

# WHO calls for new measures to identify COVID-19 variants

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(HealthDay)—The World Health Organization says steps to expand

genome sequencing of new variants of the coronavirus are needed as the pandemic enters its second year, the *Associated Press* reported.

New variants found in Britain and South Africa appear to be more contagious and have triggered new travel restrictions. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at an online news conference Monday from Geneva that "there will be setbacks and new challenges in the year ahead—for example, new variants of COVID-19 and helping people who are tired of the pandemic continue to combat it," according to the *AP*.

WHO is working with scientists around the world to "better understand any and all changes to the virus" and their impact, Tedros said.

He added he wanted to "underscore the importance of increasing genomic sequencing capacity worldwide" and of sharing information with the United Nations health agency and other countries. He said that "only if countries are looking and testing effectively will you be able to pick up variants and adjust strategies to cope."

**More information:** [AP News Article](#)

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