

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

27th Aug 2021

Overnight News Roundup

One Minute Overview

Cases On The Rise Across World

- Symptom-tracking study found number of Britons falling ill with Covid every day rose by a fifth last week. [England and Wales were today told to brace for a Scotland-like surge in Covid cases in schools next week](#)
- Australia reported more than 1,100 new coronavirus infections today — the largest daily increase since the pandemic began. [It is the fourth time in six days that Australia has broken its one-day case record and came as Sydney's stretched hospitals erected emergency tent accommodation to cope with surging cases that have helped to fill 80 per cent of intensive care beds in New South Wales.](#)
- South Korea reported 20 COVID-19 deaths for Wednesday, the highest daily count this year, as the number of severe cases more than doubled since the current and worst wave of infections began in July. [While total case mortality rates remain low at below 1% and no major strains on its healthcare system is reported yet, South Korean authorities have been trying to secure more ICU beds for severe patients](#) which are on the rise along with record new infections.
- More than 100,000 people are hospitalized with Covid-19 in the US -- the first time that level has been reached since January -- as medical workers say they're once again struggling to treat waves of patients. [The latest figure, amid a summer surge in Covid-19 cases driven by the highly transmissible Delta variant, is also more than double what it was on the same day last year, when vaccines were not available as they are now.](#) Hospitals and researchers have been saying the vast majority of this year's hospitalized patients are unvaccinated.
- Kentucky and Texas joined a growing list of states that are seeing record numbers of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in a surge that is overwhelming doctors and nurses and afflicting more children. [Intensive care units around the nation are packed with patients extremely ill with the coronavirus — even in places where hospitalizations have not yet reached earlier peaks.](#)

100,000 More Deaths if USA Fails to Change Ways

- The U.S. is projected to see nearly 100,000 more COVID-19 deaths between now and Dec.1, according to the nation's most closely watched forecasting model. But health experts say that toll could be cut in half if nearly everyone wore a mask in public spaces. In other words, what the coronavirus has in store this fall depends on human behavior. ["Behavior is really going to determine if, when and how sustainably the current wave subsides,"](#) said Lauren Ancel Meyers, director of the [University of Texas COVID-19 Modeling Consortium](#). "We cannot stop delta in its tracks, but we can change our behavior overnight."

Africa - Vaccinations Are Still Too Low

- COVID-19 vaccinations in Africa tripled over the past week, though protecting even 10% of the continent by the end of September remains "a very daunting task," the Africa director of the World Health Organization said Thursday. [Meanwhile, the continent saw 248,000 new confirmed cases over the past week, with at least 24 countries seeing a surge in infections driven by the delta variant.](#) "This

is a preventable tragedy if African countries can get fair access to the vaccines,” Matshidiso Moeti told reporters.

New Zealand's Zero Covid Strategy Under Microscope

- New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said the strict nationwide lockdown enforced to stamp out COVID-19 was helping limit the spread of the highly infectious Delta variant, even as the number of new cases rose on Thursday. [New Zealand reported 68 new cases on Thursday taking the total number of people infected in the latest outbreak to 277.](#) Of the total cases, 263 are in Auckland and 14 are in the capital Wellington.

Blood Clot Risks After Covid Outweigh Vaccine Risks - Says Study

- The chances of developing dangerous blood clots after being infected with the virus that causes Covid-19 far outweighs the risks of the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines, according to the largest study of its kind. [The sweeping analysis used data from more than 29 million people in England to compare both vaccines with infection from Sars-Cov-2.](#) It weighed up rates of hospital admission or death from blood clots, as well as other blood disorders, within 28 days of either a positive test or receiving the first jab.

Vaccine Manufacture Expansion into Latin America

- Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech said they are partnering with a Brazilian pharmaceutical company to help manufacture their Covid-19 vaccine in Latin America, which could help meet growing demand for the shot in the region. [Eurofarma will produce at least 100 million doses annually for distribution in the region, Pfizer and BioNTech said Thursday. The doses will be in addition to those reaching Latin America through distribution channels such as Covax,](#) the global initiative intended to get vaccines to low-income countries, and donations by the U.S., the companies said.

