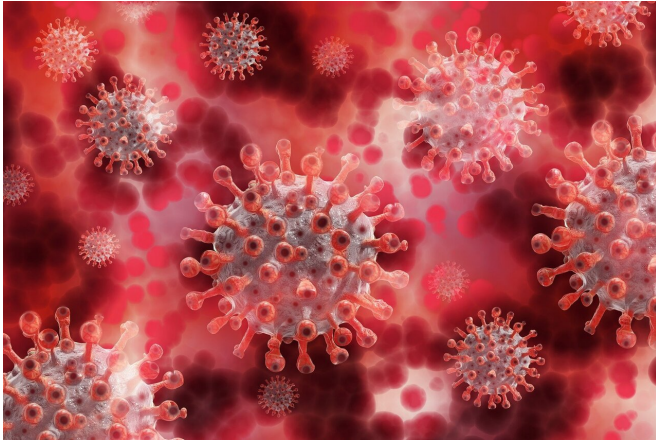


Dutch government announces new restrictions to rein in virus

28 September 2020



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The Dutch government introduced new nationwide restrictions Monday aimed at tackling the swift spread of coronavirus infections that is sweeping across the country, including banning supporters from professional sports matches and ordering bars and restaurants to close at 10 p.m. for the coming three weeks.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte also advised people to wear [face masks](#) when shopping in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, the three cities with the highest rates of infections, and said store owners can refuse entry to customers who aren't wearing a mask.

Health Minister Hugo de Jonge warned that the nation is failing to control the virus and could face tougher measures if the tide isn't turned soon.

"The bottom line is, we're doing our best, but the virus is doing better," De Jonge said in a nationally televised news conference with Rutte to announce the new restrictions. The package of new measures comes into force Tuesday evening.

The announcement comes less than two weeks after the government ordered bars and pubs in the most populous regions of the country to close earlier than usual at 1 a.m.

Infections have been soaring in the Netherlands in recent weeks. The country's [coronavirus](#) dashboard registered 2,921 new infections in the last 24 hours, down slightly from the 2,996 registered Sunday by the country's public health institute.

Ernst Kuipers, of the national acute care network, told reporters ahead of the news conference that there are now 660 COVID-19 patients in Dutch hospitals, including 142 in intensive care units and that the numbers are rising fast.

Rutte said that people should work from home, people should allow no more than three visitors into their homes, and that in other places no more than four people should go out together. A maximum of 30 people will be allowed at indoor venues like stores and bars and a maximum of 40 at outdoor locations.

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