

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

26th Aug 2020

News Highlights

Covid-19 cases surge in Spain since lockdown lifts

Spain added nearly 20,000 new coronavirus infections in the last week, the worst numbers since March, and the cumulative tally of cases crossed 400,000 as the country continued to battle the pandemic. [Infections have increased sharply since Spain lifted a national lockdown at the end of June](#), but the deaths have reduced significantly, with health officials admitting that there is a level of community transmission across the country.

Boris Johnson says mask wearing mandates may change in schools

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who initially suggested that masks could impede communication between teachers and staff and have little health benefits, [has now said that the advice is subject to change with changing evidence](#). Several schools took the decision upon themselves to provide face coverings and the Scottish government has confirmed that secondary schools will make masks obligatory in corridors and on school buses.

South Korea faces lockdown choices as coronavirus cases mount

After having successfully controlled the pandemic during its first wave in the early part of the year, South Korea may have to make difficult decisions about imposing lockdowns or reintroducing physical distancing measures to curb a new surge in cases. [However, the economy would be sure to suffer](#), with The Bank of Korea's August 18 report saying that 35% of all jobs may be at risk if lockdowns are imposed again.

Coronavirus droplets may travel up to eight metres, study claims

A study published in the British Medical Journal has claimed the coronavirus droplets can travel up to 8 metres when someone sneezes or shouts and that the currently accepted distancing measures of two metres may be inadequate. [The study says that high-risk environments, such as bars and nightclubs](#), should have higher social distancing rules that could be relaxed in other lower-risk environments.

Lockdown Exit

Tourism Industry Faces \$1 Trillion Loss, 100 Million Jobs At Risk From Covid-19, UN Reports

A new policy brief from the United Nations outlining Covid-19's impact on the tourism industry projects the pandemic will cost the tourism industry approximately \$1 trillion in losses and threaten more than 100 million jobs worldwide, underlining how the ongoing global crisis has devastated one of the world's largest industries. Tourism "allows people to experience some of the world's cultural and natural riches and brings people closer to each other, highlighting our common humanity. Indeed, one might say that tourism is itself one of the wonders of the world," Guterres said Tuesday. "That is why it has been so painful to see how tourism has been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2020/08/25/un-report-tourism-industry-covid-19-faces-1-trillion-loss-100-m>

[illion-jobs-at-risk/](#)

How India's Silicon Valley saw its COVID-19 success come undone

On June 9, an Indian health education minister posted an infographic on Twitter showing COVID-19 infections and deaths in the city of Bengaluru were running about half the rate in New Zealand, a country acclaimed globally for reining in the disease. The city — which has more than double the population of New Zealand — “stumps the Kiwis,” said the caption to the image posted by Sudhakar K., who is responsible for medical education in the southern state of Karnataka. Bengaluru, known to many as Bangalore, is the capital of the state. His tweet was liked and retweeted by thousands. But the celebration was short-lived. At the time, only about 450 cases of the novel coronavirus had been recorded among Bangalore’s population of more than 12.5 million, compared with more than 260,000 cases across India and about 1,150 in New Zealand.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-india-bengaluru/how-indias-silicon-valley-saw-its-covid-19-success-come-undone-idUSKBN25M015>

Second lockdown ‘not necessary’ as 91% of England has zero cases in four weeks

A second lockdown is not necessary because the majority of people in England live in neighbourhoods with no new coronavirus cases for four weeks, an expert has claimed. Professor John Clancy, from Birmingham City University, fears ‘dodgy data’ is being used to justify local lockdowns. He says 91% of the country – 51 million people – live in areas without new infections for nearly a month. He said the UK’s testing system was in ‘total chaos’ as new restrictions were enforced in Oldham and parts of Blackburn and Pendle as part of a strict ‘semi-lockdown’. And Birmingham could face fresh measures after rapidly rising infections saw the city added to the Government’s coronavirus watch list.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/08/24/second-lockdown-fears-blamed-dodgy-data-zero-coronavirus-cases-recorded-90-england-13169349/>

