

Government takes decisive action against new COVID-19 variant

Press release

From Tuesday 30 November, face coverings will be mandatory in shops and on public transport and all travellers returning to the UK will require PCR testing.



Temporary and precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the new COVID-19 Omicron variant in the UK will come into force on Tuesday, the government has confirmed.

From 4am Tuesday 30 November face coverings will be compulsory in shops and other settings such as banks, post offices and hairdressers, as well as on public transport unless individuals are exempt from doing so.

All travellers arriving into the country from 4am on Tuesday 30 November will be required to take a PCR test on or before day 2 and self isolate until they have received a negative test result. These PCR tests can be purchased from private providers. Free NHS tests are not valid for this purpose.

Under the UK presidency an urgent meeting of G7 health ministers will also be convened on Monday 29 November to discuss the developments on Omicron.

This update adds to the measures rapidly implemented earlier this week to prevent the spread of the new variant including travel restrictions and meaning all close contacts of anyone who has tested positive for the Omicron variant are required to isolate for 10 days regardless of whether they have been vaccinated.

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