Twitter Thread by Dr Xand van Tulleken ■■■■



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If you're frustrated by this lockdown it is worth remembering that there is an alternative. Our country has had a year to build an effective system for testing to identify cases & isolate them & those they have exposed. We are all paying the price for the failure to do this.

The deaths that are occurring now were largely preventable. The people dying didn't simply want a big family bash over the holidays nor have they all been breaking the rules. They are not all old or medically vulnerable.

They are key workers and people's whose jobs and lives expose them to crowds. The situation is so desperately tragic it's much easier to blame them. But really important not to blame them. None of us can reduce our risk to zero and all of us rely on people taking risks.

The deaths, suffering & long term problems caused by the repeated lockdowns are an equal tragedy. It is appallingly difficult for many people right now.

It is not beyond a wealthy state like ours to control the spread of the virus without simply shutting everyone at home but at the moment this is the only alternative we have.

We are facing months - perhaps over a year - of a combination of severe restrictions and high covid death rates. This will not be the only pandemic we see in our lifetimes. We need a public health infrastructure that includes a dynamic, rapid, accessible testing system and...

... a set of responses to test results that genuinely interrupt transmission. It doesn't seem at the moment that this is being constructed at the rate required.

I'm not as interested in blaming the government for the current appalling unfolding tragedy as I am in drawing attention to the complete absence of an alternative to lockdown. We currently have just one effective tool: staying home. This seems desperately important to fix.

Anyway if you've read this far then please do be careful - of covid, of riding your bike and of learning a few new parkour tricks. If you need hospital care for anything in the next few weeks then the NHS will be there for you but the staff are under

very severe pressure.