

France opts for 3rd shots, not lockdown, to fight new wave

November 25 2021



French Health Minister Olivier Veran speaks during a press conference on the COVID-19 epidemic situation in France and upcoming new governmental measures to curb the spread of the virus, Thursday, Nov. 25, 2021 in Paris. France has launched a plan to supply booster shots to all adults, opting against a further lockdown or curfew, to help combat a worrying uptick in infections in the country. Coronavirus infection have peaked in France over the last few days, rising above the 30,000 mark. Credit: Thomas Coex, Pool Photo via AP

France launched a plan Thursday to give COVID-19 booster shots to all adults, as it opted against a further lockdown or curfew to help combat a worrying uptick in infections in the country.

Coronavirus infections have jumped in France over the last few days, with daily new cases rising above the 30,000 mark, and virus-related hospitalizations and deaths are again rising.

French Health Minister Olivier Veran laid out the plans during a press conference in which he announced a reduction in the time gap between second and third shots from six to five months. He said France already has enough vaccines to launch the nationwide booster campaign.

Veran also laid out a swathe of measures seen as tightening the use of masks in public areas and said that the country's COVID pass, which is required in many indoor places across the country, will become invalid if a person has not received a booster shot within seven months of a second dose.

He said that there are ten times more unvaccinated people currently hospitalized because of the virus than vaccinated ones, adding that without the vaccine the country would already be in a lockdown situation.

More than 89% of French adults are vaccinated, but the most vulnerable had a vaccine early in the year and so immunity is believed to be waning. Also children under 12 have not had access to vaccines yet in France though that could change after the European Medicines Agency on Thursday authorized Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for 5-11-year-olds.



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In a sign of resurgent concerns about France's virus situation, Morocco is suspending all flights to and from France starting Friday, until further notice.

A government committee overseeing travel amid the pandemic made the decision Thursday "to protect Morocco's achievements in managing the

pandemic," according to the state news agency MAP. The two countries have close economic and cultural ties.

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