



National Indian Health Board NATIONAL TRIBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

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What COVID-19 Variants Should Tribal Nations be Aware Of?

Several variants of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) have been documented in the United States and around the globe during this pandemic. The press frequently uses the term "variant," "strain," "mutant," and "lineage" interchangeably. New variants of a virus are expected to occur over time, since viruses continuously change through mutation. Sometimes new variants appear and then disappear. Other times, new variants develop and infect the population. These variants are more transmissible than the original strain of SARS-CoV-2, and Tribal communities should be made aware.

Variant Classifications

Variant of Interest

A variant of interest is a variant with specific genetic markers that have been associated with changes to receptor binding, reduced neutralization by antibodies generated against previous infection or vaccination, reduced efficacy of treatments, potential diagnostic impact, or predicted increase in transmissibility or disease severity.

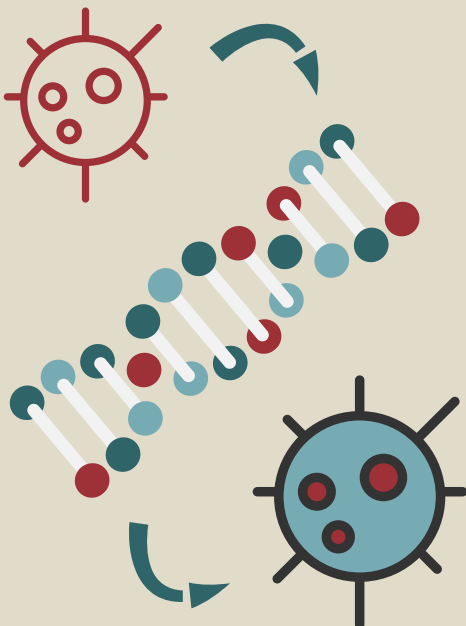
Variant of Concern

A variant of concern is a variant for which there is evidence of increased transmissibility, more severe disease (e.g., increased hospitalizations or deaths), significant reduction in neutralization by antibodies generated during previous infection or vaccination, reduced effectiveness of treatments or vaccines, or diagnostic detection failures.

Variant of High Consequence

A variant of high consequence has clear evidence that prevention measures or medical countermeasures (MCMs) have significantly reduced effectiveness relative to previously circulating variants.

Currently, there are no SARS-CoV-2 variants that rise to the level of high consequence.



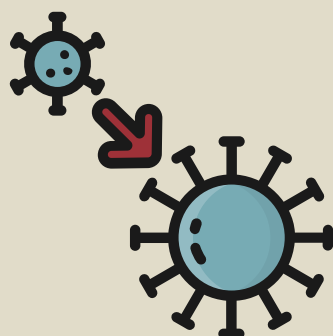
Variants in the U.S. that Tribal Nations Should be Aware of

	B.1.617.2 (Delta)	B.1.1.529 (Omicron)
Date of detection	October- 2020	November- 2021
First Detected in	India	South Africa
Transmissibility	Increased transmissibility	Potential increased transmissibility
Date of designation	Apr-4-2021	Nov-30-2021

Currently, the Delta and Omicron variants circulating in the U.S. are classified as variants of concern.

Vaccines authorized for use (either by Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) or official approval) in the U.S. are safe and effective against these variants. Effective therapeutics are available, as well.

Tribal communities should be aware of all circulating variants, especially the current variants of concern, in their communities. It is recommended to get vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 to protect all Tribal citizens from getting and spreading COVID-19.



For more information, or to learn more about frequently asked questions, visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant-info.html).
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Disclaimer: This fact sheet is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$2,000,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

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