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Russia Breaks Covid Deaths Record for Fourth Day Straight

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Russia has Europe's highest coronavirus death toll. **Sofia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

Russia broke its record for new coronavirus deaths for the fourth day in a row Friday, with new infections surging amid slow vaccination rates and health experts warning of a months-long wave of new infections.

The government tally reported 887 Covid deaths in the past 24 hours.

That brings Russia's official coronavirus death toll to 208,142 — Europe's highest.

Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova, who oversees the national Covid-19 response warned on Thursday that a difficult period is coming.

"We have a rise in morbidity and I want to ask you to be careful," she said during a government meeting.

The latest wave could last as long as 6 months and Russia will see new pandemic highs into December, said Yevgeny Timakov, a Moscow-based infectious disease specialist.

Russia's total excess fatality count — which compares the number of recorded fatalities from all causes with what would be expected during a normal period — is around 596,000 since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Russia's coronavirus task force also reported 24,522 new cases over the past 24 hours. Russia is the world's fifth worst-hit country with more than 7 million Covid infections.

The Kremlin on Thursday urged regions to take steps to slow the spread but denied that national-level restrictions were in the works to address the latest spike.

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