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## Mild Variant Linked to Most Covid Cases in Bangkok

### Description

The NB.1.8.1 strain has become the main Covid-19 variant in Thailand over the past year. However, health officials have stated there is no indication that it spreads more quickly or causes more severe illness.

Dr Montien Kanasawat, director-general of the Department of Disease Control (DDC), noted a slight increase in Covid-19 cases compared to the previous week. No clusters or new deaths have been reported.

Authorities have urged the public to continue basic precautions, especially to protect young children, the elderly, and those with health conditions. People in crowded areas are advised to wear masks and wash hands frequently. Those with symptoms should seek medical care.

The DDC reported a total of 3,642 cases of Covid-19 and one death this year as of 23 May.

Most cases occurred in individuals aged 30–35, followed by those over 60 and people aged 20–29. Despite the recent rise, case numbers are still below the five-year median.

Data from the Public Health Research Institute, covering 1 January 2025 to 23 April 2026, showed NB.1.8.1 was present in 50.95% of samples. This was followed by JN.1 at 24.97% and XEC at 9.14%.

Deputy director-general Dr Direk Khampaen stated that Covid-19 is now considered an endemic or seasonal disease in Thailand. However, he emphasised the importance of maintaining good hygiene and preventive measures.

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### Vocabulary List:

1. **variant** //ˈveriənt// (noun): a different form of something, especially a virus
2. **endemic** //ɛnˈdɛmɪk// (adjective): present regularly in a particular place
3. **precautions** //prɪˈkɔːʃənz// (noun): actions taken to avoid danger or harm
4. **clusters** //ˈklʌstəz// (noun): groups of cases or things close together
5. **median** //ˈmiːdiən// (noun): the middle value in a set of numbers
6. **hygiene** //ˈhaɪdʒɪn// (noun): practices that keep you healthy and clean

### Comprehension Questions



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## Multiple Choice

1. What is the main Covid-19 variant in Thailand over the past year?  
Option: JN.1  
Option: XEC  
Option: NB.1.8.1  
Option: Delta
2. How many total cases of Covid-19 were reported in Thailand as of 23 May?  
Option: 3,642 cases  
Option: 4,500 cases  
Option: 2,000 cases  
Option: 5,000 cases
3. What age group had the most Covid-19 cases?  
Option: 20-29  
Option: 30-35  
Option: 60+  
Option: 0-19
4. Which variant had a 24.97% presence in samples?  
Option: NB.1.8.1  
Option: JN.1  
Option: XEC  
Option: Alpha
5. As of the latest report, how many deaths due to Covid-19 were there this year?  
Option: 0  
Option: 1  
Option: 2  
Option: 5

## True-False

5. As of the latest report, how many deaths due to Covid-19 were there this year?
6. According to health officials, Covid-19 is now considered what type of disease in Thailand?



- Option: Pandemic
- Option: Endemic
- Option: Epidemic
- Option: Acute

7. The NB.1.8.1 strain causes more severe illness than previous variants.
8. Authorities have reported new clusters of Covid-19 cases.
9. Dr Montien Kanasawat is the director-general of the Ministry of Health.
10. The DDC has urged the public to wear masks in crowded areas.
11. Most Covid-19 cases in Thailand are in individuals aged 60 and above.
12. Basic precautions are only necessary for the elderly during the pandemic.

### Gap-Fill

13. The main Covid-19 variant in Thailand over the past year is \_\_\_\_\_.
14. As of 23 May, there has been a total of \_\_\_\_\_ Covid-19 cases reported.
15. People in crowded areas are advised to wash hands frequently and wear \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The DDC stated that most Covid-19 cases occurred in the age group of \_\_\_\_\_ to 35.
17. The presence of the NB.1.8.1 variant in samples was reported at \_\_\_\_\_%.
18. Covid-19 is now considered an \_\_\_\_\_ disease in Thailand.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. NB.1.8.1 2. 3,642 cases 3. 30-35 4. JN.1 5. 1 6. Endemic

