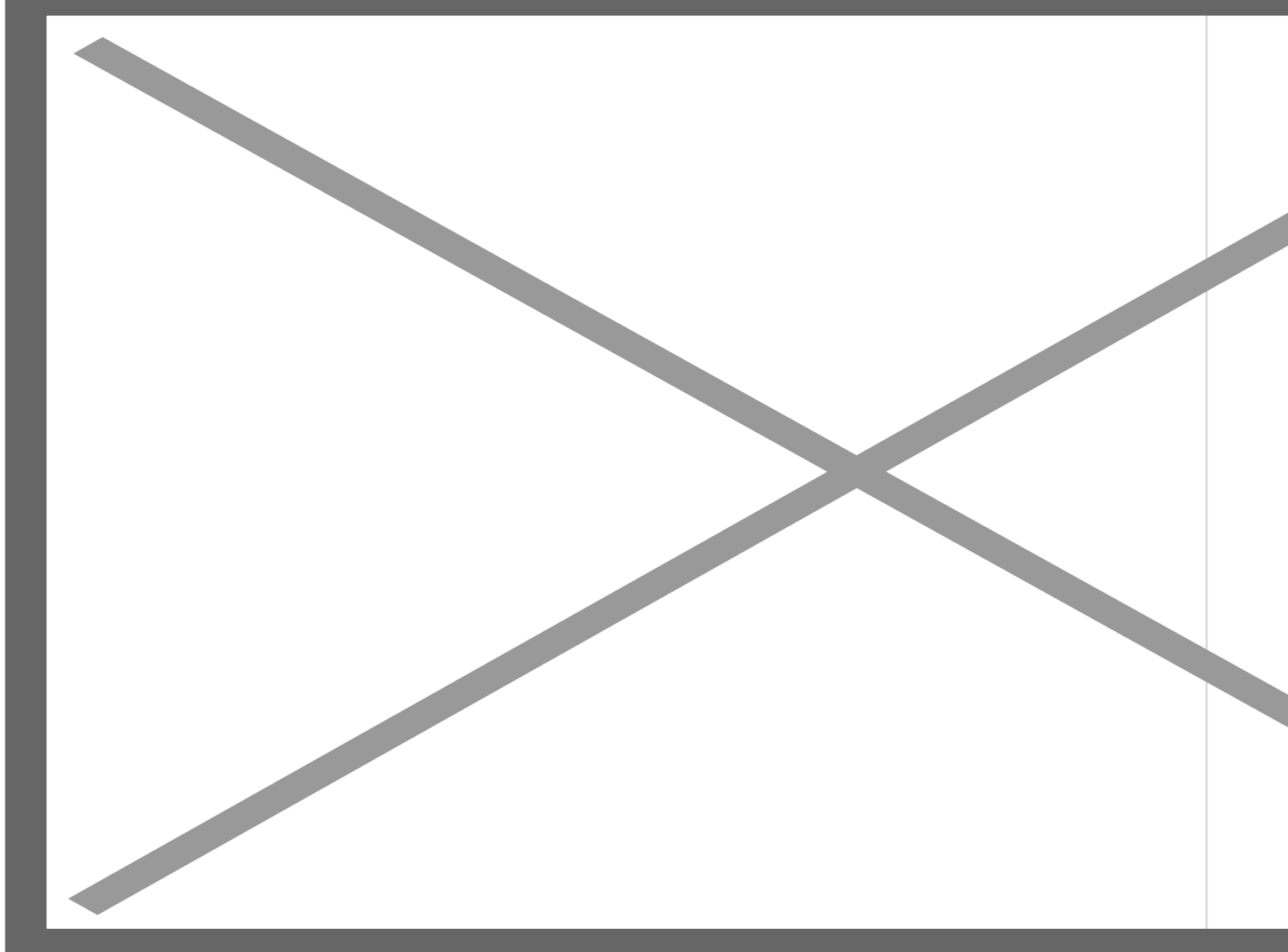


Dr. Fauci says British coronavirus may have reached the United States

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Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Dr. Anthony Fauci. (Photo: AFP)

Washington, December 22 (RHC)-- The top U.S. infectious disease doctor has warned Americans to assume that a more contagious new strain of the COVID-19 virus detected in the United Kingdom is already in the United States. Immunologist Anthony Stephen Fauci told U.S. media on Tuesday it was certainly possible that the new strain was already present in the United States.

"When you have this amount of spread within a place like the UK, you really need to assume that is here already," Fauci said. The government's top health official noted that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo had already suggested testing all arrivals to New York City.

British officials warned that the new variant of the novel coronavirus might be more contagious and spread more easily in children compared to the original virus that was first detected in Wuhan, China last year.

The World Health Organization (WHO) urged the public to remain vigilant during the upcoming holiday season as cases related to the UK's new COVID-19 strain had already appeared in other countries. It is estimated that the new variant spreads 50 percent to 70 percent faster than the original form of the virus.

Earlier strains of coronavirus found it harder to infect children in comparison to adults which were more susceptible to disease.

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