Exit Strategies

UK chief executives think shift towards remote working will endure

Over three quarter of UK chief executives believe the shift towards remote working will endure, the results of a survey show as companies continue to look at when to bring staff back to offices. PwC surveyed 699 bosses online in 67 countries/regions (including 96 bosses in the UK) in June and July. The company was looking at how business leaders have responded to the pandemic. The results showed 86% of UK bosses see a long term shift towards remote working enduring, and 68% believe the shift towards lower-density workplaces, with fewer people working together in person, will endure.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/business/uk-chief-executives-think-shift-towards-remote-working-will-endure-a4532851.html>

France set to make Brits arriving in the country quarantine 'within days' according to reports

France is looking to impose mandatory quarantine on Britons arriving in the country in the coming days. People who arrived in the UK from France after August 15 are required to self-isolate for 14 days due to rising numbers of coronavirus cases in France. And France’s secretary of state for European Affairs Clement Beaune suggested those travelling from the UK to France could soon face similar requirements. He told France 2: “There will be reciprocal measures so that Britons don’t close the border in one direction. “For travellers returning from the United Kingdom, there will probably be restrictive measures decided in the next few days by the Prime Minister and by the Defence Council.” Meanwhile, Switzerland could become the next European country to be subject to quarantine measures by all four nations of the UK, according to latest figures. A seven-day rate of 20 Covid-19 cases per 100,000 people is the threshold above which the UK Government considers

triggering quarantine conditions.

<https://www.chroniclive.co.uk/news/uk-news/france-set-make-brits-arriving-18822950>

Paris and French Riviera labelled coronavirus 'risk zones' by Germany

Tourists travelling from the greater Paris and Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur regions to Germany must take a Covid-19 test and quarantine upon their return, the German foreign ministry stated on Monday. The greater Paris region of Île-de-France and the southern Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur region, which includes tourist hubs on the French Riviera, were added to the German foreign ministry's list of 'risk areas' late on Monday evening. All travel to these areas should be avoided unless the journey is "indispensable," according to the German foreign ministry. Travellers who return from these areas must undergo a Covid-19 test and self-isolate for 14 days upon their return.

<https://www.thelocal.com/20200825/paris-and-cte-dazur-labelled-coronavirus-risk-zones-by-germany>

Vic govt needs to provide plan for when stage four lockdown ends

Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO Paul Guerra has called on the Victorian government to reveal what the plan is for when Melbourne's stage four lockdowns are finished in three weeks. Melbourne's stage four lockdown is set to be lifted on September 13 and the state government has not provided any clarity about what will happen when the lockdown is lifted. "We're less than three weeks away now ... what businesses now need is the certainty around September 13," Mr Guerra told Sky News host Peta Credlin. "What does the plan look like to not only get out of this current phase, but what is the sign posting that means that we can go - if in fact we go to stage three- how do we get to stage two and ultimately how do we get out of this."

https://www.skynews.com.au/details/_6184293665001

Colombia to move to 'selective' quarantine, participate in vaccine trials

Colombia will enter a period of "selective" quarantine when its five months of national coronavirus lockdown ends at the close of August, President Ivan Duque said on Monday, and will be part of Johnson & Johnson vaccine trials. Restrictions on events and large crowds will continue during September while the government evaluates the spread of the virus, Duque said, as more economic reactivation with safety protocols moves ahead. "On Sept. 1 a new phase begins where we change the concept of preventative obligatory isolation with a large number of exceptions to a concept of selective isolation, of distancing, of individual responsibility," Duque said during his nightly television broadcast.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-colombia/colombia-to-move-to-selective-quarantine-participate-in-vaccine-trials-idUKKBN25L013>

Did Europe Make a Mistake Reopening Its Borders?

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<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-08-24/coronavirus-why-germany-is-struggling-to-stop-the-new-covid-spike>

Partisan Exits

Face masks in schools: Boris Johnson performs U-turn on advice

Boris Johnson has abandoned advice that pupils should not wear face masks in English secondary

schools. The prime minister performed his latest U-turn in the face of growing pressure from headteachers, teaching unions and medical experts. Face coverings will be mandatory for children in all schools that lie in areas subject to stricter coronavirus restrictions.

