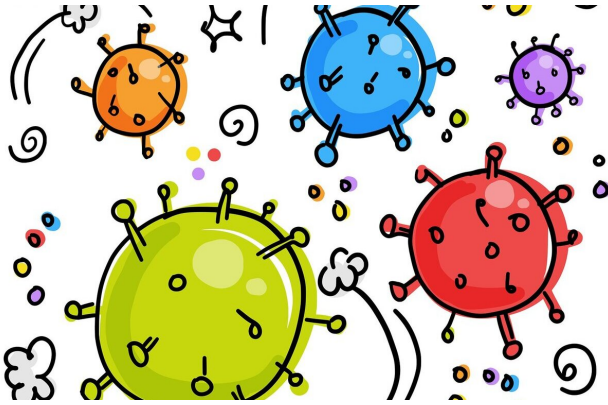


Belgian virus cases in intensive care double in month

3 August 2020



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

The number of coronavirus patients admitted to Belgium's intensive care units has doubled in a month and the epidemic is spreading "intensively", health officials warned on Monday.

Belgium suffered one of the highest per capita rates of infection at the height of COVID-19's progress through Europe but began easing lockdown measures in May after the disease peaked.

Now, cases are climbing once again and the country of 11 million has postponed plans to further ease anti-virus measures, while imposing tougher controls in the port city of Antwerp.

"We can see that the virus is circulating intensively in our territory. The numbers continue to rise," federal virus taskforce spokeswoman Frederique Jacobs said.

"There are no less than 13 municipalities in which more than 100 people per 100,000 inhabitants have tested positive, that's one person in 1,000 infected as of last week."

On average 2.7 people died of COVID-19 every day in Belgium in the last week of July, up by about a third from two in the previous seven days. At least 9,845 have died since the epidemic arrived.

The rate of daily new cases climbed 68 percent between the two weeks, and the daily number of hospitalisations by more than a third. In total 69,849 cases have been detected in the country, although most recover.

Most of the new wave of infections are among [young adults](#), but nevertheless, Jacobs said, "The number of people admitted to [intensive care](#) has doubled since the beginning of July."

Separately, the [economic damage](#) caused by the epidemic continued to cut a swathe through Belgium's cultural sector, with the historic Ancienne Belgique music hall letting go 200 "external workers", freelance contractors.

The theatre has not hosted a live concert since March and under current anti-virus rules when it reopens in September its 1,000-seater hall will be limited to 100 suitably distanced ticket-holders.

"That's not workable for us," interim director Marc Vrebos said, explaining the hall had written to security, cleaning, technical and hospitality workers to warn them not to count on getting new shifts.

© 2020 AFP

APA citation: Belgian virus cases in intensive care double in month (2020, August 3) retrieved 5 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-08-belgian-virus-cases-intensive-month.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.