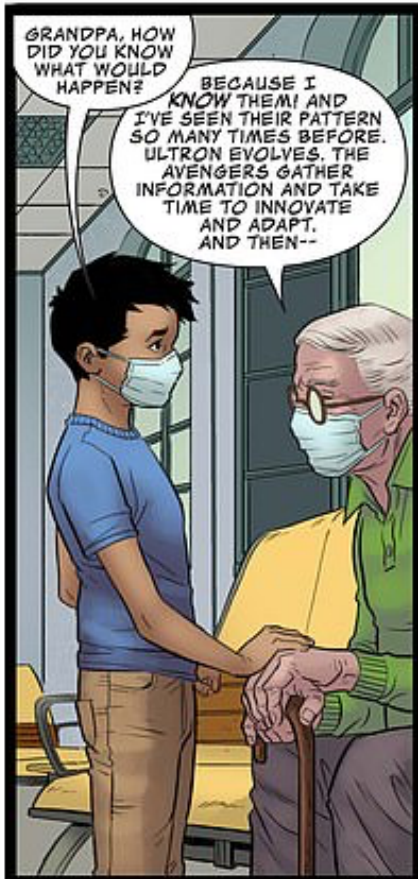




Ultron does battle with the Avengers, who represent Pfizer's Covid vaccines. They initially struggle to defeat him



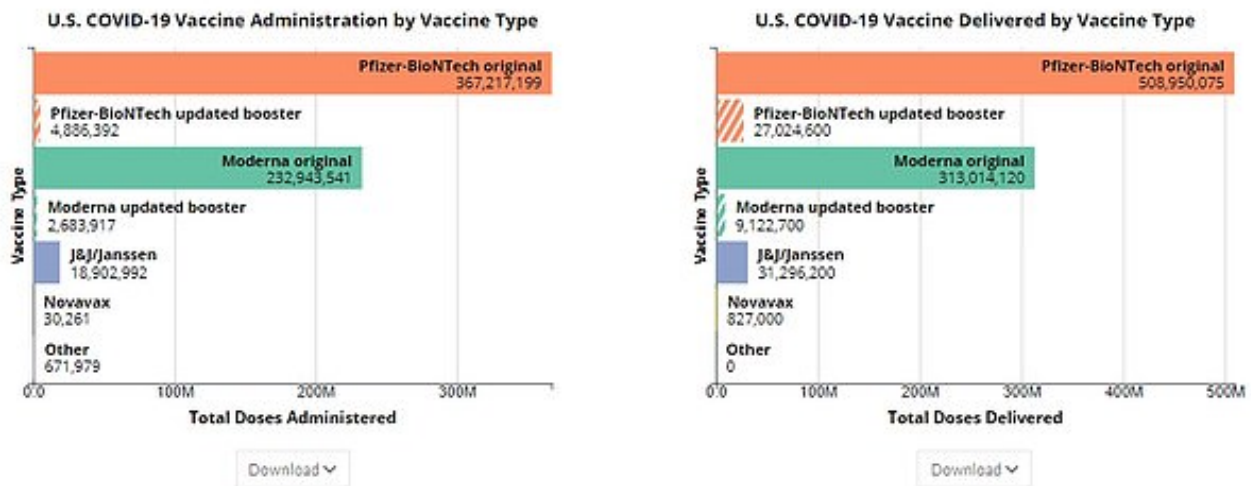




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But then Iron Man returns with an ion cannon and blasts Ultron back into space. The cannon

mirrors the updated bivalent booster jab



These graphs show the number of updated Pfizer and Moderna shots in vaccine clinics (right) and the number that have been administered into people's arms (left)

The US launches a flu and Covid booster program every year in the hope of heading off pressure on hospitals during the winter months.

It comes after an autumn Covid resurgence in the UK began to fuel concerns that the US could be on course for another wave.

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Warning over the link to Covid cases across the pond, infectious diseases expert at Yale University Dr Scott Roberts told DailyMail.com: 'As a general pattern, what we've seen is the US seems to lag behind the UK by two to three weeks.'

'Whenever cases go up in the UK that definitely concerns me, and I would not be surprised if the US followed a similar pattern.'

'That has happened with several prior waves. [For example], in the Alpha and Delta waves we saw a spike in the UK and a lot of regions of Europe shortly before in the United States.'

Official data shows Alpha sent cases surging in the UK about October 1, and in the US they followed two weeks later on October 14.

This was the same with the Omicron wave when cases in the UK jumped from the end of November, following a fortnight later in the US.

With Delta the US rise began around July 8, about four weeks after a similar surge began in the UK.

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