

Beware the New Delta Plus Variant | A New Vaccine to the Rescue?

The Delta Variant of COVID-19 ravaged India. Now there's the Delta Plus variant. Is it more contagious than the already nasty Delta variant?



A new variant of SARS-CoV-2 is starting to spread around the US. Scientists have named it AY.4.2. The popular press, on the other hand, has dubbed it the Delta plus variant. This subvariant of the Delta coronavirus is spreading in the UK, making up over 11% of cases there. It has also been isolated in dozens of other countries.

Now, the Delta plus variant is spreading in the US. At least eight states are reporting cases and it is expected to spread even faster than the original Delta variant. How worrisome is this variant of a variant? British public health authorities suggest it may be more transmissible than Delta, but the available vaccines still protect people from this new version.

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CDC is tracking the emergence of the Delta+ subvariant very closely to make sure it doesn't develop into something more worrisome.

Will the Delta Plus Variant Undo Progress?

Many people in the US are acting as if the pandemic is over. Even if they have not been vaccinated, these folks have shed their masks. They are going out to eat, getting on airplanes and attending sporting events. These people have let down their guard even more than before. They think they are bullet proof.

Many states have seen a rapid decline in COVID cases over the last few months. There are some exceptions, though. Over the last week cases are up in Alaska, Missouri, Mississippi, South Dakota, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Arkansas. There are hot spots in Texas, Georgia and Idaho.

Researchers at Johns Hopkins have created modeling scenarios. They suggest that there could be a new surge of infection in the fall unless many more Americans get vaccinated. There is also the possibility that some future variant will be able to escape the protective power of the vaccines.

The Delta Plus Variant Has Emerged:

This new mutant form of the SARS-CoV-2 is the Delta plus variant. It arose in India. That's hardly a surprise. India has been slammed for weeks. Vineeta Bal is an immunologist at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Pune, India.

She told NPR (June 23, 2021):

“The fear in everybody's mind is that now there is a further mutation and it might again take us towards another wave.”

The Delta + variant is on the move. It is already in the US. Other countries that have detected the Delta plus variant include Canada, Japan, Portugal, Russia and Switzerland. If we have learned one thing about pandemics it is that pathogens like SARS-CoV-2 do not stay put in one geographical area. They can spread like wild fire across the globe.

Will Beware the New Delta Plus Variant | A New Vaccine to the Res... Coronaviruses?

The news from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is exciting. Researchers have created a vaccine that might protect people from several different types of coronavirus. So far, the scientists have only tested this shot in mice, but this second-generation hybrid vaccine seems to work surprisingly well.

One of the lead investigators, Dr. Ralph Baric, noted:

“The vaccine has the potential to prevent outbreaks when used as a new variant is detected.”

You can learn more about mRNA vaccines against coronaviruses by listening to our podcast interview with Dr. Ralph Baric [at this link](#). Click on the arrow inside the green circle under Dr. Baric’s photo.

A key researcher on this project, Dr. David Martinez adds:

“Our findings look bright for the future because they suggest we can design more universal pan coronavirus vaccines to proactively guard against viruses we know are at risk for emerging in humans,” Martinez said. “With this strategy, perhaps we can prevent a SARS-CoV-3.”

This research was published in [Science](#), June 22, 2021.

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1976 and led to a syndicated newspaper column, syndicated public radio show and web site. In 2006, Long Island University awarded him an honorary doctorate as “one of the country's leading drug experts for the consumer.” [Read Joe's Full Bio.](#)

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