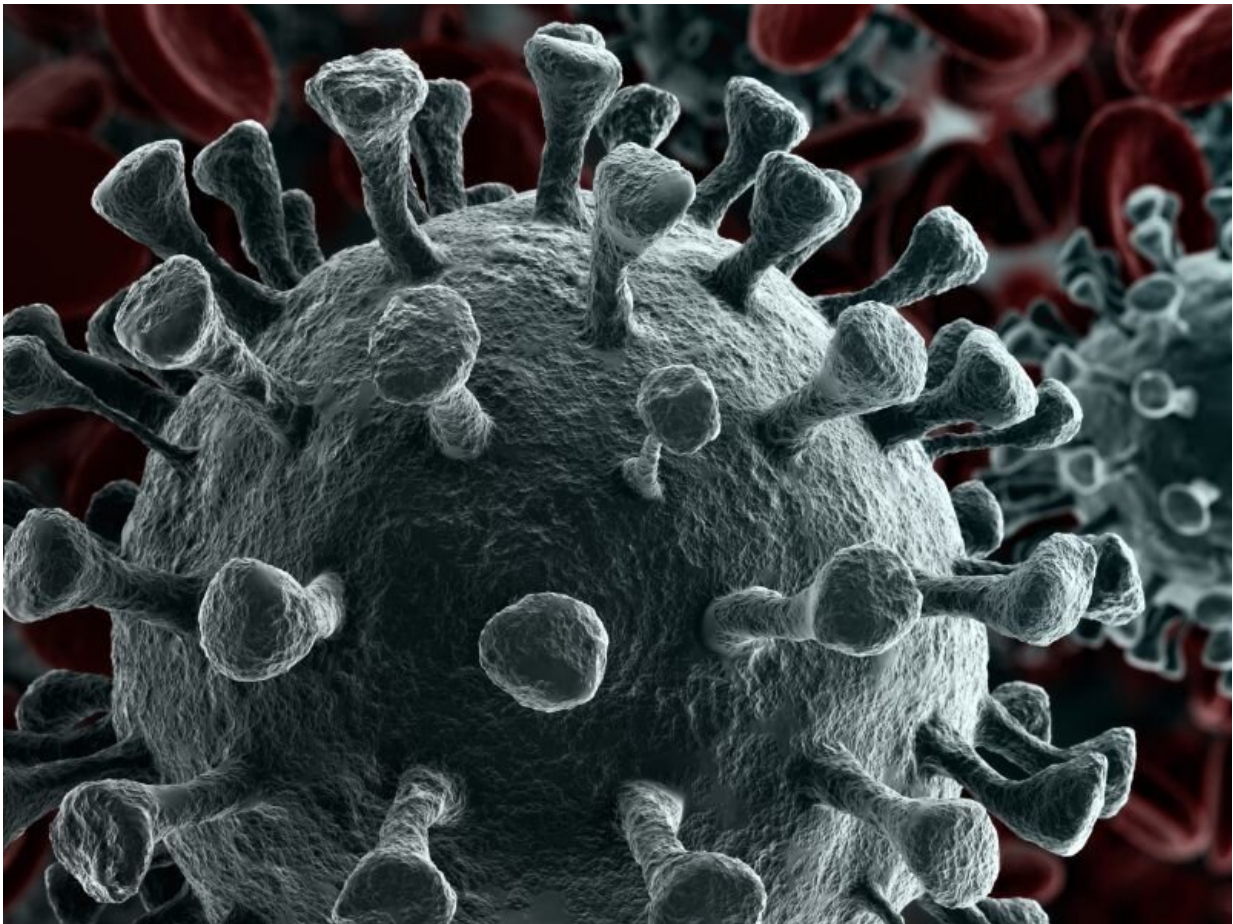


Mutation that helps coronavirus evade vaccines showing up in British variant

February 2 2021



(HealthDay)—Public Health England reported a disturbing discovery on

Monday: The variant that has brought that country to its knees appears to be gaining a mutation that could help it elude vaccines, *The New York Times* reported.

The variant, known as B.1.1.7, first came to light in December as scientists determined that it had rapidly become more common across Britain in just a couple of months. Since the discovery of B.1.1.7 in Britain, the variant has been reported in 72 other countries. The United States confirmed its first case of B.1.1.7 on Dec. 29. Since then, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recorded 467 samples of the variant in 32 states.

Public Health England said that the worrisome mutation known as E484K appears to have arisen in 11 of more than 200,000 B.1.1.7 coronavirus variant samples in the United Kingdom. Two variants in Brazil have also gained the same mutation, *The Times* reported.

British health officials estimated that the variant's rate of infection is 25 to 40 percent higher than that of other forms of the coronavirus. Some preliminary evidence suggests that it may also cause more deaths, *The Times* reported.

In South Africa, where another more infectious variant is now dominant, the Novavax and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have both been less effective in trials. That variant also carries the E484K mutation, and it has been reported in 31 countries so far, *The Times* reported. In the United States, it has turned up in Maryland and in South Carolina, according to the CDC.

More information: [The New York Times Article](#)
[More Information: CDC](#)

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