

**Arkansas now has 63 confirmed cases of the highly contagious covid-19 omicron variant, state chief medical officer Dr. Jennifer Dillaha said Monday.**

**The news comes as covid-19 hospitalizations increased by 37 to 519 Monday — a daily uptick not seen since mid October — and the number of cases in the state that were considered active rose to 10,090, the largest number since Sept. 30.**

**"We continue to monitor increasing hospitalizations across the state," Gov. Asa Hutchinson said on social media Monday afternoon. "Over 87% of covid hospitalizations are unvaccinated, which shows the effectiveness of the vaccine at preventing serious illness. Get your vaccine this week as cases and hospitalizations continue to increase."**

**Another 981 new cases were added Monday — 547 more cases than reported the previous Monday. Since the pandemic hit the state in March 2020, there have been a cumulative total of 551,394 cases.**

**Deaths from the virus rose by 15 to 9,081.**