

Virus variant confirmed in Atchison County

**(KAIR)--A COVID-19 variant has been confirmed in Atchison County.**

**That word is delivered in a release from the Atchison County office of the Northeast Kansas Multi-County Health Departments and Atchison County Emergency Management.**

**According to the release, the variant, the first confirmed in Atchison County, is identified as the P.1 variant, described by the Centers for Disease Control as having first been identified in Brazil, and later in Tokyo, Japan. It was first confirmed in the United States at the end of January.**

**P.1 is listed as a variant of concern, meaning there is evidence of an increase in transmissibility, more severe disease, leading to increased hospitalizations or death, and a reduced effectiveness of vaccines.**

**The release encourages Atchison County residents to continue to wear face masks in public places, practice social distancing, continue proper handwashing, and to get tested and stay home if symptoms begin to be shown.**

**According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, variants of concern, including P.1, are confirmed in five additional local counties, with two cases confirmed in both Doniphan and Brown counties, while seven are confirmed in Jefferson County. Leavenworth and Pottawatomie counties have four confirmed cases each.**

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