

Sweden expects to reach virus peak in mid-December

26 November 2020



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Swedish health officials said Thursday they expected the country to reach the peak of the second wave of COVID-19 infections the country is experiencing in the middle of December.

The assessment was based on new modelling by the country's Public Health Agency, based on reported cases up until November 6.

How that peak would develop would, however, depend "to an extreme extent on how well we manage to continue to keep distance to each other," state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell told a press conference.

After seeing a heavy death toll from March to June—over 5,000 in a country of 10.3 million inhabitants—Sweden, which famously has elected

to curb the virus with mostly non-coercive measures, registered a decrease in both cases and fatalities between July and mid-October.

Since then, the number of cases has soared and in recent weeks the number of deaths has also risen sharply.

On Thursday the country reported another 67 deaths linked to COVID-19, bringing the total to 6,622.

In response to the surge, Sweden has issued stricter recommendations for heavily hit areas.

These include calls for people to avoid crowded indoor environments and if possible all [physical contact](#) other than with people in your own household.

In recent weeks, the country limited the number of people allowed at public gatherings to eight, down from 50, and banned the sale of alcohol at restaurants and bars after 10:00 pm.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven on Thursday issued a reminder that the limit on gatherings was eight people, and this should be seen as the rule for private gatherings to even if the law only strictly bans public gatherings.

With Sweden, like many other countries, gearing up for one of the year's busiest shopping weekends, with so called Black Friday sales, Lofven also said that this year there could be no crowding in [shopping malls](#) or stores.

"If you can't shop without crowding, then avoid shopping there at that time," Lofven said.

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APA citation: Sweden expects to reach virus peak in mid-December (2020, November 26) retrieved 27 September 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-11-sweden-virus-peak-mid-december.html>

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