

Sweden to ban sale of alcohol after 10pm to curb COVID-19

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Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Lofven gives a news conference on new restrictions to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, in Stockholm, Sweden, Wednesday Nov. 11, 2020. The Swedish government proposes a stop the sale of alcohol after 10 pm from Nov. 20 until the end of February. (Henrik Montgomery / TT via AP)

Sweden's prime minister said Wednesday his government will present a law proposal that would ban nationwide the sale of alcohol after 10 p.m. in bars, restaurants and night clubs from Nov. 20 in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Stefan Lofven said that "we are facing a (COVID-19) situation that risks becoming pitch-black" and added that Sweden "currently is risking a situation like the one we had last spring."

Sweden has witnessed record numbers of new coronavirus infections in past weeks, which is burdening the country's [health care system](#) and intensive care wards.

"All indications point in the wrong direction," Lofven said at a joint news conference with Social Affairs Minister Lena Hallengren.

Hallengren said that all places with a permission to serve alcohol must close 30 minutes after 10 pm, and described these places—particularly bars and night clubs—as "risk environments."

Earlier Wednesday, the Swedish capital reintroduced a ban on visiting elderly care homes after a coronavirus spike was reported in retirement facilities in Stockholm.

Sweden, which has opted to keep parts of its society open, lifted in September a national ban on visiting elderly care homes, saying the need for a [restraining order](#) there had decreased.

Overall, the country of 10 million has now reported 166,707 cases and 6,082 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

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