



For Immediate Release

04/08/2021

COVID-19 Information	Vaccine Information
Phone: 980-432-1800	Website: www.rowancountync.gov/COVIDvaccine
Website: www.rowancountync.gov/COVID-19	Onsite at vaccine clinics:
Email: covid-19@rowancountync.gov	Text rocopod to 888777 or tune into 88.7 FM for updates

Rowan County COVID-19 Case Information: <https://bit.ly/rowan-covid19-hub>

COVID Variants Could Fuel “Another Avoidable Surge”

As COVID cases increase in more than half of the United States, concerns about troubling new variants have started to emerge.

States are starting to see a growing proportion of their COVID-19 cases attributed to variants, according to Centers for Disease Control (CDC). At the same time, many states are loosening restrictions, which could pose a serious threat and undo all the progress that has been made thus far.

In Europe, a third surge is being driven by the more harmful variant that was first discovered in the United Kingdom, called B.1.1.7, causing parts of France, Germany and Italy to reintroduce lockdowns and restrictions. Some experts believe that the U.S. is only a few weeks behind Europe; and if action is not taken now, another avoidable surge could happen in our country.

Below are the COVID variants that are currently known to be in the United States and could very well cause a new threat to our nation:

B.1.1.7: Initially identified in the United Kingdom in the fall of 2020, the CDC projects that this more contagious (it’s 50% more transmissible compared to SARS-CoV-2 or what we know as the coronavirus) and potentially more deadly variant could soon become the dominant strain in our nation.

Recently, there were more than 6,300 reported cases of the B.1.1.7 variant in the U.S., with the most cases being seen in Florida, Michigan, and California. As of late last week, it was noted that the B.1.1.7 variant is estimated to be responsible for 9% of the cases in New Jersey and 8% in Florida.

B.1427/B.1429: This newly identified variant, also known as the “California” or “West Coast” variant, is estimated to account for 52% of COVID cases in California, 41% in Nevada and 25% in Arizona. At this time, it has been found to be 20% more transmissible than the coronavirus, according to the CDC.

The CDC has officially classified B.1427/B.1429 as a variant of concern, due to an increase in its ability to spread the disease, as well as its ability of reducing the effectiveness of current treatments.

B.1.351: This variant is known to have originating in South Africa and has been noted to also be 50% more transmissible. Currently, it accounts for nearly 200 COVID-19 cases in the U.S., primarily in South Carolina, Maryland and Virginia, according to the CDC. Data has also found that people who have had COVID-19 can be re-infected with this strain

Remember the 3 Ws: WEAR (cloth face covering), WAIT (6 feet apart) & WASH (your hands often)!

P.1: According to the CDC, this strain was first detected in travelers from Brazil earlier this year that had arrived in Japan and were later screened.

“This variant contains a set of additional mutations that may affect its ability to be recognized by antibodies,” the CDC says. There is also evidence that this strain is more transmissible and could make vaccines less effective.

B.1.526: Early data suggests that this variant can elude protection provided by vaccines and therapeutic antibody treatments.

According to former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, “This particular variant could also cause re-infection in people who have already had COVID. It’s too soon, however, to tell whether people are being re-infected or if people who have yet to be vaccinated are getting infected.”

What you can do to avoid the variants?

New variants continue to drive home the importance of safety measures, even as more people are getting vaccinated.

The one thing that we must do is to make sure that we are not allowing these variants to continue to spread. When a virus cannot spread, it is not able to mutate any further.

The steps in order to do that include getting vaccinated and maintaining the public health measures that have been in place for over a year, such as waiting 6 feet apart from others who are not in your immediate family, wearing a face mask that covers both your nose and mouth when out in public, as well as continuing to practice washing one’s hands often.

This holds true even if you’re already fully vaccinated! It is important to note that although early data suggests that the vaccines may work against some variants, they could be less effective against others. In addition to this, it is still unclear at this time the effect that vaccines will have against transmission of the virus.

So in the meantime; if you and your family want to help get our local and state economy back on track and to help us to get back to a somewhat normal way of life that may include proms, sporting events, dance recitals, graduations, and/or upcoming vacations, make sure you do your part! Continue to practice the 3W’s and make sure to get vaccinated as soon as possible! Appointments can be made for first dose clinics every Monday morning after 10 am by calling 980-432-1800; Option 1 or by visiting our [website](#). Please note that appointments are now available for Groups 1-5, which include **ALL** adults and teenagers 16 and older.

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