

# Breaking News English.com

**Omicron coronavirus variant spreading worldwide – 29th November, 2021**

## Level 4

A new covid-19 variant called Omicron is spreading worldwide. It was first reported in Botswana and was then detected in South Africa, Hong Kong, Israel and Belgium. It is now a "virus of concern". Epidemiologists say this new strain could be very infectious. It may be able to evade protections our current vaccines give us. Many countries have reinstated travel bans. Despite these, new cases have been reported across Europe.

Scientists are looking at the dangers Omicron might pose. They found 50 genetic changes in the DNA in the spikes of the virus. Vaccines focus on these spikes. Any changes in their DNA could make the virus more dangerous, spreadable and resistant against vaccines. The White House warned that: "When you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility, and you're already having travel-related cases...it is ultimately going to go all over."

## Level 5

A new covid-19 variant is spreading worldwide. The WHO named it Omicron, after a letter of the Greek alphabet. It was first reported in Botswana on the 9th of November. Then it was detected in South Africa and flagged as a "virus of concern". Cases were then reported in Hong Kong, Israel and Belgium. Epidemiologists warned that this new strain could be extremely infectious. It may be able to evade protections afforded us by current vaccines. Many countries have reinstated travel bans. Despite these, new cases have already been reported in the UK, Germany and the Czech Republic.

Scientists are analyzing Omicron for the dangers it might pose. They have found 50 genetic changes in the DNA in the spikes surrounding the crown of the virus. Vaccines focus on these spikes. Any changes in DNA could make the virus more virulent, transmissible and resistant against vaccines. It could take a few weeks to determine how effective our vaccines are. The White House warned that: "When you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility, and you're already having travel-related cases...it is ultimately going to go all over [the world]."

## Level 6

A new variant of the covid-19 virus is beginning to spread worldwide. The WHO named the mutation Omicron, after a letter of the Greek alphabet. It was first reported in Botswana on the 9th of November. Two weeks later, it was detected in South Africa and flagged as a "virus of concern". Soon after this, cases were reported in Hong Kong, Israel, Madagascar and Belgium. Epidemiologists have warned that this new strain could be extremely infectious. They also said it may be able to evade protections afforded us by current vaccines. This has led to countries reinstating travel bans. Despite these, new cases have already been reported in the UK, Germany and the Czech Republic.

Scientists are currently analyzing Omicron to assess the dangers it might pose. They have detected 50 genetic changes in the DNA that affects the spikes surrounding the crown of the virus. Current vaccines focus on these spikes. Any changes in the DNA of the spikes could make the virus more virulent, more transmissible and possibly more resistant against vaccines. Scientists say it could take a few weeks to determine how effective our vaccines are against Omicron. The White House's chief medical adviser has warned that: "When you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility, and you're already having travel-related cases...it almost invariably is ultimately going to go all over [the world]."