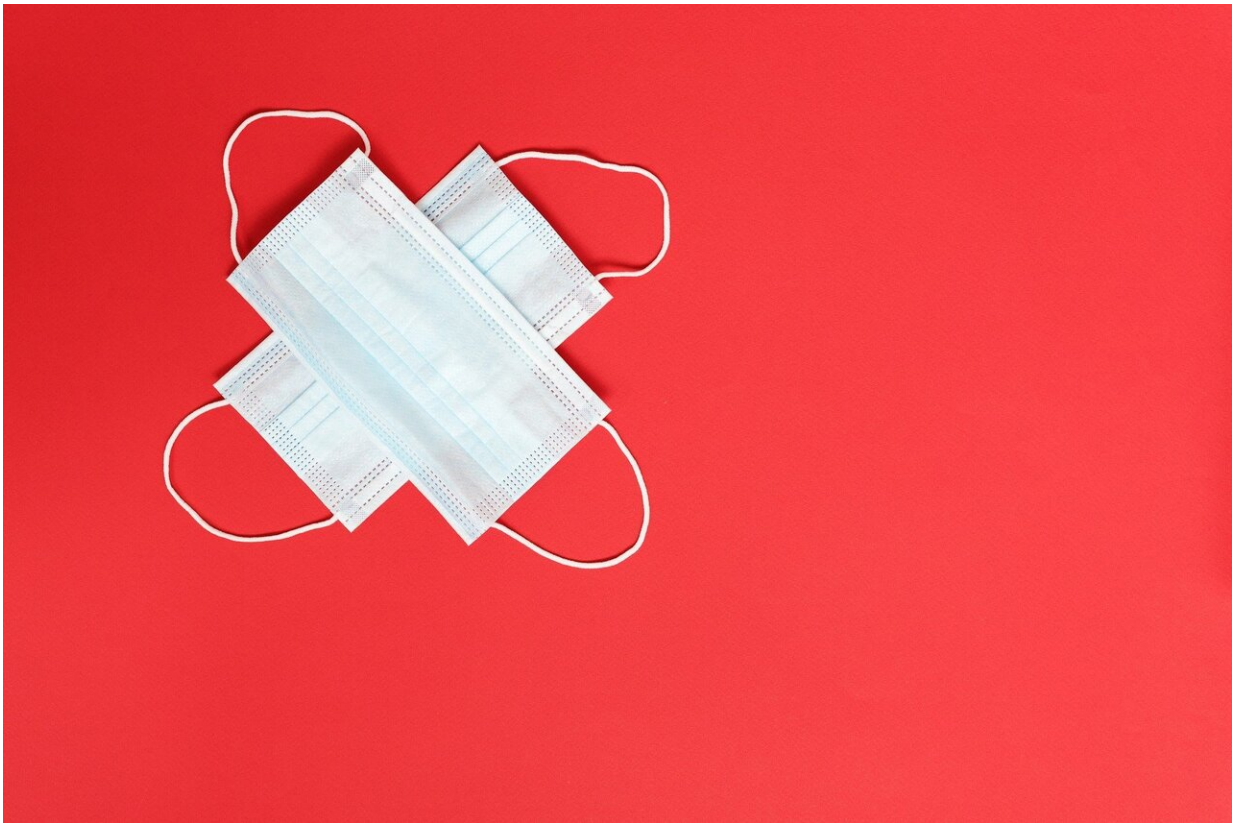


# Cyprus adopts mask-wearing outdoors to contain virus spike

October 22 2020

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Cyprus will make mask-wearing outdoors compulsory while imposing a night-time curfew in some areas in a bid to rein in a sharp spike in coronavirus cases, officials said Thursday.

The east Mediterranean island has seen daily infections rise to record three-digit figures after keeping numbers low for most of the summer.

Health Minister Constantinos Ioannou said the measures were necessary to flatten and contain the "rapid spread" of the virus in recent weeks.

He said [face masks](#) must be worn in "all outdoor public spaces" except when exercising.

Tougher rules on mask-wearing in all indoor areas such as offices—except for households—was introduced earlier this month.

A night-time curfew will be imposed on the southern port city of Limassol and the resort town of Paphos further down the coast from 11 p.m., while pubs and restaurants will have to close at 10.30 p.m.

Cyprus has opted for firmer measures to contain the spread of the virus after a record spike of 202 daily cases on Saturday.

On Wednesday, Cyprus Republic authorities reported 127 COVID-19 cases, the fourth time in a week three-digit figures were recorded.

October's cases amount for more than a third of the 2,966 cases reported since the outbreak in early March, while the [death toll](#) from [coronavirus](#) remains relatively low at 25.

Limassol is the island's virus hotspot with 180 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, Ioannou said.

On a national scale, household gatherings are limited to 10, while hospitality venues can only accommodate restricted numbers.

The new measures come into effect Friday until November 9.

Health authorities blame the spike on Cypriots not following the rules on mask-wearing, hygiene and social distancing.

The island had largely kept a lid on the pandemic by introducing an early lockdown and curfew in March which was gradually eased from early May.

The government is keen to avoid another draconian lockdown regime with the economy already in recession.

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