

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

10th Nov 2021

Lockdown Exit

New data from Texas suggests unvaccinated people are 20 times more likely to die from COVID-19

The Texas Department of State Health Services released a report that analyzed COVID-19 cases and deaths starting from Jan. 15 through Oct. 1. The report initially found that unvaccinated people were 40 times more likely to die from COVID-19 between Jan. 15 and Oct. 1. But as the unvaccinated population shrunk, between Sept. 4 and Oct. 1 that number dropped to 20 times more likely to die.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/580804-new-data-suggests-unvaccinated-people-are-20-times-more-likely-to>

In vaccine-wary Latvia, bodies pile up in hospital morgue

In an inconspicuous building of the main hospital in the Latvian city of Daugavpils, bags containing the bodies of dead COVID-19 patients lie on the ground of a makeshift morgue, held here as city gravediggers clear space for new graves. Latvia, one of the least vaccinated countries in the European Union, is facing its most severe outbreak of COVID-19 yet. In Daugavpils, where vaccine uptake is especially low, deaths have soared.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/vaccine-wary-latvia-bodies-pile-up-hospital-morgue-2021-11-09/>

AstraZeneca to create separate division for vaccines, antibody therapies

AstraZeneca is creating a separate division for vaccines and antibody therapies to be led by senior executive Iskra Reić, the drugmaker said on Tuesday, as it builds focus on its COVID-19 shot and development of coronavirus treatments. News comes after review of vaccine operations. COVID-19 shot has suffered setbacks during pandemic. Company has antibody therapy proven to prevent infection. Move shows company sees future for COVID-19 vaccine beyond pandemic - analyst.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/astrazeneca-create-separate-division-vaccines-antibody-therapies-2021-11-09/>

French president Macron: rise of Covid incidence rate is worrying

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday that those aged 65 and older will need to present proof of a COVID-19 booster shot from mid-December for health passes that give access to restaurants, trains and planes to remain valid. Besides, the third shot, so far available only for people older than 65 and the vulnerable, will from early December also be available for the 50-64 age group, Macron said in a televised address.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/french-president-macron-rise-covid-incidence-rate-is-worrying-2021-11-09/>

India's Race to Vaccinate Its Villages Meets With Rural Resistance

The stakes could hardly be higher, both for India and for the world. Public-health experts fear that a third wave of infections could soon wash over the subcontinent, shattering the uneasy calm that's prevailed since the end of the second, which crested in May. Then, medical resources were so overwhelmed that some Delhi parks were converted into open-air crematoriums; in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, the bodies of victims were left to float down the Ganges. Now, with most urban residents either vaccinated or previously exposed to infection, it's in rural areas where the virus will find the largest pool of immunologically naive targets.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-11-09/covid-vaccine-india-races-to-vaccinate-poor-suspicious-citizens-in-villages>

AstraZeneca Creates New Vaccines Unit for Its Covid-19 Assets

AstraZeneca Plc is creating a new unit to house its coronavirus assets, after the pandemic spurred the British pharmaceutical giant to move into the vaccines space. The company's Covid-19 shot and antibody therapy will be placed in the new division, which will be run by executive Iskra Reic, Astra said in a statement Tuesday. The unit will house teams from the research, manufacturing and commercial departments. "In order to optimize the management of our existing portfolio of vaccines and antibodies for viral respiratory infections, we are creating a dedicated vaccines and immune therapies unit," Astra said. "The team will be dedicated to our Covid-19 vaccine, our long-acting antibody combination and our developmental vaccine addressing multiple variants of concern."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-09/astrazeneca-creates-new-vaccines-division-for-covid-19-assets>

The death rates from Covid in red America and blue America are growing further apart | TheHill

A partisan gap in COVID-19 deaths is widening, with just 40 percent of people in counties that had voted for Trump vaccinated compared to 53 percent of people in counties that had voted for Biden. The White House said last month that unvaccinated Americans face a more than 18 times higher risk of being hospitalized with COVID-19 than those who are vaccinated. Though former President Trump has received a COVID-19 vaccine and has encouraged other adults to do the same, other conservative leaders continue to make dubious or false claims about the vaccines.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/580607-the-death-rates-from-covid-in-red-america-and>

