

# Preventing the rapid spread of the 7<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19 (excerpt)

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Gifu Prefectural Headquarters for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

With the overwhelming rate at which the Omicron BA.5 subvariant is becoming prevalent and spreading, along with the gradual reduction of immunity among those who received a 3<sup>rd</sup> vaccine dose, the current spread of COVID-19 infection exceeds the peak of the 6<sup>th</sup> wave. This means that we are at the height of the 7<sup>th</sup> wave of infections.

While with the Omicron variant, the risk of serious illness is lower, the BA.5 subvariant is thought to carry a slightly higher risk. In the event of a surge in infections exceeding that of the 6<sup>th</sup> wave, various establishments, such as schools and businesses, may be unable to function due to the number of infections and close contacts. Under these circumstances, it would be difficult to continue as normal during the usually enjoyable summer season, which is another growing concern.

In order to avoid such a situation, we are introducing three vital pillars for preventing the spread of the BA.5 subvariant in Gifu Prefecture. These are “Fully Abiding by Preventative Measures”, “Strengthening the Testing System and Available Facilities” and “Accelerating the Vaccination Rollout”. Please note that, depending on how infection rates progress from now, preventative measures may be strengthened, including requests for movement restrictions.

## Please fully abide by the following preventative measures

- Abide by basic preventative measures against infection, such as wearing a well-fitting mask, washing your hands regularly, ensuring indoor spaces are well-ventilated, maintaining social distancing where possible, and monitoring your health.
- Even amongst healthy young people there is a risk of long COVID, and of spreading the virus to family and at work.
- When having a meal with others, wear a mask (eat quietly and wear a mask during conversations). In addition, a maximum of four people from the same group can eat together at the same table, for no more than two hours.