

312 COVID-19 SUB-VARIANT JN.1 CASES DETECTED IN INDIA

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Health workers collect swab samples for COVID-19 tests. File. | Photo Credit: B. Velankanni Raj

A total of 312 cases of COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been detected in the country so far, with about 47% of them recorded in Kerala, according to the INSACOG's data updated on Tuesday.

Ten States and 2 Union Territories have so far detected the presence of the JN.1 sub-variant of the virus. They are Kerala (147), Goa (51), Gujarat (34), Maharashtra (26), Tamil Nadu (22), Delhi (16), Karnataka (eight), Rajasthan (five), Telangana (two), and Odisha (one), according to the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG).

The INSACOG's data showed 279 Covid cases recorded in the country in December had the presence of JN.1, while 33 such cases were detected in November. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified JN.1 as a separate "variant of interest" given its rapidly increasing spread but said it poses a "low" global public health risk.

The JN.1 sub-variant of the coronavirus was previously classified as a variant of interest (VOI) as part of the BA.2.86 sub-lineages, the parent lineage that is classified as a VOI, the world body said.

However, in recent weeks, JN.1 cases continued to be reported from multiple countries and its prevalence has rapidly increased globally.

The Centre has asked States and Union Territories to maintain a constant vigil amid an uptick in the number of COVID cases and the detection of the JN.1 sub-variant in the country. India recorded 573 new coronavirus infections, while the active cases stood at 4,565, according to data released by the Health Ministry on Tuesday.

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