

COVID-19: Pregnant Women and Their Unborn Babies Dying in Brazil as Deaths Set to Pass 500k Mark

Researchers say the P1 variant has started infecting and killing pregnant women and their unborn children in startling numbers.

By [Stuart Ramsay](#)

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Brazil is likely to pass the awful mark of 500,000 COVID-related deaths in the next two days. Only the United States has a higher number of dead across the world.

Currently averaging 2,500 deaths a day, [Brazil's P1 variant](#) has long been identified as a highly virulent cause for concern, prompting travel bans to most countries.

But researchers in Sao Paulo, one of the worst-hit cities in the country, say the P1 variant has started infecting and killing pregnant women and their unborn children in startling numbers.

Currently 42 pregnant women die every week from [COVID-19](#); many more women are being intubated and their premature children delivered by caesarean section without consultation with obstetricians, according to medical researchers at the Brazilian Obstetric Observatory.

Dr Rossana Pulcineli Vieira Francisco from the observatory said: “The virus transmissibility is higher with this variant and I think the big problem is that the health system for maternal care in Brazil is very bad.

“In some states the patient starts treatment in one hospital, a general hospital, and when her condition starts to worsen, and she needs to deliver the baby, she will be transported while intubated because they’re not at the right hospital to do the delivery.”

This, she believes, is part of the reason [Brazil](#) is seeing a higher rate of maternal mortality.

She says obstetricians and intensivists should be working together to find the right outcomes for mother and child, otherwise it will be very difficult to stop maternal mortality

during COVID.

“I think we have more cases because of the variant, and because our maternal health system is very fragile, we have this result.”



People queueing for a COVID vaccine jab in Sao Paulo, but overall rollout in Brazil is slow

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