**True-False:** 5. True 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. True 11. False 12. False

**Gap-Fill:** 13. NB.1.8.1 14. 3,642 15. masks 16. 30 17. 50.95 18. endemic

### Vocabulary quizzes



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**Multiple Choice ( Select the Correct answer for each question. )**

1. What is a common term for a different form of a gene?  
Option: Phenotype  
Option: Allele  
Option: Variant  
Option: Genotype
  
2. What term describes a disease regularly found among particular people or in a certain area?  
Option: Epidemic  
Option: Pandemic  
Option: Endemic  
Option: Acute
  
3. What is the term for groups of cases that occur closer together in time and space?  
Option: Outbreaks  
Option: Clusters  
Option: Incidents  
Option: Sporadic events
  
4. In a set of numbers, what is the term for the middle value when the numbers are arranged in order?  
Option: Mean  
Option: Median  
Option: Mode  
Option: Range
  
5. What is the practice of maintaining health through cleanliness called?  
Option: Sanitation  
Option: Hygiene  
Option: Cleanliness  
Option: Disinfection
  
6. What is the process by which green plants and some other organisms use sunlight to synthesize foods from carbon dioxide and water?  
Option: Respiration  
Option: Fermentation  
Option: Photosynthesis  
Option: Transpiration
  
7. What term is used to describe a set of medical signs and symptoms that are correlated with each other?  
Option: Condition  
Option: Syndrome



Option: Disorder

Option: Illness

8. What does NADPH stand for in biochemistry?

Option: Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate

Option: Nuclear adenosine diphosphate

Option: Nucleotide adenine dihydrogen phosphate

Option: Nicotinic acid dinucleotide phosphate

9. What is the body's response to injury or infection that causes redness, swelling, and pain called?

Option: Inflammation

Option: Contusion

Option: Laceration

Option: Blackening

10. What type of substances can cause oxidative stress by producing free radicals?

Option: Antioxidants

Option: Oxidants

Option: Nutrients

Option: Vitamins

**Gap-Fill ( Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

11. Photosynthesis occurs in the \_\_\_\_\_ of plant cells.

12. The metabolic \_\_\_\_\_ of glycolysis is essential for glucose breakdown.

13. Amylase is an \_\_\_\_\_ that breaks down starch into sugars.

14. Triglycerides are composed of three fatty acids and a molecule of \_\_\_\_\_.

15. Genetic \_\_\_\_\_ can lead to variations in traits among individuals.

16. A gene product that controls the expression of another gene is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

17. Excessive body fat leads to health issues such as \_\_\_\_\_.

18. Resistance training is used to build muscle \_\_\_\_\_ and endurance.

19. Personal \_\_\_\_\_ is often associated with higher self-esteem.



20. A \_\_\_\_\_ exercise is one that simulates movements used in daily life.

**Matching Sentences ( Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

21. The deadlift is an excellent exercise for building overall body strength.
22. Consecutive numbers follow one after the other without any gaps.
23. A strong grip is essential for lifting heavy weights safely.
24. A compound exercise involves multiple joints and muscle groups.
25. To promote a healthy lifestyle, one should eat well and exercise regularly.
26. A restrictive diet can lead to nutrient deficiencies if not planned properly.
27. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins crucial for bodily functions.
28. Glutathione is an antioxidant that helps protect cells from oxidative damage.
29. Bone density is an important factor in assessing skeletal health.
30. The presence of oxidants in the body can lead to oxidative stress and damage.

**Answer**

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Variant 2. Endemic 3. Clusters 4. Median 5. Hygiene 6. Photosynthesis 7. Syndrome 8. Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate 9. Inflammation 10. Oxidants

**Gap-Fill:** 11. chloroplasts 12. pathway 13. enzyme 14. glycerol 15. mutations 16. regulator 17. obesity 18. strength 19. independence 20. functional

**Matching sentence:** 1. deadlift 2. consecutive 3. grip 4. compound 5. promote 6. restrictive 7. amino 8. glutathione 9. density 10. oxidants

**CATEGORY**

- 1. Health - LEVEL4

**POST TAG**

- 1. B2
- 2. Bangkok Post
- 3. Covid-19
- 4. ESL learning



5. esl news
6. L4
7. Level 4
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