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## Hospitalizations Increase as Covid Surge Tops 1,246 Cases; St. Thomas Seeing Bulk of Active Infections With 953

Coronavirus / **Published On May 12, 2022 05:06 AM /**

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The V.I. Dept. of Health on Wednesday reported 1,246 active Covid-19 cases, numbers not seen since late December 2021 and early January when the Omicron wave first impacted the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Health officials have confirmed the presence of the BA.2 Omicron subvariant in the territory, which is known to be more contagious than the already highly transmissible original Omicron strain.

On Monday, Deputy Health Commissioner Reuben Molloy said the latest surge is a result of V.I. Carnival activities in St. Thomas, which occurred late April and included thousands of locals and

visitors alike participating in several festivities, among them jouvert morning, the Carnival Parade and Carnival Village activities.

Of the 1,246 active Covid-19 infections, 953 were reported in St. Thomas followed by 277 on St. Croix, and 16 on St. John, according to [D.O.H. data](#). The territory's positivity rate climbed to 13.06 percent. The Schneider Regional Medical Center reported ten Covid-19 infections, including four hemodialysis patients and six in-house patients. The Juan F. Luis Hospital hasn't updated its Covid data on social media for sometime now, but according to Mr. Molloy, there were 11 total patients hospitalized territory-wide as of Monday.

"The Dept. of Health expected the numbers to rise as a result of the close knit carnival festivities. So while we're not happy with the rise in the number of infections we're seeing, we're not surprised," Mr. Molloy said Monday during the administration's weekly press briefing. "For this reason I'm asking everyone who has symptoms to isolate immediately and get tested as soon as possible."

The deputy health commissioner reminded the public that regardless of one's vaccination status, or whether Covid symptoms are being experienced, "if you are infected with Covid-19 you can spread the virus to others. Please think of all the vulnerable people in our community: the elderly, the immunocompromised, the immunosuppressed and those too young to get vaccinated. That's why I'm asking everyone to double down and take all the precautions as we navigate this period," he said.

Mr. Molloy added, "If we all do our part we can bring the numbers down. Wear your mask in public."