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Latest hospital data shows there were 818 patients admitted with virus on August 22 — a small 1.7 per cent rise. Symptom-tracking study found number of Britons falling ill with Covid every day rose by a fifth last week. England and Wales were today told to brace for a Scotland-like surge in Covid cases in schools next week

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9928751/Covid-19-UK-Number-Britons-falling-ill-virus-day-rises-fifth-week-52-000.html>

Australia records largest daily Covid-19 infection rise since pandemic began

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Australia reported more than 1,100 new coronavirus infections today — the largest daily increase since the pandemic began — amid growing alarm over the spread of the virus through remote Aboriginal towns. It is the fourth time in six days that Australia has broken its one-day case record and came as Sydney's stretched hospitals erected emergency tent accommodation to cope with surging cases that have helped to fill 80 per cent of intensive care beds in New South Wales.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/australia-records-largest-daily-covid-19-infection-rise-since-pandemic-began-hpt0sqhxv>

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/skorea-reports-highest-daily-covid-19-deaths-2021-severe-cases-rise-2021-08-26/>

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<https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/26/health/us-coronavirus-thursday/index.html>

Virus surge breaks hospital records amid rising toll on kids

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Kentucky and Texas joined a growing list of states that are seeing record numbers of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in a surge that is overwhelming doctors and nurses and afflicting more children. Intensive care units around the nation are packed with patients extremely ill with the coronavirus — even in places where hospitalizations have not yet reached earlier peaks. The ICU units at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Georgia typically have room for 38 patients, and doctors and nurses may have only two or three people who are very sick, said Dr. Jyotir Mehta, medical director of the ICU. On Wednesday, the ICU had 50 COVID-19 patients alone, roughly half of them relying on ventilators to breathe.

<https://apnews.com/article/health-coronavirus-pandemic-1766777633776b9490d1db6879cfb6ce>

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<https://apnews.com/article/science-health-coronavirus-pandemic-6df4471c64e40e7e319ae368d4c1db0b>

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“This is a preventable tragedy if African countries can get fair access to the vaccines,” Matshidiso Moeti told reporters.

<https://apnews.com/article/africa-health-coronavirus-pandemic-united-nations-95bdaafae5b433cd23b71c954ab941fc>

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/new-zealands-ardern-says-lockdown-working-limit-delta-spread-2021-08-26/>

Blood clot risk greater after Covid infection than after vaccination

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<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/27/blood-clot-risk-greater-after-covid-infection-than-after-vaccination>

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Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech said they are partnering with a Brazilian pharmaceutical company to help manufacture their Covid-19 vaccine in Latin America, which could help meet growing demand for the shot in the region. Eurofarma will produce at least 100 million doses annually for distribution in the region, Pfizer and BioNTech said Thursday. The doses will be in addition to those reaching Latin America through distribution channels such as Covax, the global initiative intended to get vaccines to low-income countries, and donations by the U.S., the companies said.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-biontech-expand-covid-19-vaccine-manufacturing-into-latin-america-11629974701?mod=business_featst_pos1

Rite Aid to offer free COVID-19 testing to students in New York

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Drugstore chain Rite Aid Corp said on Thursday it would be offering free COVID-19 tests to students in public schools in New York state before or at the start of the upcoming school year. The announcement comes as students in the United States prepare to head back to classes, while the country grapples with stemming the recent surge in cases caused by the Delta variant of the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/rite-aid-offer-free-covid-19-testing-students-new-york-2021-08-26/>

Illinois requires educators, health workers to get vaccine

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Illinois health care workers and educators from kindergarten through college will be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or submit to weekly testing, Gov. J.B. Pritzker said Thursday in announcing new safety protocols that also include a fresh statewide mandate for masks to be worn indoors.

<https://apnews.com/article/health-coronavirus-pandemic-illinois-2457d5dfa73dfc30f2396fd22b3ab8a3>

Pandemic windfall for US schools has few strings attached

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As the federal government releases historic sums of pandemic aid to the nation's schools, it's urging them to dream big, to invest in seismic changes that will benefit students for generations to come. But many districts say they have more urgent problems to tackle first. In Detroit, that means fixing buildings with crumbling ceilings and mold infestations. Like other school systems, Detroit is caught between the Biden administration's lofty aspirations and bleak realities. The district is using some of the government money to hire tutors, expand mental health services and cut class sizes. But at least half of its \$1.3 billion windfall is being set aside to make long-neglected repairs.

<https://apnews.com/article/pandemic-aid-public-school-funding-346d3d4b86f904184e357c34c9754800>

Thailand in talks to buy COVID-19 vaccines from European nations

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Thailand is in talks with European countries to purchase millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccines, a health official said on Thursday, as the Southeast Asian nation tries to speed up its inoculation rollout to contain a wave of infections. Authorities in Thailand have been scrambling to shore up vaccine supplies, despite the country being the production hub for AstraZeneca shots in the region. Last week, the government said it would borrow 150,000 AstraZeneca doses from the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thailand-talks-buy-covid-19-vaccines-european-nations-2021-08-26/>

Covid-19 Australia: Brad Hazzard says all NSW health workers must be vaccinated by end of November

