

Risk Assessment Summary for SARS CoV-2 Sublineage BA.2.86

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CDC is posting updates on respiratory viruses every week; for the latest information, please visit [CDC Respiratory Virus Updates](#).

CDC has detected a new SARS-CoV-2 variant labeled BA.2.86. CDC is continually monitoring for new variants and studying their potential impact on public health.

Background

All viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2), change over time. These viruses with changes are called “variants.” These changes can affect how contagious a virus is, how well it responds to treatment, and how severely it affects people. Last week, a new variant of SARS-CoV-2 called BA.2.86 was detected in samples from people in Denmark and Israel. At least two cases have been identified in the United States. This variant is notable because it has multiple genetic differences from previous versions of SARS-CoV-2.

Current Risk Assessment

Based on what CDC knows now, existing tests used to detect and medications used to treat COVID-19 appear to be effective with this variant. BA.2.86 may be more capable of causing infection in people who have previously had COVID-19 or who have received COVID-19 vaccines. Scientists are evaluating the effectiveness of the forthcoming, updated COVID-19 vaccine. CDC’s current assessment is that this updated vaccine will be effective at reducing severe disease and hospitalization. At this point, there is no evidence that this variant is causing more severe illness. That assessment may change as additional scientific data are developed. CDC will share more as we know more.