

## LETTER TO EDITOR

## WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE DELTA VARIANT

Dear Editor,

As the COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating around the globe, health pantheons are closely watching various coronavirus mutations and variants which might be more infectious than its parent strain. It is a peculiarity of viruses that viruses instantly adapt and survives to change, and variants come out when a specific strain of virus notice one or more mutations which contradict from other of its kind.<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centre for Disease Control (CDC) closely detect these variations to figure out if the transmission can lead to an escalation in COVID-19 mortalities and cases as well as it also determines that whether the vaccines are effective or not. United States classify these variants as '**Variant of high consequence**', it compromises the effectivity vaccines and subordinate the treatments; '**variant of concern**', this variant reported rapid transmission and severe disease; '**variant of interest**', this kind lead outbreaks widespread.<sup>2</sup>

However, it is seen that United States has not declared any of the variant of coronavirus as 'high consequence' yet several strains have been labeled as 'variants of concern'. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that Delta variant has drawn more attention as it spreading rapidly like hot cakes in past few months in many countries, including USA.<sup>3</sup>

#### What are Delta and Delta plus Variant?

Delta variant which is known as B.1.617.2, can unfurl easily, an opinion by CDC. The strain is investigated to have mutations on spike proteins which make it easier to cause infection in human cells, which typically means people might be more contagious if they are being infected with coronavirus, as it spread more rapidly and easily, the researcher has reported this strain to be more dominant in USA. In truth, the investigators opine that the Delta version is 50% more lethal and contagious than its predecessor variant---- Alpha variant----, which was first reported in United Kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Scientists said that Alpha variant B.1.1.7 was 50% more contagious than the original coronavirus which was first identified in China back in

2019. Health experts says that an average Delta-variant infected person spread infection among three to four other people as compared to previous strains and it is also seen to be exempted from coronavirus vaccines treatment. However, the studies are still under process. While speaking about the symptoms of Delta-variant, researchers have said that its symptoms are almost likely to previous versions, but ageusia and cough is less common.<sup>4</sup> Scientist believes that those people who have not received any dose of coronavirus vaccines are at higher risk of getting this deadly strain as the mortality ratio is reported to be high in this strain.<sup>5</sup>

Delta plus variant or typically known as AY.1. or B.1.617.2.1 is contemplated to be a 'subvariant' of Delta variant. Its symptoms are almost same as Delta variant. However, it has a specific mutation which allows virus to directly attack on lung cells and potentially get away vaccines. It was first reported in India and has spread in dozens of other countries. India called it as a variant of concern.<sup>4</sup>

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