

HEALTH

Experts do not rule out a seventh wave, although it will be light

Epidemiologist Mireia Garcia warns that returning to the mask «is unthinkable»

There are many viruses that are transmitted through the respiratory tract and «can be confused with covid»



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►► A doctor prepares an antigen test.

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Experts do not rule out the arrival of a seventh wave caused by the relaxation of health measures and the displacement of Easter. This was stated by the epidemiologist of the Ministry of Health, Mireia Garcia, who added that «in the end we are a country that has a lot of connection with our environment, and the increase in cases can affect us».

The Government currently records a total of 507 active Covid-19 cases. In this sense, Garcia stated that «at the moment we are in a situation of stability where there

are small unmarked increases». In addition, the cases detected «are not serious». Neighboring countries reported a small increase in the number of cases.

On the other hand, in the two years of the pandemic, it has been discovered that the virus causes more damage in the autumn and winter. In the coming months, therefore, only a major outbreak is expected in the event that «there is a change in the variant». At the same time, if a new strain arrives in Andorra, a study will have to be carried out to follow the evolution, and in the event that the accessibility and severity change in it, «preventive measures should



MIREIA GARCIA
EPIDEMIOLOGIST

«We are currently in a state of stability where there are unmarked increases»

ROSA VIDAL
HEAD OF HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

«The flu has been late this year, but there are more viruses circulating than in previous seasons»

be re-established».

The situation is currently being monitored by the Ministry of Health, and «it is not unthinkable that at any given time we should take action», Garcia warned. So, she explained that the mask would probably be the first to come back, due to the ease of wearing it and that it is also economical. However, if a seventh wave arrives, it is not expected to be very marked «if we continue with the current trend», because the majority of the population is already immune.

Otherwise, at this time of year, various respiratory viruses are added to the covid, the symptoms of which can be confused with those of SARS-CoV-2. One of these viruses is the flu. Rosa Vidal, head of the Department of Prevention, Promotion and Health Surveillance, pointed out that «it can be seen that this year, the flu has had a late onset, and it has not been until week 8 of 2022 a number of significant cases have been detected». The flu usually occurs at the end of one year and the beginning of another.

However, one of the possible causes of this year's delay is the fact that the mask is no longer mandatory. In addition, «we have a lot more viruses circulating compared to previous seasons», Vidal insisted.

In terms of incidence rates, influenza has been detected in different sections of the population. The head of the prevention, promotion and surveillance department reported that in the beginning, most cases occurred in young people between the ages of 15 and 24; then more incidents were detected in younger children; and in recent weeks, «we see that there are fewer cases, and they are spread across all age groups».

In contrast, the presence of influenza in people over 65 years of age has hardly been detected. This is because the most vulnerable are usually vaccinated against this virus and have more protective effects. This season, Vidal said, 7,800 doses of the flu vaccine have been given. As for the campaign, this figure is lower than last year, but «is still a significant number».

Finally, the circulating virus has been mostly influenza A. In this sense, Vidal warned that «we must pay attention to the whole evolution of what is happening with bird flu and see if they are sporadic cases, or if in the end it shows that there is a more important retransmission». ≡

CYCLING ► NEGOTIATIONS

The Vuelta could return to Andorra for the 2023 edition

The government and the organization have already begun contacts to make the country part of the calendar

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The Vuelta could be very close to returning to the Principality, as the Minister of Tourism, Jordi Torres, the Consul General of Encamp, Laura Mas, and the director of the same competition, Javier Guillén, in a meeting that took place in the Beixalis pass to inaugurate a sculpture to the cyclist.

In 2021 he did not leave many options for maneuver to the organization, «so a much more closed and restricted schedule was chosen» and adding the fact of the passage of the Tour de France through the Principality, according to Guillén explained, «but now we have to work with the return of La Vuelta to the country and we have already

started working on it».

Talks between the government and the organization of one of the three most important cycling competitions in the world have taken place over time, «not only in recent months or weeks, but we have been in contact,» said Guillén, adding that «personally, if I were Andorran and wanted La Vuelta to return to Andorra as soon as possible, I would be optimistic».

With the 2022 course closed, the competition could return for the 2023 edition, although Guillén did not want to confirm this possibility 100%. «It may be 2023 or 2024, but it is clear that our goal is for Andorra to be part of the calendar, whether in the running field or playing with the runners' rest days».

The same speech was followed by Torres, who noted that «the idea



MARICEL BLANCH

►► The end of the stage that took place in Andorra la Vella during La Vuelta 2017.

is that the competition [La Vuelta] will be back soon and we are working so that it can take place in the coming years». The departure of La Vuelta next year from Barcelona has materialized as an incentive

«to see if it is possible to adapt the route so that competitors pass through the country, and from the Government and Andorra Turisme we will put all the facilities for this to happen». Finally, Mas wanted

to emphasize the value of the country, since, for example, «Encamp has three very important ports, which are always taken into account with competitions such as La Vuelta or the Tour». ≡



JORDI TORRES

MINISTER OF TOURISM

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LAURA MAS

CONSUL GENERAL OF ENCAMP

«Encamp has three very important ports, which are always taken into account with competitions such as La Vuelta or the Tour»

JAVIER GUILLÉN

DIRECTOR OF LA VUELTA ESPAÑA

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