

As it relates to COVID-19...What is a variant???

When you hear the term “variant,” in reference to COVID-19, it means “a form or version of COVID-19 that has different characteristics from the original Coronavirus discovered in 2019.”

Viruses constantly change through mutation, and new variants of a virus are expected to occur over time. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants emerge and persist.

In the United States and globally, multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been documented. Those variants are:

- The United Kingdom variant – detected in Fall 2020
- The South African variant – detected in early October 2020
- The Brazilian variant – detected in January 2021

These variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19. An increase in the number of cases will put more strain on health care resources and lead to more hospitalizations.

Scientists are working with the CDC to learn more about these variants, and more studies are needed to understand:

- How widely these new variants have spread
- How the disease caused by these new variants differs from the disease caused by other variants that are currently circulating
- How these variants may affect existing therapies, vaccines, and tests

What does this mean???

This means whether or not you have received the vaccine – first or second dose – you must continue to maintain:

- wearing a mask “properly” – covering your nose and mouth. For more information, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
- social distancing standards
- proper hand hygiene
- proper sneeze/cough etiquette
- disinfect work/home surfaces
- stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care

To learn more about how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, and how to protect your home, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html>.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Accessible version <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html>

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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