

IS THE NEW DELTACRON COVID VARIANT REAL? WHAT SCIENTISTS SAY. READ HERE

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Dubbed as '[Deltacron](#)', the new Covid-19 strain that combines the traits of both the Delta variant and the Omicron variant, have been detected in Cyprus.

As Deltacron trended online, several experts have opined that it is not a real Covid-19 variant. This comes at a time when the world is in the grip of Omicron, the new strain of SARS-CoV-2.

Virologist Tom Peacock said on social media that Deltacron may not be an actual variant, but possibly a result of contamination.

"So when new variants come through sequencing lab, contamination isn't that uncommon (very very tiny volumes of liquid can cause this) - just usually these fairly clearly contaminated sequences are not reported by major media outlets," he explained.

"Recombinants are definitely worth keeping an eye on and almost definitely will eventually be found, this particular example is almost definitely contamination though," he wrote.

Physician-scientist Eric Topol termed Deltacron as a 'scariant', instead of a variant. "New subtype of 'scariant' that isn't even a real variant but scares a lot of people, unnecessarily," he said.

It may be noted that Deltacron is not any official name. Leondios Kostrikis, professor of biological sciences at the University of Cyprus, called the strain 'Deltacron'.

"There are currently omicron and delta co-infections and we found this strain that is a combination of these two," Kostrikis said in an interview with Sigma TV Friday. The discovery was named "deltacron" due to the identification of omicron-like genetic signatures within the delta genomes, he said.

Kostrikis and his team have identified 25 such cases and the statistical analysis shows that the relative frequency of the combined infection is higher among patients hospitalized due to Covid-19 as compared to non-hospitalized patients.

The sequences of the 25 deltacron cases were sent to GISAID, the international database that tracks changes in the virus, on Jan. 7.

"We will see in the future if this strain is more pathological or more contagious or if it will prevail" over delta and omicron, he said. But his personal view is that this strain will also be displaced by the highly contagious omicron variant.

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