

COVID-19 Variants of Concern | IDPH

St. Clair County has reported some cases of the B.1.1.7 variant and recently one (1) new case of P.1 variant.

To date, Illinois has identified the following COVID-19 variants in Illinois:

| Variant Type | Count |
|--------------|-------|
| B.1.1.7 | 4,891 |
| B.1.351 | 91 |
| B.1.427 | 238 |
| B.1.429 | 265 |
| P.1 | 1,795 |
| Total | 7,280 |

What We Know

Mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus are expected with multiple variants documented in the United States and globally during this pandemic. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are circulating globally as described by [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#):

B.1.1.7 Variant: The United Kingdom (UK) identified a variant called B.1.1.7 with a large number of mutations in the fall of 2020. This variant spreads more easily and quickly than other variants. In January 2021, experts in the UK reported that this variant may be associated with an increased risk of death compared to other variant viruses, but more studies are needed to confirm this finding. It has since been detected in many countries around the world. This variant was first detected in the US at the end of December 2020.

P.1 Variant: In Brazil, a variant called P.1 emerged that was first identified in travelers from Brazil, who were tested during routine screening at an airport in

Japan, in early January. This variant contains a set of additional mutations that may affect its ability to be recognized by antibodies. This variant was first detected in the US at the end of January 2021.

What We Do Not Know

Scientists are working 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 It Means

Public health officials are studying these variants quickly to learn more to control their spread. They want to understand whether the variants:

- Spread more easily from person-to-person
- Cause milder or more severe disease in people
- Are detected by currently available viral tests
- Respond to medicines currently being used to treat people for COVID-19
- Change the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines

What IDPH is Doing

IDPH, in collaboration with the CDC, is monitoring Illinois closely. IDPH is working to monitor the spread of identified variants, characterize emerging viral variants, and expand its ability to find new SARS-CoV-2 variants.

For more information, visit IDPH's website:

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/variants>

