



COVID-19 Pandemic: Public and Healthcare Knowledge and Perceptions

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Description

Because of the impact on individuals and public health, the recent pandemic caused by the novel Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has become a major concern for people and governments all over the world. Concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic have grown since the emergence of BA.2, a highly contagious sub-variant of the Omicron variant of coronavirus.

The variant's characteristics and symptoms

According to the World Health Organization, the lesser-known BA.2 variant is also likely to be as severe as the 'original' Omicron strain (WHO). The WHO has emphasized that public health authorities should continue to monitor BA.2 as a distinct sub-lineage of Omicron. It goes on to say that preliminary data from population-level reinfection studies show that reinfection with BA.2 after infection with BA.1 provides strong protection against reinfection with BA.2.

Concerns have been raised about the difficulty in detecting the BA.2 variant, or Omicron's stealth sub-variant. The new variant lacks key spike protein mutations, which are typically required for rapid PCR tests to detect infection. It combines two sub-variants of the COVID virus named BA.1 and BA.2 from the Omicron strain. According to WHO, the variant primarily affects the upper respiratory tract. The BA.2 variant, like Delta, does not affect the lungs, so symptoms such as loss of taste or smell and shortness of breath are not present.

This variant has been linked to dizziness and extreme fatigue in patients. These symptoms are likely to appear two to three days after contracting the virus. Fever, coughing, sore throat, sore hand, muscular fatigue, cold, and an elevated heart rate are all possible symptoms.

Possibility of reinfection?

While the omicron variant is linked to an increased risk of reinfections and breakthrough infections, catching this problematic variant may have a silver lining. According to a recent study published on medRxiv, prior infection with the BA.1 sub lineage provides significant protection against its relative BA.2, which is now the most widely circulating strain.

Researchers at the State Serum Institute in Copenhagen, Denmark, are interested in this topic after discovering that, while nearly two million Danish residents tested positive for COVID-19 between late November and mid-February, only 1,739 reported reinfection, defined as two positive tests separated by 20–60 days.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a wide-ranging impact on the world. The lack of information, the need for accurate information, and the speed with which it is disseminated are critical, as this pandemic necessitates the cooperation of entire population.

The rapid survey received a positive response, indicating that healthcare professionals and the general public were well informed about the coronavirus. They are aware of the precautions that must be taken to prevent the spread of the disease. The authors can speculate that the lockdown in India would be effective based on the information available.

The public receives a large amount of information through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, and the medical community and government must devise strategies to ensure that accurate information is spread through these channels. The public's awareness is quite high, and it is critical that knowledge of communication channels be known and prioritised throughout the pandemic.