The US is reopening its borders to Europe, the global epicenter of Covid-19

The United States has reopened its borders to vaccinated international travelers, ending a 20-month travel ban at the same moment Europe is battling a surge of Covid-19 cases that has pushed the continent back into the epicenter of the pandemic. Fully vaccinated travelers from 33 countries -- including the United Kingdom and much of Europe -- can now enter the US without needing to quarantine, provided they have proof of vaccination and a negative viral test. Families and friends separated since the start of the pandemic streamed into airports across major European cities on Monday morning, excited to see loved ones for the first time since former President Donald Trump imposed tough travel restrictions at the outset of the pandemic in an effort to control the virus.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/08/world/covid-europe-us-reopens-borders-intl/index.html>

Covid-19: Majority in NI 'want to keep working from home'

A majority of workers in Northern Ireland would like to work from home even after pandemic restrictions are fully lifted, a survey has suggested. YouGov surveyed 1,000 local workers online during August, weighted to give a representative sample of adults in work. It was carried out for the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development. The survey suggests that of those working fully from home, only 3% wanted to return to their office full time.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-59208583>

U.S.-Mexico border reopens after 20 months of COVID shutdown

There were fewer crossings at the Mexico-United States border than expected on Monday as it reopened to nonessential travel following a 20-month closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with many residents staying home to avoid potential chaos. Officials in the Mexican border city of Tijuana said people did not make the most of restrictions being lifted along the 2,000-mile (3,200-km) border due to fears of being caught in traffic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/us-mexico-border-reopens-after-20-months-covid-disruption-2021-11-08/>

WHO warns of shortage of 1-2 bln COVID vaccine syringes

There could be a shortage of one to two billion syringes needed to administer COVID-19 vaccinations in 2022 which could also impact routine immunisations and undermine needle safety, the World

Health Organisation warned on Tuesday. National health authorities should plan their needs well in advance to avoid the "hoarding, panic buying and type of situation" seen early in the pandemic with the lack of personal protective equipment, WHO expert Lisa Hedman said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-warns-shortage-1-2-blncovid-vaccine-syringes-2021-11-09/>

Exit Strategies

Vaccine Mandate News: Covid Vaccine to Be Mandatory for NHS England Workers

Frontline National Health Service workers in England must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 by April 2022, the U.K. government announced. Health Secretary Sajid Javid told Parliament on Tuesday the move was necessary to protect patients and other NHS staff. It follows a separate decision by the government to make vaccines compulsory for care home workers from Nov. 11. Only those frontline NHS workers who can prove they have had two coronavirus vaccinations can be employed, Javid said. Staff who don't work face to face with patients or are medically exempt will not face mandatory shots.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-09/covid-19-vaccines-made-mandatory-for-nhs-workers-in-england>

New vaccine campaigns target rural Americans to address disparities

In the United States, there is a renewed campaign to vaccinate rural Americans due to the stark difference in Covid-19 cases and deaths among those living in less-populated areas compared with towns and cities. Rural residents are now twice as likely to die from Covid-19 as Americans in metropolitan areas. Yet rural areas tend to lag at least 10% behind metropolitan areas when it comes to vaccination – and this hesitancy is exacerbating already existing health issues. "Rural populations are older, they're sicker and they're poorer," said Fred Ullrich, research analyst at the RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis and co-author of a report on Covid's disproportionate burden on rural communities.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/nov/09/covid-vaccine-campaign-rural-americans>

Costa Rica announces nationwide mandate requiring coronavirus vaccinations for children

Costa Rica has made coronavirus vaccinations a requirement for all people under the age of 18, in what experts say is one of the world's broadest mandates to immunize children against the virus. The Health Ministry in the Central American nation said Friday that the vaccinations would be included with other mandatory shots against chickenpox, polio and the human papillomavirus, or HPV. It said that the measure was taken to "safeguard" the best interests of the children and that parents and legal guardians were responsible for ensuring minors are vaccinated in a "timely manner."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/08/costa-rica-vaccine-children/>

