

The Viral Pokemon of the 21st Century: SARS-CoV-2's Mega Evolutions

It is an undeniable fact that the COVID-19 pandemic which was caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is like a ticking time bomb that is ready to totally wipe out the entire humanity if it's not prevented early enough. All of the people, regardless of race and color, are forced to make a transition from the usual into the new normal, compelling them to adapt and adjust to this catastrophic situation. But, it is quite scary to know that just like the characters in the anime "pokemon", this coronavirus can also mutate and evolve depending on its hostile environment and based on the given circumstance it is facing.

As mentioned by the World Health Organization (WHO), there are hundreds of variants of this virus that they have been closely monitoring as of January 2020. However, some of these changes that cause to make different variants are considered harmless, unless it changes the virus' genetic material that can affect some of its properties (e.g. transmission time, extremity). Moreover, the Alpha, Beta, Delta, and Gamma variants are the ones to look out for.

As of now, one of the most famous known variants of COVID-19 is the "Delta Variant". It was mentioned that it originally came from the country of India last December and according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, this type of mutated virus causes severe infections and spreads faster than the other form of this virus (2 times more contagious). It could bring more complications to those people who are unvaccinated rather than to those who are vaccinated. Furthermore, this type of mutation can continue to change, that's why there is still more to learn about this variant.

On the other hand, aside from the Delta variant, another strain of newly mutated virus called the Lambda variant is making its way to infect the whole nation. Based on a report made by Lapid (2021), it was first identified in the country of Peru in late 2020. She added that some Japanese researchers unveiled that it is highly dangerous and it possesses high resistance against all the vaccines compared to the original strain. Sadly, last August 15, 2021, the Philippines detected and reported its first case of the COVID-19 Lambda variant on a 35-year-old woman. But the DOH tagged her as "recovered" after the 10-day isolation she underwent.

Although it may sound like a cliché, it is indeed true that change is inevitable. We humans change and evolve over time, and if we do, this virus can do it too because they are also subject

to change. But one thing is for sure, and that is the virus can't destroy humans, while humans can destroy the virus. With this kind of optimism, we can make the impossible possible. By means of getting vaccinated and staying at home, we can make this happen. However, if you need to go out, remember to always wear your mask, keep a safe distance, and always disinfect your hands. These are some of the simple and basic reminders you need to remember in order for you to be safe against this virus together with its mega evolved forms.

Sources:

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