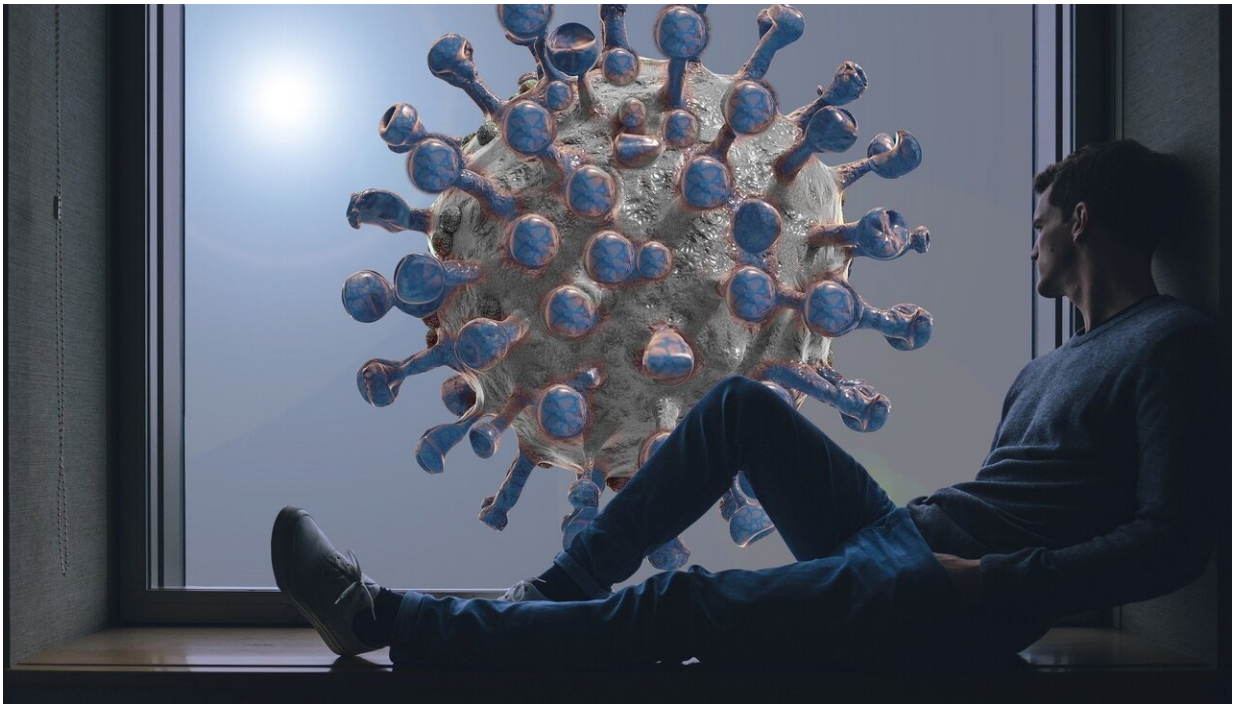


Norway tightens COVID curbs amid Omicron surge

December 14 2021



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Norway on Monday announced new COVID curbs less than a week after tightening restrictions amid the spread of the Omicron variant and soaring case numbers and hospital admissions.

The move came after Norway's health authority warned the country

could record between 90,000 and 300,000 daily coronavirus cases and up to 200 hospital admissions per day in three weeks without more measures.

Norway has registered record numbers of cases and [hospital admissions](#) in recent days, detecting 958 Omicron infections on Monday, of which 472 were in the capital Oslo.

Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store warned of a "serious" situation in which the Delta variant and the new, highly transmissible Omicron strain would create "a total saturation of the [health](#) system".

The gap between second and third COVID jabs for over-45s and [health workers](#) will be reduced to four-and-a-half months, with booster shots offered by mid-January.

Bars and restaurants will not be able to serve alcohol, remote working will be compulsory where possible, mask mandates will be extended and access to public swimming pools and gyms restricted.

Cancelling large sporting events was also recommended.

The measures will come into force overnight from Tuesday to Wednesday and are due to last four weeks.

South Africa first reported Omicron to the World Health Organization last month. Early data suggest the variant is more transmissible and resists vaccines, prompting several countries to reimpose restrictions and travel bans.

Norway, a northern European nation of 5.4 million people, has recorded 317,870 COVID-19 cases and 1,136 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

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Citation: Norway tightens COVID curbs amid Omicron surge (2021, December 14) retrieved 19 July 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-12-norway-tightens-covid-curbs-omicron.html>

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