<https://news.sky.com/story/face-masks-in-schools-boris-johnson-performs-u-turn-on-advice-12056671>

Covid-19: Boris Johnson admits school face mask advice might change

Advice on wearing masks in schools in England will shift if the medical evidence is persuasive, Boris Johnson has said as pressure mounts from schools and unions. "On the issue of whether or not to wear masks in some contexts – you know, we'll look at the the changing medical evidence as we go on," the prime minister told reporters on Tuesday. "If we need to change the advice then of course we will." No 10's initial advice that masks could impede communication between teachers and staff and have little health benefit had been rapidly overtaken by events as dozens of schools took the unilateral decision to provide face coverings. The Scottish government has confirmed that secondary schools would be given "obligatory" guidance that pupils should wear face coverings in corridors, communal areas and school buses from next Monday.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/aug/25/covid-19-boris-johnson-school-face-mask-advice-change>

Behind the 'freedom day' mass protest being planned across Australia

Coronavirus conspiracy theorists are trying to recruit half a million people for a mass protest calling for Victoria to end its lockdown and Australia to get its freedom back. The '500,000 to End the Vic Lockdown & celebrate freedom!' event on Facebook already has more than 35,000 people listed as attending on September 5, with a further 23,000 saying they're interested. "The Andrews government must be made accountable for overseeing the biggest public health disaster in Australian history," the event description reads. "500,000 Australians shall declare the END of the state of emergency. "Dan Andrews – Get out of our lives. We can manage our own wellbeing." The protesters plan to meet at a location that will be announced on the day.

<https://www.news.com.au/world/coronavirus/australia/behind-the-freedom-day-mass-protest-being-planned-across-australia/news-story/653238089ac84b4fc11d910efefd72a4>

Coronavirus Australia: Victorians urged to claim cash compensation over lockdown

Victorians are being urged to try and claim cash compensation from the state government for the "unreasonable" lockdown in a shock move that could cost taxpayers millions of dollars. Liberal Senator Sarah Henderson has revealed she is urging families and businesses to consider pursuing compensation after the Victorian Premier announced he will extend the state of emergency for a year. It follows confirmation that Jim's Mowing founder Jim Penman is offering to lodge multiple compo claims for franchise owners who are now banned from mowing the lawn. "For Victorians who've suffered loss from unreasonable state emergency restrictions, there's the option to pursue compensation," Senator Henderson said. "The Public Health and Wellbeing Act provides this important right. Proud to stand up for those who need support including in regional communities.

<https://www.news.com.au/national/victoria/politics/coronavirus-australia-victorians-urged-to-claim-cash-compensation-over-lockdown/news-story/ec5686f7b207b60b6fa1c8ec9d171fbe>

China's Xinjiang residents yell from balconies as strict coronavirus lockdown drags on

An outbreak of COVID-19 cases in Xinjiang last month saw local authorities impose strict measures, which have seen residents of the autonomous region's largest city, Urumqi, banned from leaving their homes since July 18. More than 900 cases of the virus have been recorded in Xinjiang since the outbreak began, however no new cases of the virus have been recorded since August 16, and residents in the lockdown zones are now desperate to be let out. The footage was widely shared on the Chinese social media platforms WeChat and Weibo over the weekend, but censors have since deleted many posts featuring the clips.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-25/xinjiang-yell-from-balconies-over-strict-coronavirus-lockdown/12589440>

New Zealand First joins National in calling for parliamentary committee to scrutinise COVID-19 response

New Zealand First has joined National's call to reconvene Parliament's Health Select Committee so that MPs can scrutinise the Government's COVID-19 response in a public setting. National's health spokesperson Dr Shane Reti has written to Health Select Committee chair Louisa Wall twice now to request the committee convene and call on Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield and Health Minister Chris Hipkins to appear.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/politics/2020/08/new-zealand-first-joins-national-in-calling-for-parliamentary-committee-to-scrutinise-covid-19-response.html>

New Thinking on Covid Lockdowns: They're Overly Blunt and Costly

...Still, because of the close connection between the pandemic and economic activity, many epidemiologists and economists say the economy can't recover while the virus is out of control. "The virus is going to determine when we can safely reopen," Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said in April. The Federal Reserve said in late July that "the path of the economy will depend significantly on the course of the virus."

