

## COVID variant warning: Brazil P.1 variant infects many who had recovered, devastating Manaus

B.1.1.7, first identified in Britain, has demonstrated the power to spread far and fast. In South Africa, a mutant called B.1.351 can dodge human antibodies, blunting the effectiveness of some vaccines.

Scientists have also had their eye on a third concerning [variant that arose in Brazil](#), called P.1. Research had been slower on P.1 since its discovery in late December, leaving scientists unsure of just how much to worry about it.

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Now three studies offer a sobering history of P.1's meteoric rise in the Amazonian city of Manaus. It most likely arose there in November and then fueled a record-breaking spike of coronavirus cases. It came to dominate the city partly because of an increased contagiousness, the research found.

But it also gained the ability to infect some people who had immunity from previous bouts of Covid-19. And laboratory experiments suggest that P.1 could weaken the protective effect of a Chinese vaccine now in use in Brazil.

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"It's right to be worried about P.1, and this data gives us the reason why," said William Hanage, an epidemiologist at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

P.1 is now spreading across the rest of Brazil and has been found in 24 other countries.

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