



## Covid-19: Containment Exit

### Press release of the National Academy of Medicine

April 5, 2020

The epidemic curve of Covid-19 shows that a plateau is beginning to appear in the 53 Member States of the WHO Euro zone.<sup>1</sup>

In the absence, to date, of a vaccine, of proven effective antiviral treatment, and in a situation of shortage of masks and diagnostic tests, it has been necessary, in France as in many countries, to resort to the method of confining the population to their homes.

The purpose of confinement was to slow the spread of the virus and to reduce the sudden influx of patients into health facilities, especially the most serious cases in intensive care units with limited capacity. This containment has a strong economic and social impact.

The French government has provisionally set the end of the containment period at 15 April 2020.

To carry out the containment in the best conditions for the management of serious cases in health establishments, limiting the spread of the virus, resumption of professional activities, and public understanding, **the National Academy of Medicine recommends the following principles:**

- That the release from confinement be decided on the basis of the Region and not by age group;
- That this release be authorised only in Regions where a net decrease in the number of Covid-19 patients requiring hospitalisation, and a return of resuscitation needs to the pre-epidemic state are observed;
- That persons residing in a Region discharged from containment should not be allowed to travel to a Region still in containment;
- That the decision concerning border Regions be taken in consultation with neighbouring States;
- That the release from confinement be accompanied by a continued ban on gatherings (except in exceptional cases, such as funerals, for which the maximum number could be 20 people), by

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization, Coronavirus Situation Report 75, April 4, 2020

French National Academy of Medicine, Communiqué of 2 April 2020 on "Pandemic of Covid-19: reinforced barrier measures in the containment phase and in view of the exit from containment".

the maintenance of health barrier measures (hand washing, hydro-alcoholic gel, etc.), but also by reinforcing them by making it compulsory to wear an anti-projection mask for the general public, even a home-made one, in the public space.

This last obligation would be a sign that the release from confinement is not yet a return to normal life and should be maintained until transmission of the virus has stopped (no new cases in the last 14 days);

- That the rationale for the decision to release or maintain containment be developed Region by Region, in order to ensure the best possible understanding of the concerned population;

- That the decision to release the containment should not be based on the results of individual bioassays, whose availability and reliability do not appear insured in the short term, and whose operational implications will be confusing;

- That serological studies (Elisa test) for epidemiological purposes in the general population be initiated as soon as possible throughout the country on a regional basis, in order to assess the risk of a second epidemic wave.

- That, by all means, scientific, technical, industrial and regulatory, and at all levels, French, European and worldwide, the development and production of a vaccine be accelerated.

Considering that the measures that will be taken in the phase of exit from confinement will be aimed at protecting health, **the National Academy of Medicine calls for** the population be informed about the health interest of these measures and encourages it to respect them.