

New Covid Variant Xec Spreading Rapidly Across Continents



2 Minutes of Reading

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A new Covid variant is spreading rapidly and has caught the attention of the research world: 111 samples have already been reported from 15 countries, across three different continents. A significant spread, which

may have originated from Germany. The Xec variant, in the coming months, could change the current landscape of Covid variants and has already ignited intense summer waves in various parts of the world. First appearing 'in Berlin at the end of June,' Xec is a recombinant variant and has already been detected on 3 different continents. Since its debut, 'it has spread rather quickly in Europe, North America, and Asia' and 'continues to spread.' It seems to be 'a likely next challenger to the currently dominant variants (KP.3.1.1 and descendants),' explains Melbourne (Australia) data expert Mike Honey, who has recently charted a first profile of Xec. But several variant hunters have already set their sights on it. Raj Rajnarayanan, professor at Nyitcom-Arkansas State University, is documenting its advance in various charts posted on X. In one published on August 18, two sequences of Xec were already appearing in Italy, detected in Veneto and Trentino Alto Adige on July 31 and 18, respectively. What stands out, Honey highlights in a focus posted on X, is the 'growth advantage' it is showing 'globally,' estimated at '3.8% per day (27% per week)' compared to the JN.1 variants, which already have additional mutations making them competitive (Honey calls them 'DeFLuQE' variants). According to the expert, the new 'contender' seems to have 'the fastest growth of which I am aware.' Until a few days ago, about 111 samples of this new variant had been reported from 15 countries across 3 continents. Israel and Spain have recently reported their first samples. Xec 'is a mix' of two different variants: 'KS.1.1 (a so-called FLIRT variant) and KP.3.3 (FLuQE variant),' lists

Honey, who believes this new version of Sars-CoV-2 'may have an advantage' particularly from its 'unusual mutation' (T22N), combined with those that already characterize the faster variants. Its growth 'has been stronger in Germany, presumed origin,' but Xec is also making its presence felt in 'neighboring Denmark and the Netherlands.'

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