

# *New SARS-COV-2 variants present in most severe cases and deaths in Cuba*

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**The Cuban Minister of Public Health, José Angel Portal Miranda.**

Havana, May 13 (RHC)-- New variants of the SARS-COV-2 virus that have entered Cuba in recent months have influenced the increased transmissibility of COVID-19. They are currently associated with the most severe, critical, and deceased cases.

Since the beginning of the pandemic and up to December 2020, circulation of the D614G variant

(Group G) was reported in more than 90% of the samples analyzed in Cuba. However, this pattern changed in the last period due to the arrival of international travelers, said the Minister of Public Health, José Angel Portal Miranda, on the television program Round Table.

Different groups and variants of the coronavirus have been identified worldwide because it has been mutating or changing over time.

Within these variants, the WHO has defined that those reported in the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Brazil are of concern due to their greater transmissibility and possible implications for the severity of the disease, the immune response, or the efficacy of current vaccines, said Portal Miranda. He warned that all three are circulating in the country.

Portal said that a study of severe and critical cases in Havana showed the presence of the variant reported in South Africa in 87.7% of the patients.

The Minister specified that 68.1 % of the deaths in the country in the last few months had the South African variant and that in Havana, this rate was 80.4 %.

He also said that the western provinces (Pinar del Rio, Havana, Mayabeque, and Artemisa) show the highest variant patterns.

In Havana, the most complex epidemic scenario, he pointed out that a great diversity of autochthonous variants and mutational patterns is observed. Since February, there has been an increase in those reported in South Africa, United Kingdom, and California.



**Radio Habana Cuba**