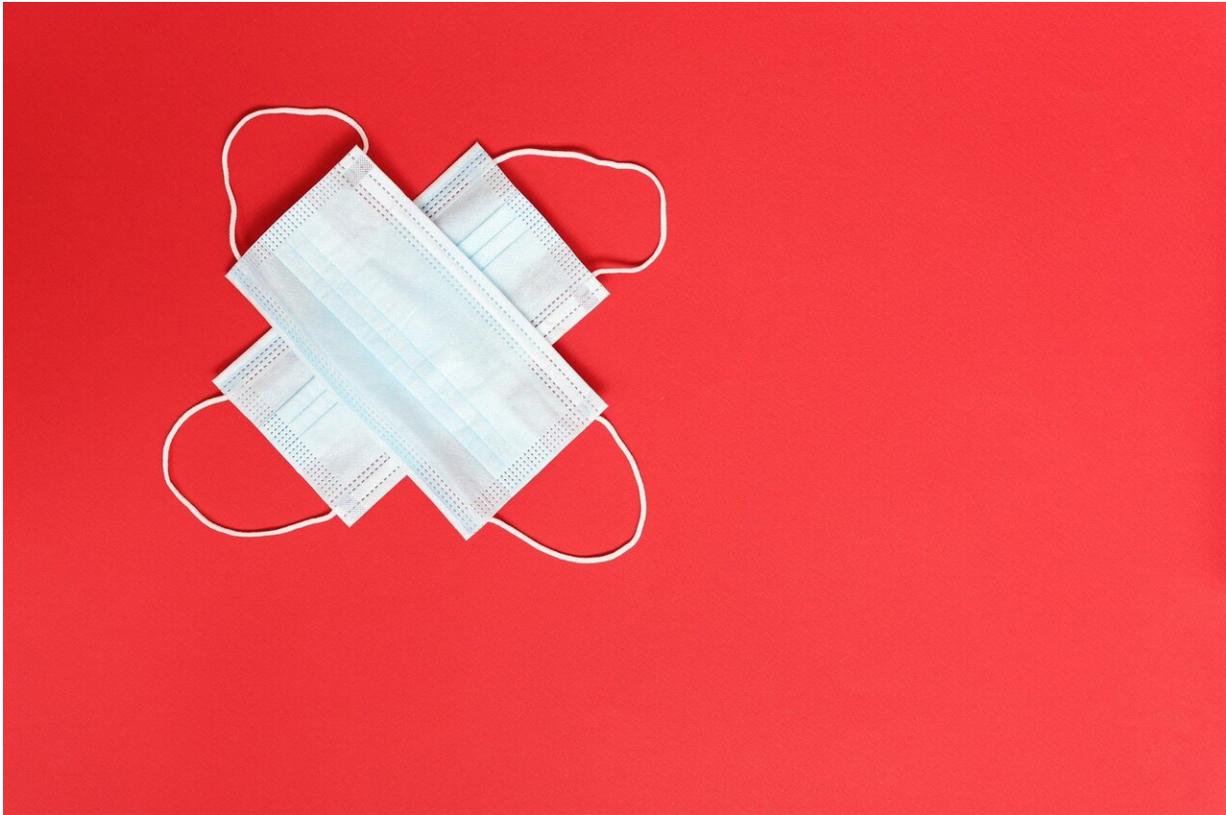


Spain tightens virus face mask rules

March 30 2021



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Spain on Tuesday tightened face masks rules, making them mandatory outdoors and in all public places.

Face masks have been obligatory since May 2020 but only in places where it was not possible to maintain at least two metres (6.5 feet) of

social distancing.

The new law will come into effect on Wednesday once it is published in the official government gazette.

Spain has been hard-hit by the pandemic, having so far recorded over 75,000 deaths from nearly 3.3 million cases.

"It is important that citizens know that we have not reached a relaxation phase, and we cannot in any way afford to be reckless," government spokeswoman Maria Jesus Montero told a news conference.

Exceptions will continue to be made for people with [medical conditions](#) or [respiratory problems](#) or for those exercising outdoors.

The government has vowed to vaccinate 70 percent of Spain's population by the end of summer.

So far some 2.6 million people in the nation of around 47 million people have been fully vaccinated, mainly residents and workers in nursing homes who were given priority.

Spain's central government said Tuesday it would file a [legal challenge](#) against a law passed by the northwestern region of Galicia making it mandatory to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and other diseases.

The law, which was approved in February, calls for fines of up to 3,000 euros (\$3,500) for anyone who refuses to get a vaccine.

But Montero said it "limited fundamental rights" and was a matter for national, not regional, legislation.

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