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## COVID-19 variants in MMDHD jurisdiction

Ithaca, Stanton, St. Johns- Viruses are constantly changing, and this includes SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These genetic variations occur over time and can lead to the emergence of new variants that may have different characteristics.

Several COVID-19 variants have been found in Mid-Michigan Health Department's (MMDHD) jurisdiction (Clinton, Gratiot, and Montcalm counties) over the course of the pandemic. This includes the following variants: B.1.1.7, B.1.351, B.1429, P.1, and most recently, the new B.1617 variant.

The new B.1.617 variant (India variant) has been identified in a Clinton County adult with recent travel to India. This variant was initially detected in India last December. The CDC has not yet included the India variant on its [list of concerning strains](#), but its emergence is a reminder that COVID-19 is still a threat.

"We know that multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are circulating in The United States, in Michigan, and right here in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties," said Marcus Cheatham, MMDHD's Health Officer. "These variants are more contagious than other strains and are able to spread more quickly within our communities, so our best defense is for everyone to get vaccinated. "

Mid-Michigan District Health Department continues to offer several COVID-19 vaccination clinics each week. Those who have not been vaccinated are encouraged to visit our website at [www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org) to schedule an appointment.

MMDHD is asking community members to remain vigilant and practice these strategies to help slow the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay at least six feet away from others not in your household
- Avoid attending large gatherings
- Wear a mask around others
- Avoid crowded areas or gatherings
- Ventilate indoor spaces if around others
- Seek testing if ill, exposed, or after travel
- Follow isolation or quarantine guidance if ill, exposed, or waiting on test results

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot, and Montcalm Counties.*

*We take action to protect, maintain and improve the health of our community.  
Advancing innovative solutions to achieve healthier outcomes*

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