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid-lockdowns-economy-pandemic-recession-business-shutdown-sweden-coronavirus-11598281419>

Continued Lockdown

Coronavirus lockdown set to stay across Blackburn and Pendle

Coronavirus restrictions in parts of East Lancashire are expected to continue when the Government reviews existing measures later this week, but will be more tightly targeted and focus on smaller areas. People in Oldham and in specific wards in Pendle and Blackburn were told not to socialise with anyone outside their household from midnight on Saturday. They were also advised to only use public transport if essential and numbers attending weddings, civil partnerships and funerals were restricted to up to 20.

<https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/18674374.coronavirus-lockdown-set-stay-across-blackburn-pendle/>

Coronavirus rates are falling in Greater Manchester after 3 weeks of lockdown

Coronavirus rates are now lower in Greater Manchester than they were at the start of the local lockdown, with the latest data suggesting a regional spike in cases has been reversed. Extra restrictions on the ten boroughs in the region have been in place for three full weeks after being announced on July 30. At the time the local lockdown was declared, infection rates were rising in all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester, and this trend continued broadly for the first two weeks after the measures were brought in. But in the third week, the upward trend hit a peak, and in many areas they have been falling sharply for the past seven days. Five of the boroughs now have weekly infection rates below 25 cases per 100,000 population - which means they are no longer on amber alert on the government watchlist. Tomorrow, local restrictions will be lifted in Wigan and the falling numbers in other boroughs suggest the measures may soon be removed in other areas of Greater Manchester.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/local-lockdown-now-working-charts-18822123>

Eight in 10 poorer UK families feel worse off since lockdown - survey

Some families have abandoned balanced meals for lack of money during the coronavirus crisis, while many have faced physical and mental problems, according to a report. Researchers from the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) and the Church of England (C of E) spoke to parents who said they had been forced to sell possessions to protect their children's quality of life, and found that 80% of poorer families surveyed felt they had become worse off financially since the lockdown began. The findings underline the disproportionate strain being placed on the poorest households as

the UK struggles to deal with the pandemic. In June the Resolution Foundation said that while many low-income families were turning to credit cards to get by under lockdown, many higher-income households were able to save more money as their costs fell.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/25/eight-in-10-poorer-uk-families-feel-worse-off-since-lockdown-survey>

Coronavirus hard lockdown of Melbourne public housing towers left residents feeling like 'criminals', inquiry hears

Victoria's hard lockdown of some of Melbourne's most vulnerable residents last month left the community feeling anxious, fearful and as if they were being "treated like criminals". The chaos and confusion at nine public housing towers is detailed in reports to a Victorian Ombudsman inquiry, revealing residents slept rough in their cars, ran out of food and supplies, while others reportedly self-harmed. 7.30 has obtained two legal submissions by the Flemington and Kensington Community Legal Centre and Inner Melbourne Community Legal which are now representing residents.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-25/coronavirus-melbourne-public-housing-tower-shutdown-inquiry/12589372>

Victorian jobs slump amid stage 4 coronavirus lockdown, but 'COVID recession' bites elsewhere

Paula Evans, owner of boutique Tierra Alma in beachside Mordialloc, didn't need the Australian Bureau of Statistics to tell her about the epic economic pain of Melbourne's August lockdown. "It's been a really huge impact this time around with the stage 4 hitting Melbourne," she said. "I would say my business is down by 70 per cent." New data submitted to the Australian Tax Office (ATO) from payroll systems around the country show jobs fell 1 per cent in the month to August 8. But in Victoria, the hit was much harder.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-25/victoria-sees-jobs-slump-amid-stage-4-coronavirus-lockdown/12593054>

Northland towns quiet as Auckland lockdown extended

Northland's towns and tourist spots will remain quiet until Sunday night due to the government's extension of Covid-19 alert level 3 restrictions in Auckland. Businesses in the region say the last two weeks have been a grind without Auckland visitors spending. As essential workers, Checkpoint's Nick Truebridge and Nick Monro were allowed through the State Highway 1 roadblock to speak to Northlanders about how they're faring.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/checkpoint/audio/2018761081/northland-towns-quiet-as-auckland-lockdown-extended>