NSW hits 90 per cent COVID-19 fully vaccinated target

Premier Dominic Perrottet says NSW is leading the country out of the pandemic NSW recorded 222 new COVID-19 cases and four deaths. Government data shows that 94 per cent of NSW residents have had one dose of a vaccine

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-09/nsw-reaches-90-per-cent-covid-19-double-vaccination/100600014>

Covid-19 vaccines now compulsory for all NHS staff in England

Covid-19 vaccines will be compulsory for all NHS staff in England who have until spring to get their jabs or risk losing their job, the Government has announced. Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said all those working in the health service will have until spring to give them time to receive both vaccine doses. The only people exempt from the mandatory policy will be those who do not

have to face contact with patients and those who have a medical exemption. Making a Covid-19 update statement in the House of Commons, Mr Javid said: "Having considered the consultation responses, the advice of my officials and NHS leaders including the chief executive of the NHS, I have concluded that all those working in the NHS and social care will have to be vaccinated. We must avoid preventable harm and protect patients in the NHS, protect colleagues in the NHS and of course protect the NHS itself."

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/covid-19-vaccines-now-compulsory-for-all-nhs-staff-in-england-1291257>

India could ship vaccines to COVAX in a few weeks, say sources

India could resume deliveries of COVID-19 shots to global vaccine-sharing platform COVAX in a few weeks for the first time since April, two health industry sources said, ending a suspension of supplies that has hurt poor countries. The World Health Organization (WHO), which co-leads COVAX, has been urging India to restart supplies for the programme, especially after it sent about 4 million doses to its neighbours and partners in October.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-could-ship-vaccines-covax-few-weeks-say-sources-2021-11-09/>

U.S. judge upholds United Airlines' COVID-19 vaccine mandate for employees

A U.S. federal judge on Monday ruled United Airlines Holdings Inc can impose a COVID-19 vaccine mandate on its employees that only provides unpaid leave for workers who are exempted for medical or religious reasons. U.S. District Judge Mark Pittman in Fort Worth, Texas, rejected arguments by employees that the airline was improperly putting them in an "impossible position" by forcing them to choose a vaccine or unpaid leave.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/us-judge-upholds-united-airlines-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-2021-11-08/>

WHO warns of shortage of 1-2 bln COVID vaccine syringes

There could be a shortage of one to two billion syringes needed to administer COVID-19 vaccinations in 2022 which could also impact routine immunisations and undermine needle safety, the World Health Organisation warned on Tuesday. National health authorities should plan their needs well in advance to avoid the "hoarding, panic buying and type of situation" seen early in the pandemic with the lack of personal protective equipment, WHO expert Lisa Hedman said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-warns-shortage-1-2-bln-covid-vaccine-syringes-2021-11-09/>

Hong Kong won't reopen before mid-2022, government adviser says

Hong Kong could open up to global travel in roughly six months, after officials have successfully navigated the introduction of quarantine-free borders with mainland China and boosted the local vaccination rate, a government adviser said. The Chinese territory needs to finish negotiating open borders with the mainland, while using the next few months to increase the flagging Covid-19 inoculation rate among the city's elderly, Lam Ching-choi, a member of Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam's advisory Executive Council, said in an interview on Monday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/11/9/bbhong-kong-wont-reopen-before-mid-2022-government-advisor-says>

Partisan Exits

APEC affirms stand against vaccine nationalism, driven to manage climate change

Members of Asia-Pacific trade group APEC have reiterated a "strong stance" against vaccine nationalism to support the region's recovery from the pandemic and are committed to tackle climate change, host New Zealand said on Wednesday. New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs Nanaia Mahuta and Minister of Trade Damien O'Connor said all 21 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member countries had contributed to the region's pandemic response and work towards progress on trade.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/apec-affirms-stand-against-vaccine-nationalism-driven-manage-climate-change-2021-11-09/>