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NSW healthcare workers must be fully vaccinated for Covid-19 by November 30 Public health orders require workers to have at least one dose in next 5 weeks 20% of staff are still not jabbed despite having access to vaccine since February Healthcare staff must provide vaccination proof to employer or face exclusion

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9928415/Covid-19-Australia-Brad-Hazzard-says-NSW-health-workers-vaccinated-end-November.html>

NHS planning Covid vaccines for children from age 12, reports say

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NHS England has been told to prepare to administer Covid vaccinations to all children aged 12 and above, as vaccine advisers continue to consider whether to extend the programme, according to reports. The planned extension to the vaccination programme would coincide with the start of the new school year. NHS trusts have been told to have plans prepared by 4pm on Friday, the Daily Telegraph reported. Children aged 12-15 in the UK are currently offered coronavirus vaccines only if they have certain health conditions or live with vulnerable people, but distribution of the vaccines has already been extended to that age group by countries such as the US, Germany and Israel.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/26/nhs-planning-covid-vaccines-for-children-from-age-12-reports-say>

Biden Falls Short on U.S. Vaccine 'Arsenal' Pledge, Experts Say

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Congress appropriated \$16 billion to ramp up Covid-19 countermeasures, but a new report found that the Biden administration had spent very little of it on expanding vaccine manufacturing capacity.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/us/politics/biden-coronavirus-vaccine.html>

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<https://apnews.com/article/africa-health-coronavirus-pandemic-united-nations-95bdaafae5b433cd23b71c954ab941fc>

Brain fog, total exhaustion: One Big Law associate's COVID battle

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As law firms grapple with return-to-office plans, Big Law associate Andrew Kinsey offers a powerful example of why rushing back might be unwise. Kinsey has spent the last two weeks fighting a COVID-19 infection, sharing his symptoms in real time in a series of often-alarming tweets. For example, on the seventh day of his illness he wrote, “It took 15 minutes of slowly changing positions, waiting, moving again, waiting ... but I got from the bed to my chair without throwing up or having to rest for 20 minutes. It sounds pathetic, but this is a huge step.”

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/brain-fog-total-exhaustion-one-big-law-associates-covid-battle-2021-08-26/>

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Music industry weighs vaccine mandates, but politics collide

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The coronavirus vaccine gave the live entertainment industry hope for a rebound in 2021. Now, as COVID-19 cases surge and hospital beds fill up, it feels like March 2020 all over again. Tom DeGeorge runs the popular Crowbar club in Tampa, Florida, that once hosted about 300 concerts a year, mostly touring bands. He managed to stay afloat and reopen last fall, hosting about six shows a month. But with cases surging in Florida, show cancellations have racked up and attendance has plummeted.

<https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-lifestyle-health-arts-and-entertainment-coronavirus-pandemic-ab306f0473b79731a3b8cd7680afd37f>

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YouTube has removed 1 million videos for dangerous COVID-19 misinformation since February 2020, according to YouTube’s Chief Product Officer Neal Mahon. Mahon shared the statistic in a blog post outlining how the company approaches misinformation on its platform. “Misinformation has moved from the marginal to the mainstream,” he wrote. “No longer contained to the sealed-off worlds of Holocaust deniers or 9-11 truthers, it now stretches into every facet of society, sometimes tearing through communities with blistering speed.”

<https://techcrunch.com/2021/08/25/youtube-has-removed-1-million-videos-for-dangerous-covid-19-misinformation/>

Detroit highlights the tension over COVID vaccine mandates

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Public support for stronger measures to require COVID vaccinations is strong, according to a new Reuters/IPSOS poll, but for Detroit automakers the debate over vaccination policy is far from over.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/gm-require-us-salaried-employees-report-vaccination-status-2021-08-26/>

mRNA vaccines trigger backup immune response; some cancer drugs may help

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A new study may help explain why mRNA vaccines by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna are more effective at preventing hospitalizations and deaths than they are at preventing infection. Test-tube experiments on blood samples from 61 fully vaccinated adults showed that by six months, vaccine-induced antibodies that can immediately neutralize the virus had declined. But so-called memory B cells, which produce new antibodies if they encounter the virus later on, had increased and become better at recognizing viral variants, according to a report posted on Monday on bioRxiv ahead of peer review.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/mrna-vaccines-trigger-backup-immune-response-some-cancer-drugs-may-help-2021-08-25/>

Reliance Life Sciences seeks nod to start human trials of COVID-19 vaccine - ET

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India's Reliance Life Sciences has applied for regulatory approval to begin early stage human trials of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate, The Economic Times reported on Thursday. The unlisted firm's parent Reliance Industries did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/reliance-life-sciences-seeks-nod-start-human-trials-covid-19-vaccine-et-2021-08-26/>

