

# *U.S. coronavirus infections hit all-time high*

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Atlanta, December 29 (RHC)-- U.S. coronavirus infections have reached an all-time high, surpassing even January's terrible peak, with cases now averaging 267,000 a day and rising rapidly.

Hospitalizations are up, too, with nearly 80,000 U.S. hospital beds filled, though that figure is about half of the number hospitalized during last winter's surge.

On Wednesday, the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control (CDC) revised its estimate of the percentage of U.S. Omicron variant infections downward, suggesting the dangerous Delta variant is continuing to circulate widely.

Meanwhile, the Food and Drug Administration, the FDA, is warning that over-the-counter rapid antigen tests might be less sensitive at detecting the Omicron variant. The warning comes as the Biden administration is preparing to make a half-billion tests available, for free, to U.S. households.

In New York City, there's been a fivefold increase in the number of children hospitalized with COVID-19 this month.

Dr. James Schneider, head of pediatric care at Cohen Children's Medical Center, said: "We're seeing record numbers of admissions of all children, of all ages, from newborns all the way through 21 years of age, in hospitals and in ICUs with Omicron. Not to say that it's more severe, but my experience so far is that it's not less severe, at least in kids; it's just that it's much more contagious."

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