

High percentage of the British strain of the virus exists in Cyprus – Reduction of serious cases only through compliance with the measures

The British strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus is detected in a percentage of 25.7% in the community of Cyprus. According to specialized tests carried out on positive samples sent to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), it appears that the new more contagious virus mutation exists in the community, causing a large spread of the disease and an increase in cases and hospitalizations.

In particular, the ECDC informed that the British strain **was detected in 56 cases from an additional 208 positive samples**, in which sequencing was successfully carried out. In total, the ECDC sequencing for **338 samples** has been completed **so far, and the British strain has been identified in a total of 87 cases, a percentage of 25.7%**. These are positive samples of the January – February period.

As reported in an ECDC report, the British strain is more than 50% contagious, affects younger people and leads to an increase in hospital admissions.

As the data shows, the above characteristics of the British strain are also observed in Cyprus, since **the hospital admissions of the last 10 days mainly concern healthy younger people**, who develop respiratory problems. Specifically, **70% of those hospitalized are from the District of Lemesos**, where there is a higher epidemiological burden.

The only weapon for the protection of our health is to comply with the basic **measures of distancing, personal hygiene and reduction of social contacts**. Along with the increase of the vaccination coverage of the population, proper use of masks and careful socialization can save our lives, lead to a safe gradual return to normality and contribute to a faster restart in the near future.

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