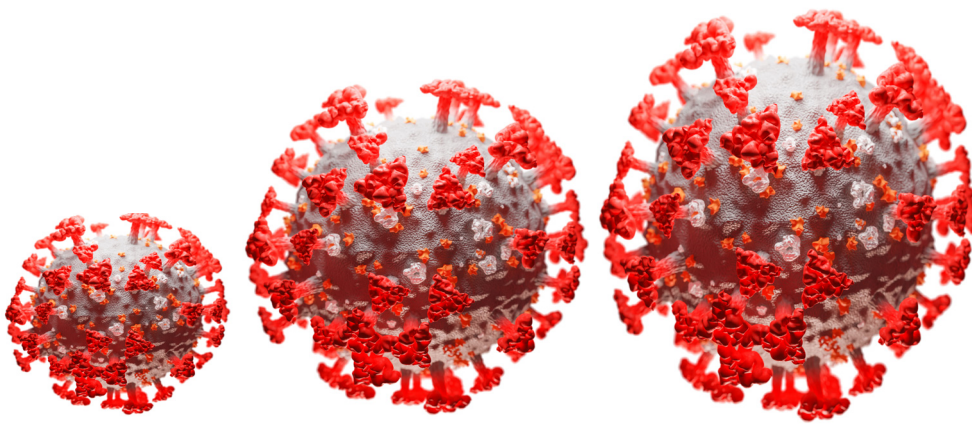


COVID-19 Situation Update - 114

18 January 2021

This situation update is on the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) reported cases and deaths, Globally, Regionally, for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Countries, French Territories, and the United Kingdom Overseas Territories.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Virus Evolution



Region of the Americas

41,681,270
cases

961,286
deaths in

56
countries, areas, or territories

Global

93,805,612
cases

2,026,093
deaths in

236
countries, areas, or territories

What does it mean to say a virus mutates or changes?

When a virus replicates or makes copies of itself, it sometimes changes a little bit. These changes are called “mutations.” A virus with one or several new mutations is referred to as a “variant” of the original virus.

The more viruses circulate, the more they may change. These changes can occasionally result in a virus variant that is better adapted to its environment compared to the original virus. This process of changing and selection of successful variants is called “virus evolution.”

Some mutations can lead to changes in a virus’s characteristics, such as altered transmission (for example, it may spread more easily) or severity (for example, it may cause more severe disease).

Some viruses change quickly and others more slowly. SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, tends to change more slowly than others such as HIV

or influenza viruses. This could in part be explained by the virus’s internal “proofreading mechanism” which can correct “mistakes” when it makes copies of itself. Scientists continue to study this mechanism to better understand how it works.

Should I be concerned about SARS-CoV-2 changing?

It is normal for viruses to change, but it is still something scientists follow closely because there can be important implications. All viruses, including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, change over time. So far hundreds of variations of this virus have been identified worldwide. WHO and partners have been following them closely since January 2020.

[Read more...](#)

COVID-19 highlights:

COUNTRY	COVID-19 CASE UPDATE
Anguilla	last case on 02 January 2021
Antigua and Barbuda	last case on 16 January 2021
Barbados	last case on 15 January 2021
British Virgin Islands (UK)	last case on 24 December 2020
Dominica	last case on 15 January 2021
Grenada	last case on 08 January 2021
Montserrat	no new cases for 179 days
Saint Kitts and Nevis	last case on 07 January 2021
Saint Lucia	last case on 18 January 2021
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	last case on 17 January 2021

- **Antigua and Barbuda** - As of January 16, 2021, 2 new COVID-19 cases were reported.
- **Barbados** - On January 15, 2021, 37 new persons tested positive. The Ministry of Health and Wellnes is investigating a possible COVID-19 related death.
- **Montserrat** - The Ministry of Health and Social Services is commencing its COVID-19 vaccination programme, including public education and awareness as to the safety and importance of the vaccination. The first shipment of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is expected to arrive on island in the first week of February and will be available for distribution shortly after.
- **Saint Lucia** - Five new COVID-19 related deaths were reported on January 18, 2021. Two new deaths were recorded on January 16, 2021.
- **Saint Vincent and the Grendadines** - 16 new cases were recorded on January 17, 2021. In a January 18, 2021 press release, a second COVID-19 death was reported.