Don't wait on vaccine rules, White House tells companies amid legal fight

The White House on Monday urged employers to go ahead and push worker vaccinations, as legal challenges to President Joe Biden's vaccine rule work their way through the courts. A U.S. federal appeals court issued a stay Saturday freezing the Biden administration's efforts to require COVID-19 vaccines for workers at U.S. companies with at least 100 employees or weekly tests, citing "grave statutory and constitutional" issues with the rule. The ruling from the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals comes after numerous Republican-led states filed legal challenges against the new rule, which is set to take effect on Jan 4.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/dont-wait-vaccine-rules-white-house-tells-companies-amid-legal-fight-2021-11-08/>

Covid-19 vaccine debate takes a strange turn

The Covid-19 vaccine debate is getting weird. On Twitter, Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz accused Big Bird of pushing "Government propaganda...for your 5 year old!" after the Muppet tweeted about getting the shot in his wing. CNN aired a special on Saturday with "Sesame Street" to explain the vaccine to children ages 5-11, who are now eligible to get the shot. Watch Rosita, a green Muppet, overcome her fear and bravely get her first Covid-19 vaccine dose.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/08/politics/covid-vaccine-debate-what-matters/index.html>

Singapore to start charging Covid patients who are 'unvaccinated by choice'

Singapore will no longer pay the Covid-19 medical bills for people "unvaccinated by choice", the government said, as the country grapples with a surge in cases. The government currently covers the full Covid medical costs for all Singaporeans, as well as permanent residents and long-term visa holders, unless they test positive soon after returning home from overseas. However from 8 December, the government said it will "begin charging Covid-19 patients who are unvaccinated by choice".

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/09/singapore-to-start-charging-covid-patients-who-are-unvaccinated-by-choice>

EXCLUSIVE Boeing U.S. worker vaccine exemption requests top 11000 -sources

The number of Boeing Co employees seeking a vaccine exemption on religious or medical grounds has reached more than 11,000 - or nearly 9% of its U.S. workforce - a level many times higher than executives initially estimated, people familiar with the matter told Reuters. The widespread reluctance has left executives scrambling for a strategy that keeps employees safe and complies with President Joe Biden's vaccine mandate for federal contractors, but avoids an exodus of engineering and factory labor, the people said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/exclusive-boeing-us-worker-vaccine-exemption-requests-top-11000-sources-2021-11-08/>

Israel to rule on child COVID vaccines out of public eye amid anti-vax threats

Israeli health officials will decide behind closed doors on whether to allow child COVID-19 vaccinations, citing concerns that decision makers would otherwise not speak freely due to aggressive anti-vax rhetoric by members of the public. Israel has been a world leader in vaccinations and more than 40% of the population has received a third shot. Following the green light given by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for using the Pfizer/BioNTech coronavirus vaccine on children aged 5 to 11, Israel's Health Ministry is set on Wednesday to hold a decisive discussion among experts on whether to follow suit.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-rule-child-covid-vaccines-out-public-eye-amid-anti-vax-threats-2021-11-08/>

U.S. tells court that blocking COVID-19 vaccine rule to cost lives

The Biden administration told a court on Monday it has clear authority to impose a COVID-19 vaccine rule on employers with at least 100 staff and that a court's order on Saturday blocking the rule could cost dozens or even hundreds of lives daily. People are increasingly returning to work and they risk accelerating the spread of COVID-19 without the rule, said the filing in the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals by government lawyers. "With the reopening of workplaces and the emergence of the highly transmissible Delta variant, the threat to workers is ongoing and overwhelming," said the filing.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-says-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-lawsuits-belong-court-picked-randomly-2021-11-08/>

Thousands protest in New Zealand against COVID-19 rules

New Zealand beefed up security measures at its parliament on Tuesday as thousands of people gathered to protest against COVID-19 vaccine mandates and government lockdowns aimed at controlling the pandemic. All but two entrances to the parliament building, known as the Beehive, were closed off in unprecedented security measures, as mostly unmasked protesters marched through central Wellington and congregated outside parliament. While the demonstration was peaceful, many people were seen holding signs and placards with messages like "Freedom" and "Kiwis are not lab rats" and shouting slogans as they demanded the government roll back compulsory vaccination and lift restrictions.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thousands-protest-new-zealand-against-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-2021-11-09/>

