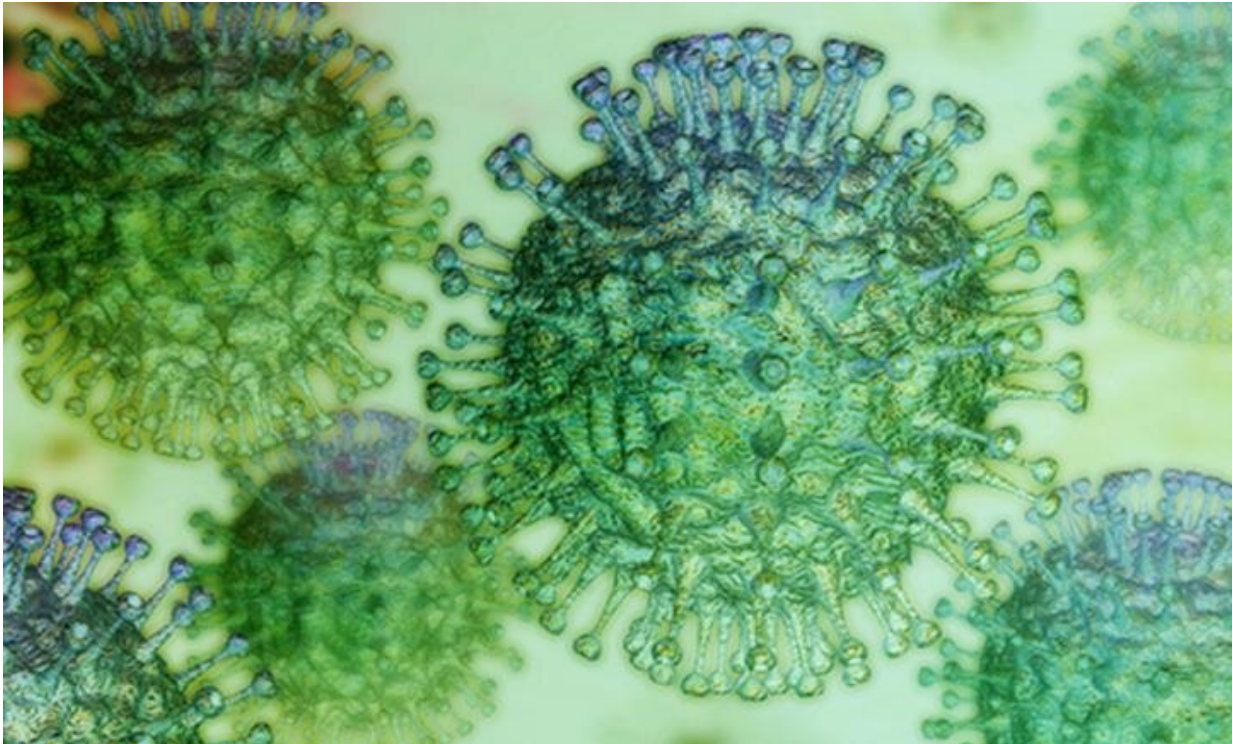


Slovenia starts mass virus testing

December 22 2020



Coronavirus. Credit: European Centers for Disease Control

Slovenia began mass coronavirus testing on Tuesday in a huge drive targeting a fourth of its two million population.

The first phase will run until Thursday and is available to anyone who wishes to be tested.

Another is due after Christmas, focussing on key workers such as teachers, soldiers and [police officers](#).

Over a hundred people queued up at the central Kongresni Square in the capital Ljubljana, one of several locations in 13 cities where testing is available.

Health ministry secretary Marija Magajne said on Monday the programme aimed at "containing the spread of the virus, reducing the number of people hospitalised as well as deaths".

Results will be delivered on mobile phones within 15 minutes along with instructions for those who test positive, Magajne said.

Slovenia and several countries in the region escaped the worst during the pandemic's first wave but has battled high infection rates in recent months.

More than 2,400 Slovenians have died and there have been over 107,000 cases officially registered.

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Citation: Slovenia starts mass virus testing (2020, December 22) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-12-slovenia-mass-virus.html>

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