

Germany warns of 'escalation' in Covid cases

October 22 2021

Germany's health ministry said Friday the country was seeing a surge in coronavirus infections and warned that the situation was likely to worsen as winter approaches.

"With the rising infection numbers we are seeing an escalation of the situation," health ministry spokesman Oliver Ewald told reporters in Berlin.

The concern comes a day after Germany's Robert Koch health institute (RKI) said in its weekly report that seven-day coronavirus incidence rates had been rising since the end of September.

The upwards trend "became visible in almost all age groups over the past week and it is to be expected that the increase in case numbers will pick up speed in the further course of autumn and winter," Ewald said.

Germany recorded 19,572 new coronavirus cases over the past 24 hours on Friday, according to the RKI, up 70 percent on a week earlier.

Friday's figure was the highest since early May, when far fewer Germans were vaccinated against COVID.

The country's seven-day incidence rate jumped to 95.1 new infections per 100,000 people, also the highest level since May.

The [health ministry](#) said the spike in cases had not yet led to an "increased dynamic" in COVID patients needing intensive care.

Germany's DIVI [intensive care](#) association however voiced alarm at the latest developments.

Senior DIVI expert Christian Karagiannidis wrote on Twitter that there was a "very close correlation" between incidence rates and new COVID hospital admissions.

"The real fourth wave is beginning now and is gathering speed," he tweeted.

The leaders of Germany's 16 regional states are meeting to discuss the next steps in the fight against the pandemic, and are expected to keep existing measures largely in place.

The RKI in its report pleaded for all citizens, including those who are fully vaccinated or have already recovered from COVID, to keep respecting the recommended [health](#) guidelines.

These include wearing [face masks](#), airing out rooms, keeping a [physical distance](#) and regularly washing hands.

"Unnecessary close contacts should be reduced and in particular indoor situations that could become so-called super spreading events should be avoided when possible," the report added.

More than 66 percent of the population in Germany, a country of some 83 million people, is now fully vaccinated against COVID.

Nearly 70 percent have received at least the first dose.

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