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NCDHHS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 2021 - 00:00

NCDHHS Reports First Identified Case of B.1.1.7 COVID-19 Variant in NC

RALEIGH

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is reporting the first identification in a North Carolina resident of the COVID-19 variant called B.1.1.7, which was first detected in the United Kingdom in December. The B.1.1.7 variant was identified in a sample from an adult in Mecklenburg County processed by Mako Medical Laboratories. To protect the privacy of the individual, no further information will be released.

In the United States, 195 cases of B.1.1.7 had been reported in 21 states as of Jan. 22, 2021. Early data suggest that this variant may be more contagious than other variants. Current COVID-19 vaccines are expected to be effective against the new variant.

“While expected, identification of this COVID-19 variant in North Carolina is concerning, especially at the same time as we are already seeing very high numbers of cases,” said NCDHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen, MD. “It is more important than ever to practice the 3Ws.”

State health officials advise people to stay home except for essential activities and avoid gathering, especially indoors, with people who do not live with you. If you absolutely must travel or be with people you do not live with, get tested in advance, keep it small and outdoors and always wear a mask.

North Carolina's Modified Stay at Home Order is in effect. This order requires people to stay at home between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. Businesses including restaurants, bars, entertainment venues, personal care businesses, most retail stores and more, are required to close by 10 p.m. In addition, all onsite alcohol consumption sales must end by 9 p.m.

A safe and effective vaccine is now available for health care workers, long-term care residents and staff and adults over 65. Supplies are very limited, and people may have to wait. For more information visit yourspotyourshot.nc.gov (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines).

This press release is related to: