

# The need to determine recommended activity restrictions as part of the criteria for a COVID-19 alert based on the status of the municipal-level response

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Japan experienced the third wave from the second half of November, 2020 to the second half of February, 2021 in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. A state of emergency was declared in 11 prefectures of Japan in January 2021 [NHK; <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/special/coronavirus/data-all> (cited 2021 February 26)], and the number of COVID-19 cases in the third wave was significantly higher than that of the first wave.

An examination by each prefecture or municipality reveals a considerable difference in the rate of infection in COVID-19.

The following parameters differ by municipality in Japan: the number of patients with severe COVID-19, the number of patients hospitalised for COVID-19, the availability of beds for patients with COVID-19, the availability of beds for patients with severe COVID-19, and the state of the medical system (which includes the state of testing). Given this situation, important indices for COVID-19 alerts issued by

government entities must be ascertained. In addition, the infection trends and the related state of the medical system in municipality should be considered. This difficult situation must be endured and SARS-CoV-2 contained (through vaccination) while adeptly balancing the prioritisation of measures to prevent infection and economic measures.

Each municipality needs to carefully determine a policy on activity restrictions based on infection trends in the region, and each municipality needs to further clarify the balance between “when to refrain from routine activities” and “when to relax those restrictions”. Moreover, each municipality needs to relieve the mental exhaustion of its residents.

COVID-19 must be dealt with by meticulously analysing its various aspects and by ascertaining its status in different regions. Municipalities, the nation as a whole, and countries around the globe must support one another to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.



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