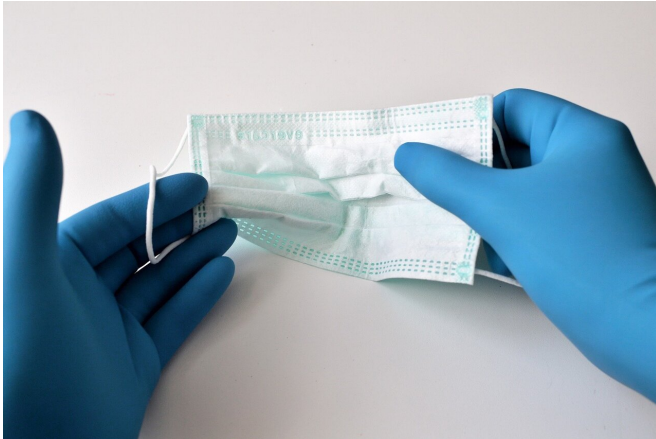


France has almost 10,000 new virus cases ahead of key meeting

10 September 2020



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France on Thursday registered a record of almost 10,000 new COVID-19 cases over the last 24 hours ahead of a key meeting to decide a toughening of coronavirus measures.

Officials are increasingly concerned about the high number of infections in France, even if the [death toll](#) and admissions to [intensive care](#) are way off the heights recorded in March and April.

The health ministry said 9,843 new [coronavirus](#) infections had been recorded, the highest number since large scale testing began, with 71 new clusters confirmed.

Over the last week, 48,542 new cases have been counted, out of over a million tests carried out. The proportion of tests coming in positive has now risen to 5.4 percent.

Nineteen more people died after a COVID-19 infection, bringing France's total toll from the pandemic to 30,813, the ministry added.

French ministers and health experts will meet

Friday to decide what measures are needed, with President Emmanuel Macron vowing they would give a clear idea to the public what can be expected over the next weeks.

"We need to be as transparent and clear as possible," Macron said Thursday. "We need to be demanding and realistic without giving in to any kind of panic."

The head of the scientific council advising the government on the pandemic, Jean-Francois Delfraissy, said Wednesday that "tough" decisions may be required at the meeting.

People at high risk because of old age or [health problems](#) including diabetes, obesity and respiratory issues may require a protective "bubble" around them.

The government may also have to become more forceful in some areas about imposing confinement measures for infected people and those they have been in touch with, he said, although this was not for now an official recommendation.

There was the danger of a "very rapid, exponential rise" in some places, Delfraissy said, singling out the French Riviera and Provence region.

Prime Minister Jean Castex is himself in a seven-day period of self-isolation, having spent part of the weekend with the boss of the Tour de France who tested positive for COVID-19.

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