Jha outlines ways to make schools safe from coronavirus

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School districts across the country need to follow four rules to ensure that students and their teachers remain protected from the coronavirus this fall, pandemic expert Dr. Ashish Jha said. They are: Vaccinations for all who are eligible; proper ventilation and related mitigation measures in buildings; regular testing; and masks, he said Thursday in the latest edition of the "COVID: What Comes Next" podcast hosted by The Providence Journal. "For me this is personal," said Jha, dean of Brown University's School of Public Health, because he has children in public schools, said.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/jha-outlines-ways-to-make-schools-safe-from-coronavirus/ar-AANMymQ>

Covid-19: Pandemic had severe impact on young people, says report

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The coronavirus pandemic and restrictions have had "a severe impact" on children and young people. That is according to a report from the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY). More than half (52%) of 16-year-olds who took part in the research felt their mental and emotional health had worsened during the pandemic. "Insufficient consideration" was given to how children and young people's lives would be affected, it said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-58334583>

All theories on origins of Covid-19 outbreak still 'on the table', says WHO

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The World Health Organization has said all theories on the origins of the Covid-19 outbreak, including the possibility of laboratory leak, are "on the table" and urged Chinese scientists to carry out their own investigations. WHO officials were answering questions from the press after a classified US intelligence report delivered to the White House on Tuesday was reported to be inconclusive on the question of the origins of the pandemic, in part due to a lack of information from China.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/25/us-intelligence-biden-inconclusive-report-covid-origins-wuhan-lab-animals>

China Livzon Pharma affiliate's COVID-19 vaccine candidate enters phase III trial

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A potential COVID-19 vaccine developed by a biotech firm affiliated with China's Livzon Pharmaceutical Group Inc (Livzon) has entered a late-stage trial, Livzon said late on Thursday. A Phase III trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of the candidate, named V-01, in people aged 18 and over has started recruiting participants in the Philippines, Livzon said in a filing.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-livzon-pharma-affiliates-covid-19-vaccine-candidate-enters-phase-iii-trial-2021-08-26/>

Inovio to start COVID-19 vaccine trial after Brazil regulator's nod

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Inovio Pharmaceuticals Inc said on Thursday it would start a large study for its experimental COVID-19 vaccine in the next few weeks, after the drugmaker received authorization from Brazil's regulatory agency. The company is currently working on importing the vaccine to Brazil and expects dosing of trial participants to begin in September, Chief Executive Officer Joseph Kim told Reuters. Inovio started developing its COVID-19 DNA vaccine, INO-4800, last year but fell behind rivals after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) put the Phase 3 portion of its mid-to-late stage trial on hold for more information on the vaccine delivery device.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/inovio-start-covid-19-vaccine-trial-after-getting-brazil-regulator-approval-2021-08-26/>

Heart inflammation risk boosted slightly by vaccine, more by COVID-19 -study

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The use of Pfizer Inc and German partner BioNTech SE's (22UAY.DE) widely used COVID-19 vaccine marginally increases the risk of heart inflammation, but the risk is higher among those infected with the coronavirus,

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/heart-inflammation-risk-boosted-slightly-by-vaccine-more-by-covid-19-study-2021-08-25/>

Experts on WHO team say search for COVID origins has stalled

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The international scientists dispatched to China by the World Health Organization to find out where the coronavirus came from said Wednesday the search has stalled and warned that the window of opportunity for solving the mystery is "closing fast." Meanwhile, a U.S. intelligence review ordered up by President Joe Biden proved inconclusive about the virus's origin, including whether it jumped from an animal to a human or escaped from a Chinese lab, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

<https://apnews.com/article/science-health-coronavirus-pandemic-united-nations-f08a2972ae5a59cc425a89a36c3389d1>

India sees surge in COVID cases after harvest festival

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India has logged 46,164 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, with experts saying festival celebrations in the southern state of Kerala were behind the whopping increase in infections. It was the first time since July 7 that the country's single-day infections went past the 45,000 mark, coronavirus data on the Johns Hopkins University's website showed on Thursday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/26/india-surge-covid-kerala-onam-festival>

Two more Paralympic athletes test positive for Covid-19 in Tokyo village

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Two more athletes have tested positive for Covid-19 in the Paralympic village, with officials awaiting

information to confirm if a cluster of infection has broken out, after a first case was discovered on Tuesday. The news came as ParalympicsGB announced a member of their coaching staff, part of the wheelchair tennis team, has the virus and is in isolation.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/aug/25/two-more-paralympic-athletes-test-positive-for-covid-19-in-tokyo-village>