

Public Health Scotland urges public to defer Christmas parties

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Given the number of COVID-19 outbreaks that are being linked to Christmas parties, particularly those caused by Omicron, Public Health Scotland (PHS) is urging people to defer such parties at this time.

Dr Nick Phin, Director of Public Health Science and Medical Director at PHS, explains:

“There is much that we still need to learn about Omicron, but early evidence suggests that this new COVID-19 variant is much more transmissible. The impact of this transmissibility has been seen in recent weeks, with a number of Omicron outbreaks linked to parties.

“We still need to learn more about the severity of disease caused by Omicron and the effectiveness of vaccines, but there are important things that we can do to help protect ourselves and our families now. To help minimise the further spread of COVID-19, and Omicron in particular, I would strongly urge people to defer their Christmas parties to another time.

“I appreciate that everyone is keen to celebrate this festive season, particularly after the pressures of the last twenty months, but by postponing some plans we can all do our bit to protect ourselves and our loved ones”.

A reminder of the other measures we can all take to continue to keep safe over the festive period:

- Please get your vaccine and your booster when your turn comes.
- Please test at least twice weekly using lateral flow devices and take a test each time you are socialising with people out with your household.
- Reduce the number of people you catch up with. Try to meet outdoors; if indoors, ensure ventilation is good.
- Keep up the other public health measures: wash your hands, clean surfaces, maintain distances and of course wear a face covering in public spaces.

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