Scientific Viewpoint

Pfizer to apply for COVID vaccine use in Brazil for children 5-11 years

Pfizer Inc plans to seek Brazil's authorization to use its COVID-19 vaccine in children aged 5 to 11 years, the country's health regulator Anvisa said on Tuesday after a meeting with the U.S. company. Pfizer representatives met with Anvisa to present technical data ahead of a formal submission of its request, the regulator said in a statement. The dose for children aged 5 to 11 years will be lower than the dose for children over the age of 12 due to a new formula developed by the company, Anvisa said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/pfizer-apply-covid-vaccine-use-brazil-children-5-11-years-2021-11-09/>

U.S. government to buy \$1 billion worth of Merck's COVID-19 pill

The U.S. government will buy another \$1 billion worth of the COVID-19 pill made by Merck & Co Inc and partner Ridgeback Biotherapeutics, the companies said on Tuesday. The government in June agreed to buy 1.7 million courses of molnupiravir for \$1.2 billion and is now exercising options to buy 1.4 million more. That brings the total secured courses to 3.1 million and worth \$2.2 billion. Merck said the government has the right to buy 2 million more courses as part of the contract.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-government-buy-14-mln-more-courses-mercks-covid-19-pill-2021-11-09/>

EXCLUSIVE Amid spike in cases, EU to shortly approve first COVID antibody drugs - sources

The European Union drugs regulator is set to authorise the use of two monoclonal antibodies to treat COVID-19 patients in coming days, two EU sources told Reuters, in its first approvals of such therapies.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/exclusive-amid-spike-in-cases-eu-to-shortly-approve-first-covid-antibody-drugs-sources/ar-AAQuROq>

Bangladesh's Beximco to sell first generic version of Merck COVID-19 pill

A Bangladeshi drugmaker will soon begin selling the world's first generic version of Merck's COVID-19 pill, molnupiravir, which has been touted as a potential game-changer in the fight against

the pandemic. Beximco Pharmaceuticals will first sell generic molnupiravir in Bangladesh before considering exports based on global regulatory approvals, it said on Tuesday. The generic version has received emergency use authorisation from Bangladesh's drug regulators.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/asian-firm-beximco-sell-generic-version-merck-covid-19-pill-2021-11-09/>

Covid-19 drove deaths up 16% in OECD countries and hit mental health, too, report finds

The Covid-19 pandemic caused a 16% rise in expected deaths among the 38 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, hitting overall life expectancy in 24 out of 30 members, the organization said Tuesday. Life expectancy fell the most in Spain and the United States, the group said, with the United States losing 1.6 years of life per capita on average over the year and a half of the pandemic so far, and Spain losing 1.5 years, the OECD said. "COVID 19 contributed, directly and indirectly, to a 16% increase in the expected number of deaths in 2020 and the first half of 2021 across OECD countries," the group said in its report.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/09/health/oecd-covid-report/index.html>

COVID-19: Pfizer antiviral pill could be available 'early in 2022' if approved

An antiviral pill to treat COVID-19 should - subject to regulatory approval - be available early next year, the UK boss of Pfizer has told Sky News. The US drugs giant announced last week that the pill had been shown to cut the risk of hospitalisation or death from the virus by 89% and Britain has already ordered 250,000 courses of the treatment.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-pfizer-antiviral-pill-could-be-available-early-in-2022-if-approved-12464491>

India to buy 10 mln doses of Zydus Cadila's COVID-19 shot at about \$4 each

French health authorities said on Monday the number of people hospitalised because of COVID-19 went up by 156 over the past 24 hours, the highest daily rise since Aug. 23, to reach a one-month peak of 6,865. The number of patients in intensive care units (ICUs) for the disease increased by 40 to 1,141, a ninth rise in 10 days. President Emmanuel Macron will speak to the nation on Tuesday about the resurgence of COVID-19 infections as well as his economic reform programme

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-buy-10-mln-doses-zydus-cadilas-covid-19-vaccine-2021-11-08/>

Analysis: COVID-19 pills are coming, but no substitute for vaccines, disease experts say