Classification of transmission scenarios

WHO recommends using the following categories to describe transmission patterns at national and sub-national levels (wherever possible) to guide decisions for preparedness, readiness and response activities.

CATEGORY NAME	DEFINITION
No cases	Countries/territories/areas with no cases
Sporadic cases	Countries/territories/areas with one or more cases, imported or locally detected
Cluster of cases	Countries/territories/areas experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures
Community transmission	Countries/territories/areas experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains • Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance • Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area

Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Countries, French Territories and United Kingdom Overseas Territories

COUNTRY	CONFIRMED CASES	ACTIVE CASES	DEATHS	# OF TESTS	TRANSMISSION TYPE	STATUS OF SCHOOLS	TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS	MASKS MANDATORY	STATE OF EMERGENCY (CURFEW)	COVID-19 WEB ADDRESS AND HOTLINE
ANGUILLA	15	0	0	6,521	Sporadic cases	Open	Yes	No	No	https://beatcovid19.ai/ (264) 476-7627
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	189	27	6	7,744	Sporadic cases	Open	Yes	-	Yes	https://ab.gov.ag/detail_page.php?page=42 (268) 462-6843
BARBADOS	1,095	-	7	87,241	Clusters of cases	Online	Yes	In public buildings	Yes	https://gisbarbados.gov.bb/covid-19/ (246) 536-4500
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	121	19	1	16,204	Clusters of cases	Both face to face & online	Yes	Yes	No	https://bvi.gov.vg/covid-19 (284) 852-7650
DOMINICA	111	7	0	8,454	Sporadic cases	Open	Yes	Yes	No	http://dominica.gov.dm/corona (767) 448-2151
FRENCH GUIANA	14,975	-	75	-	Community transmission	-	Yes	-	-	
GRENADA	139	9	1	18,314	Sporadic cases	Varied stages of reopening	Lifted	Yes	Yes	https://covid19.gov.gd/ (473) 458-4787 / (473) 538-4787
GUADELOUPE	8,834	-	156	--	Community transmission	-	Yes	-	-	https://www.guadeloupe.ars.sante.fr/
MARTINIQUE	6,227	-	43	122,755	Community transmission	-	Yes	-	-	https://www.martinique.ars.sante.fr/
MONTSERRAT	13	0	1	814	No cases	Face to face sessions	Yes	No	No	https://www.gov.ms/covid-19/
SAINT BARTHELEMY	224	-	0	-	Sporadic cases	-	-	-	-	
ST KITTS & NEVIS	34	-	0	6,391	Sporadic cases	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	https://www.covid19.gov.kn/
SAINT LUCIA	656	310	8	22,060	Clusters of cases	Closed.	Yes	Specific settings only	Yes	https://www.covid19response.lc/
SAINT MARTIN	1,046	-	12	-	Community transmission	-	-	-	-	https://www.stmartinweek.fr/
ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	494	374	2	24,705	Clusters of cases	Online	No	Specific settings only	No	http://health.gov.vc/health/index.php/c (784) 534-4325
TOTAL	34,173	746	312	321,203						

Table 1: COVID-19 status in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Countries, French Territories and United Kingdom Overseas Territories. 'Sporadic cases' indicates countries/territories/areas with one or more cases, imported or locally detected. 'Clusters of cases' indicates countries/territories/areas experiencing cases clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures.

Data in red new. Disclaimer: Data is updated by 5:00PM each day and there could be delays in reporting. Any discrepancies from national data figures will be edited on the next issue.

BE AWARE.

PREPARE.

ACT.

PAHO's Response



Health Care Workers: Surviving the COVID-19 Pandemic

Health Care Workers across the globe continue to go above and beyond the call of duty. In the Caribbean, the challenges are no different, the physical and mental affects, stigma and discrimination, fear of infection, and overall trying their best to keep it together. They show up everyday and put us first.

This [video](#) feature shares stories of health care workers in the Eastern Caribbean and how they survive.

[Link](#) to previous Situation Updates



www.paho.org/coronavirus



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