

# Over 10,000 in English hospitals with virus: govt

December 30 2021

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The number of people in hospital with Covid in England topped 10,000 on Wednesday, the highest total since March, as UK case numbers hit a new record.

According to updated government figures, there were 10,462 people in hospital with Covid in England on Wednesday morning, the highest level since March 1. Fresh UK-wide data was not available.

The UK also reported 183,037 daily cases in the last 24 hours, a new record, as the country faces a huge surge due to the new Omicron variant.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson toured a vaccine centre in Milton Keynes in central England and urged the public to get tested and be "sensible" at New Year's parties.

Johnson urged people to get "vital" booster jabs, saying "the overwhelming majority" of those currently going into intensive care in our hospitals have not had the booster jab.

He cited doctors as saying "the numbers are running up to 90 percent of people in [intensive care](#) who are not boosted".

More than 33 million people in the UK have had [booster](#) jabs, while Johnson has vowed to every adult an appointment by the end of the year.

The prime minister urged people to enjoy New Year "in a cautious and sensible way" and "take a test" before meeting friends.

This came as concerns rose over shortages of self-testing kits due to huge demand.

The UK Health Security Agency tweeted that it was delivering record numbers of kits and more would become available.

The London Fire Brigade said more than 700 firefighters had tested positive or were self-isolating, taking more than a third of its fire engines off the road.

The UK has been one of Europe's worst hit with a [death toll](#) of 148,089.

Johnson defended his decision not to tighten virus curbs in England over the festive period, while Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have limited social contacts and closed nightclubs.

The high take-up of boosters in England "is allowing us to go ahead with New Year in the cautious way that we are," he said.

The government also factored in "the data about the relative mildness of Omicron", Johnson said.

He stressed the "very, very clear effect of getting those jabs, of boosters in particular," saying "that's what's making a huge difference".

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