

Danger ahead? How a COVID variant with the transmissibility of Omicron and the deadliness of SARS could emerge

As SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, has spread throughout the world, many observers have failed to take note of the [millions](#) of illnesses and deaths caused by HIV—another virus that has approached pandemic status during its history.

Now an HIV variant that is more virulent and transmissible has been [discovered](#) in the Netherlands, where it apparently has been circulating for decades, according to new research.

Luckily, none of the variant's new mutations make it resistant to widely used therapies. But the finding may offer a warning for how the COVID pandemic could proceed in the coming months: viruses do not necessarily evolve to become milder.

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"Delta was a warning shot across our bow, showing the virus can become both more transmissible and more virulent. There is nothing that we know of that restrains this virus from becoming as lethal as its cousin [SARS-CoV-1](#). We still have no clue whether one genetic change or many make SARS-CoV-1 so much more virulent than SARS-CoV-2. As long as we are in the dark about what it is that determines the virulence of the virus, we have no idea which direction the next variant will come from," [said infectious disease researcher William Haseltine.]

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)