Oral antiviral pills from Merck & Co and Pfizer Inc have been shown to significantly blunt the worst outcomes of COVID-19 if taken early enough, but doctors warn vaccine hesitant people not to confuse the benefit of the treatments with prevention afforded by vaccines. While 72% of American adults have gotten a first shot of the vaccine, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll, the pace of vaccination has slowed, as political partisanship in the United States divides views on the value and safety of vaccines against the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/covid-19-pills-are-coming-no-substitute-vaccines-disease-experts-say-2021-11-08/>

AstraZeneca's COVID-19 antibody cocktail clears first step for registration in Australia

AstraZeneca's antibody cocktail against COVID-19 received its first nod for registration in Australia, the country's medical regulatory body said on Tuesday. The Therapeutic Goods Administration said it granted provisional determination to the Anglo-Swedish drugmaker last week for its antibody cocktail, EVUSHELD, the first protective shot other than vaccines against COVID-19. The regulator said the provisional determination is the first step in the process, adding that it now expects AstraZeneca to submit an application for provisional registration shortly.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/astrazenecas-covid-19-cocktail-clears-first-step-registration-australia-2021-11-09/>

Amid spike in cases, EU to shortly approve first COVID antibody drugs - sources

EMA to approve Regeneron-Roche cocktail of monoclonal antibodies. EU agency to authorise also Celltrion's antibody therapy. Full marketing authorisations expected this week - source <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/exclusive-amid-spike-cases-eu-shortly-approve-first-covid-antibody-drugs-sources-2021-11-09/>

U.S. FDA lifts clinical hold on Inovio's COVID-19 vaccine trial

Inovio Pharmaceuticals Inc said on Tuesday the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had lifted a partial clinical hold on late-stage trial of its COVID-19 vaccine within the country. Inovio said it now has the authorization to proceed with the trial after 14 months, sending its shares up 4.6% before the bell. The FDA last year in September put the final-stage trial on hold as it sought more information from the company, including details on a delivery device used to inject genetic material into cells.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-fda-lifts-clinical-hold-inovios-covid-19-vaccine-trial-2021-11-09/>

French health authority advises against Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for under 30s

France's public health authority has recommended people under 30 be given Pfizer's Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine when available instead of Moderna Inc's Spikevax jab, which carried comparatively higher risks of heart-related problems. The Haute Autorite de Sante, which does not have legal power to ban or licence drugs but acts as an advisor to the French health sector, cited "very rare" risks linked to Myocarditis, a heart disease, that had shown up in recent data on the Moderna vaccine and in a French study published on Monday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/french-health-authority-advises-against-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-under-30s-2021-11-09/>

U.S. government to buy \$1 billion more worth of Merck's COVID-19 pill

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-government-buy-14-mln-more-courses-mercks-covid-19-pill-2021-11-09/>

Australia's NSW says unvaccinated 16 times more likely to die from COVID-19

Unvaccinated people are 16 times more likely to end up in intensive care units or die from COVID-19, Australia's New South Wales state said in a report, with officials urging people to get inoculated as Australia begins to live with the coronavirus. The data from New South Wales (NSW) health department out late on Monday showed only 11% of people out of 412 who died from the Delta outbreak over four months through early October were fully vaccinated. The average age of those deaths was 82. Only around 3% of people in intensive care units had two doses, while more than 63% of the 61,800 cases detected between June 16 and Oct. 7 were unvaccinated.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australias-nsw-says-unvaccinated-16-times-more-likely-die-covid-19-2021-11-09/>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Yukon declares state of emergency over COVID-19

The Yukon government has declared a state of emergency, announcing new health regulations aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19, including a proof-of-vaccination requirement set to take effect on Saturday. The declaration came after the territory reported 80 new COVID-19 infections diagnosed over a three-day period between Friday and Monday, for a total of 169 active cases. The territory says it is moving rapidly to implement a proof-of-vaccination system for a range of settings, including restaurants, ticketed events, fitness facilities and personal services businesses, as well as

faith-based and cultural gatherings. It says the new measures also include mandatory masks in all indoor public settings and outdoor public settings where physical distancing isn't possible, as well as capacity limits on different types of indoor and outdoor gatherings.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-covid-19-cases-whitehorse-elementary-outbreak-1.6242108>

