

Update on End of year celebrations during COVID-19

THE LATEST ON THE COVID-19 GLOBAL SITUATION
& GUIDANCE ON MASS GATHERINGS



World Health
Organization

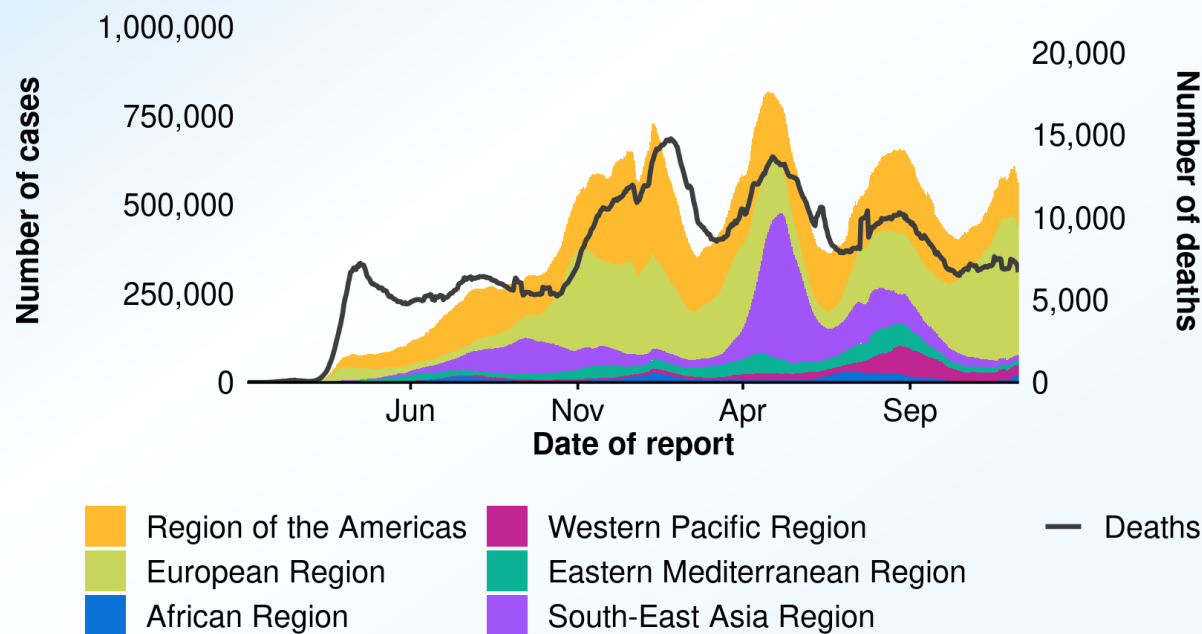
EPI•WiN

infodemic
MANAGEMENT

Current global situation

CASES REPORTED TO WHO AS OF 15 DECEMBER 2021

- Cases: > 270 million
- Deaths: > 5.3 million



data smoothed with 7-day moving average

** Cases depicted by bars; deaths depicted by line*



CHECK OUT THE LATEST
GLOBAL SITUATION

[WHO](#)
[Coronavirus](#)
[Disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
[Dashboard](#)

Celebrating the end of year safely

- In many parts of the world, the end of the year and beginning of the new year are a time of celebrations
- Family and friends attend small private gatherings, large public events and sometimes travel long distances to celebrate together



Photo: houstonia



Photo: NBC news



Photo: NBC News



Photo: Secret London



Photo: NBC news

SARS-CoV-2 can spread during any size of gathering

- Evidence has shown that the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 does not correlate with the size of a gathering
- Therefore, attendees need to exert caution at any gathering, including private family parties and other end-of-year celebrations
- To avoid increased SARS-CoV-2 transmission during end-of-year celebrations, it is imperative to observe the holiday with caution and care



