

Sullivan, Michelle A HLTH:EX

From: Krajden, Mel [BCCDC] <Mel.Krajden@bccdc.ca>
Sent: November 26, 2021 10:29 AM
To: Gustafson, Reka HLTH:IN; Sandhu, Jatinder HLTH:IN; XT:Patrick, David HLTH:IN; Skowronski, Danuta [BCCDC]; Singal, Mayank [BCCDC]; Naus, Monika [BCCDC]; _BCCDC_Micro Oncall
Cc: Henry, Bonnie HLTH:EX
Subject: WHO has now classified B.1.529 as a Variant of Concern (VOC) with the name Omicron

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

- WHO has now classified B.1.529 as a Variant of Concern (VOC) with the name Omicron

[https://www.who.int/news/item/26-11-2021-classification-of-omicron-\(b.1.1.529\)-sars-cov-2-variant-of-concern](https://www.who.int/news/item/26-11-2021-classification-of-omicron-(b.1.1.529)-sars-cov-2-variant-of-concern)

Sullivan, Michelle A HLTH:EX

From: Krajden, Mel [BCCDC] <Mel.Krajden@bccdc.ca>
Sent: November 26, 2021 12:49 PM
To: XT:Amos, Heather HLBC:IN; Prystajecy, Natalie [BCCDC]
Cc: Sandhu, Jatinder HLTH:IN; Gustafson, Reka HLTH:IN; Henry, Bonnie HLTH:EX
Subject: Re: very high level key messages for the SA variant

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

copying Bonnie. mel

From: Amos, Heather [BCCDC]
Sent: November 26, 2021 12:44 PM
To: Prystajecy, Natalie [BCCDC]; Krajden, Mel [BCCDC]
Cc: Sandhu, Jat [BCCDC]; Gustafson, Reka [BCCDC]
Subject: RE: very high level key messages for the SA variant

Thanks. These might be good to share with Bonnie as well.

From: Prystajecy, Natalie [BCCDC] <Natalie.Prystajecy@bccdc.ca>
Sent: Friday, November 26, 2021 12:33 PM
To: Krajden, Mel [BCCDC] <Mel.Krajden@bccdc.ca>; Amos, Heather [BCCDC] <heather.amos@bccdc.ca>
Cc: Sandhu, Jat [BCCDC] <jat.sandhu@bccdc.ca>; Gustafson, Reka [BCCDC] <reka.gustafson@phsa.ca>
Subject: Re: very high level key messages for the SA variant

Fantastic messages. Just fixing that it should be B.1.1.529

From: Krajden, Mel [BCCDC]
Sent: Friday, November 26, 2021 12:24 PM
To: Amos, Heather [BCCDC]
Cc: Prystajecy, Natalie [BCCDC]; Sandhu, Jat [BCCDC]; Gustafson, Reka [BCCDC]
Subject: very high level key messages for the SA variant

Key messages related to B.1.1.529 (Omicron) which has been declared as a Variant of Concern (VOC)

This variant has not yet been detected in the approximately 98,000 SARS-CoV-2 strains sequenced in BC but it has been detected in a number of countries outside of Africa.

Emerging variants are expected during the COVID pandemic. Parts of the world remain unvaccinated, and vaccination does not totally protect against transmission. Rather vaccines protect against severe disease.

Because the mRNA vaccines produce the entire spike protein, which is the part of the virus that is used to infect cells, it is very unlikely that any variant will interfere with the vaccine's ability to protect against severe disease.

The World Health Organization and countries around the world including Canada are carefully monitoring for more information on the transmissibility and disease severity related to B.1.1.529 (Omicron). All hands are on deck.

In BC we have very robust systems in place to monitor for vaccine protection in real time, and to perform surveillance for emerging variants including from travelers.