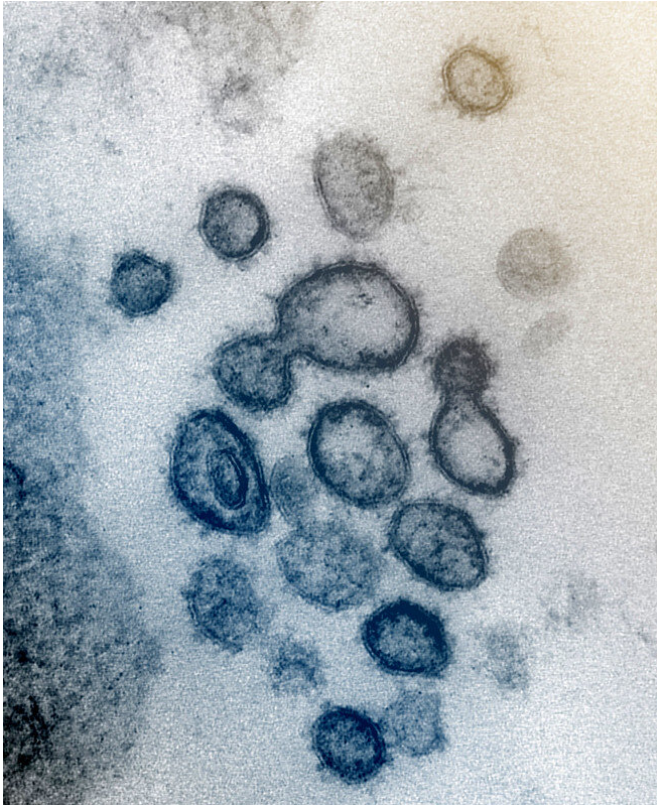


Canada confirms first COVID Omicron infections

29 November 2021



This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

Canada said Sunday it has detected its first cases of the new Omicron strain of COVID, in two people who had traveled recently to Nigeria.

Both [patients](#) are in isolation while public health authorities trace their possible contacts, said federal and Ontario provincial officials.

"I was informed today by the Public Health Agency

of Canada that testing and monitoring of COVID-19 cases has confirmed two cases of the Omicron variant of concern in Ontario," Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos said in a statement.

"As the monitoring and testing continues," he added, "it is expected that other cases of this variant will be found in Canada."

The government of Ontario confirmed that the two cases are in the capital Ottawa.

The World Health Organization has listed Omicron as a "variant of concern" and countries around the world are now restricting travel from southern Africa, where the new strain was first detected, and taking other new precautions.

The WHO says it could take several weeks to know if there are significant changes in transmissibility, severity or implications for COVID vaccines, tests and treatments.

On Friday, Canada banned travel from seven African countries over concerns about the spread of the Omicron strain. Nigeria was not one of them.

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