<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>

A risk-based approach for safe gatherings

- WHO recommends that the decision-making process of holding, modifying, postponing or cancelling gatherings of any type or size should rely on a **risk-based approach**
- This involves evaluating the risk based on the local context, deciding actions to mitigate the risk and communicating those (Please see [WHO mass gathering COVID-19 risk assessment tool](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/10665-333185))
- Individuals and communities should manage the health risk in their daily lives and adapt to COVID-19 protective behaviours

Fig. Risk assessment: A cyclical process*



* <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/10665-333185>
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>

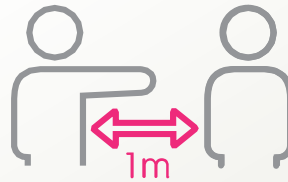
Protective measures to stay safe during end-of-year celebrations

- Gatherings should not take place unless basic precautionary measures are applied and adhered to by all attendees

Protective measures should be applied by everyone, irrespective of their COVID-19 vaccination status



Stay at home
if you feel unwell or have
COVID-19 symptoms



Keep a physical distance of at
least 1 metre from others



Open windows to
improve ventilation



Cough or sneeze into a
bent elbow or tissue



Wash hands
frequently



When indoors, avoid crowded
or poorly ventilated areas



Follow the advice on
masks

Precautionary measures should be applied for small and large events

- Precautionary measures should be implemented for gatherings of any size; even small private events and celebrations
- Precautions include hosting events:
 - in well ventilated areas
 - all attendees should follow advice on wearing masks
 - keeping at least 1m distance from others
 - coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow or tissue
 - washing their hands frequently
- Anyone showing symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 infection should stay at home
- Even with precautionary measures in place, zero risk does not exist
- If appropriate measures can't be taken, postponing or cancelling events of any size should always be a consideration to protect the health and well being of attendees and their communities



<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>

Consider virtual alternatives to celebrate together

- **Travelling may increase the risk of exposure and transmission of SARS-CoV-2**
- **Consider all travel related risks.**
Precautionary measures should be strictly followed when travelling
- Persons who **have not been fully vaccinated** or do not have proof of previous SARS-CoV-2 infection and are **at increased risk of developing severe disease, including people 60 years of age or older or those with comorbidities** should be advised to **postpone travel to areas with community transmission**
- **Virtual alternatives** can be considered instead of physical meetings to take part in celebrations

<https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/who-advice-for-international-traffic-in-relation-to-the-sars-cov-2-omicron-variant>
<https://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/small-mass-gatherings/social-gathering-5.png>



Additional resources



- Small public gatherings on holidays and COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/teams/risk-communication/event-organizers-and-attendees>



- Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/10665-332235>



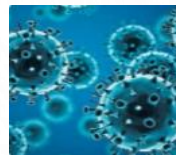
- COVID-19 risk assessment tool

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/10665-333185>



- Holding gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO policy brief

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>

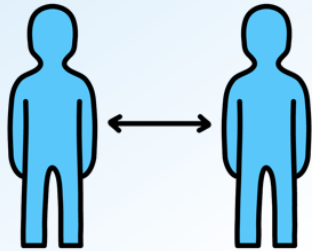


- WHO advice for international travel in relation to the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant

<https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/who-advice-for-international-traffic-in-relation-to-the-sars-cov-2-omicron-variant>

COVID-19 protective measures

Protect yourself & others



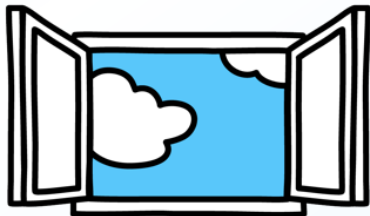
Keep your distance



Wash your hands frequently



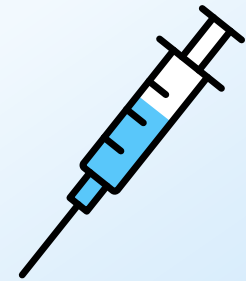
Cough & sneeze into your elbow



Ventilate or open windows



Wear a mask



Get vaccinated when it is your turn



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www.who.int/epi-win