Morgues, hospitals struggle with COVID-19 deaths in Romania

The morgue in Romania's main hospital has no space for the dead any more. In a stark illustration of the human cost of the coronavirus surge sweeping the nation, bodies of COVID-19 victims, wrapped in black plastic bags, line a hallway of the hospital in the capital, Bucharest. Hundreds of people have been dying each day for the past two months in Romania. The country has been among the hardest-hit in the current virus onslaught raging through Central and Eastern European nations, where far fewer people have been vaccinated than in Western Europe.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/9/morgues-hospitals-struggle-with-covid-19-deaths-in-romania>

France hits one-month high for patients hospitalised for COVID-19

French health authorities said on Monday the number of people hospitalised because of COVID-19 went up by 156 over the past 24 hours, the highest daily rise since Aug. 23, to reach a one-month peak of 6,865. The number of patients in intensive care units (ICUs) for the disease increased by 40 to 1,141, a ninth rise in 10 days. President Emmanuel Macron will speak to the nation on Tuesday about the resurgence of COVID-19 infections as well as his economic reform programme

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-hits-one-month-high-patients-hospitalised-covid-19-2021-11-08/>

Bulgaria's daily COVID-19 deaths rise to record high

Bulgaria reported a record number of daily coronavirus deaths on Tuesday as the European Union's least vaccinated country grapples with a fourth wave of the pandemic, official data showed on Tuesday. New infections were 5,286, down from a peak in late October, while 334 people died of the virus, the highest daily death toll since the start of the pandemic. Over 8,500 people were in hospital, including 734 in intensive care units, the data showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/bulgarias-daily-covid-19-deaths-rise-record-high-2021-11-09/>

Dutch hospitals urge new measures as COVID-19 cases near record

A group of hospitals in the southern Dutch province of Limburg on Tuesday called for the government to take new measures to stem rising COVID-19 cases, saying they have no space or staff to handle more coronavirus patients. Coronavirus infections in the Netherlands, as in other parts of Europe, are approaching all-time highs despite adult vaccination levels around 85%. Prime Minister Mark Rutte's government announced last week new measures to slow the spread of the virus, two months after scrapping social distancing rules

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/dutch-hospitals-urge-new-measures-covid-19-cases-near-record-2021-11-09/>

Russia's daily COVID-19 death toll hits new record high

Russia said last week's nationwide workplace shutdown had helped turn the tide of surging COVID-19 cases, even as officials on Tuesday reported the largest one-day death toll of the pandemic so far. All but a handful of Russia's 80-plus regions on Monday ended a "non-working" period from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 that was ordered by President Vladimir Putin, the toughest nationwide restriction since the early months of the pandemic. The health minister told a televised government meeting on Tuesday that the increase in the number of patients receiving medical care had slowed last week for the first time since the beginning of August, though he said it remained "quite high."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-daily-covid-19-death-toll-hits-new-record-high-2021-11-09/>

Global COVID-19 total tops 250 million infections

At a World Health Organization (WHO) media briefing on Nov 4, the group's COVID-19 technical lead, Maria Van Kerkhove, PhD, said virus activity is rising in places where it shouldn't be—in countries

with ample vaccine and tools to fight the pandemic. She urged world leaders and health officials to channel their grief and anger over the pandemic's grim totals into actions to bring transmission under control and cut severe impacts and deaths. "The trajectory of the pandemic is in our hands. It has always been in our hands. What happens now and into 2022 is up to us," she said. In Europe, currently the world's main hot spot, Russia's week-long work stoppage designed to curb virus transmission has ended, but cases are still near record daily highs. Meanwhile, Germany's 7-day incidence rate climbed to its highest level of the pandemic, according to the latest update from the Robert Koch Institute. Health officials are facing the prospect of postponing some surgeries, and some regions are already transferring patients to cope with increased burden on hospitals from COVID-19 patients.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/11/global-covid-19-total-tops-250-million-infections>