Lockdown costs \$1 billion as Government digs in heels over decision not to extend wage subsidy

Finance Minister Grant Robertson has dug in his heels about not extending the wage subsidy by four days to cover keeping Auckland in lockdown until Sunday night. He says struggling businesses had 22 weeks of support from the scheme - with the majority of that time in alert levels 2 and 1 with little or no restrictions. "We recognise this has been a tough time but there has been a lot of support provided." And in Parliament this afternoon, Robertson revealed Treasury estimates the two weeks of restrictions to contain the resurgence of Covid-19 caused a \$1 billion hit to the economy with each week costing \$500 million.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12359458

Gaza in lockdown to try to contain its first COVID-19 outbreak

Gaza was in lockdown on Tuesday after the first cases of COVID-19 in the general population of the Palestinian enclave, whose restricted borders until now had helped spare it from an outbreak. Health authorities in the Hamas-controlled territory are concerned over the potentially disastrous combination of poverty, densely populated refugee camps and limited hospital facilities in dealing with an outbreak. A government spokesman said the four cases were uncovered after a woman

travelled to the West Bank, where she tested positive. Four members of her family then tested positive in Gaza, the first cases outside quarantined border facilities. Interior Ministry spokesman Eyad al-Bozom said the family had been in contact with many other people in the Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza, and that the camp was now isolated from the rest of the 360 sq. km. territory. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-gaza/gaza-in-lockdown-to-try-to-contain-its-first-covid-19-outbreak-idUKKBN25L0XI>

Scientific Viewpoint

Coronavirus: Two-metre rule is based on 'outdated' science as sneeze droplets can travel 8m, study claims

High-risk environments such as nightclubs and bars should have stricter distancing rules, the British Medical Journal argues. The two-metre rule is based on "outdated" science because there is evidence that coronavirus droplets can travel up to 8m (26ft) when someone sneezes or shouts, researchers have claimed. Social distancing guidelines are "over-simplistic", as small droplets containing COVID-19 can go much further than the government claims, according to the study published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ). It says that high-risk environments - such as nightclubs or bars - should be subject to social distancing rules of up to 8m, while lower-risk settings could have their rules significantly relaxed.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-two-metre-rule-is-based-on-outdated-science-as-sneeze-droplets-can-travel-8m-study-claims-12056293>

Universities join forces to develop materials for the fight against COVID-19

Researchers around the world are racing to find treatments to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused more than 16 million human infections globally. COVID-19 is caused by the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. A person becomes infected when the virus makes its way through the mouth or nose into the lungs and from there into the cells that line the inside of our lungs. Exactly how the virus gets past the protective barriers in our lungs is unknown, but scientists have recently discovered that SARS-CoV-2 binds to a type of carbohydrate-based polymer called glycosaminoglycan (GAG). The widely used anticoagulant heparin belongs to this class of natural polymers, and hospitalized patients with COVID-19 who were administered heparin to treat blood clotting disorders also experienced a lower risk of dying from COVID-19.

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-08/vt-ujf082520.php

China's Sinovac enters supply deal with Indonesia for COVID-19 vaccine doses

Sinovac Biotech Ltd said on Tuesday it would help Indonesia's state-owned drugmaker Bio Farma produce in the country at least 40 million doses of its potential coronavirus vaccine before March 2021. The U.S.-listed Chinese drugmaker has signed two agreements with Bio Farma for supply, local production and technology licensing of its vaccine candidate CoronaVac and the Indonesian company is conducting the late-stage study of the candidate. Sinovac will continue to supply the bulk vaccine until the end of 2021 after March, it said in a statement. There are no approved vaccine for COVID-19, with drugmakers and research organizations racing to develop a safe and effective vaccine that is seen as crucial to combat the pandemic.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sinovac-biotech-in/chinas-sinovac-enters-supply-deal-with-indonesia-for-covid-19-vaccine-doses-idUKKBN25L1PA>

Coronavirus: Safety watchdog to probe hospital spread of Covid-19

The spread of coronavirus to patients within hospitals is being investigated by a safety watchdog to try and help the NHS protect patients and prepare for winter. The independent Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch has launched a national enquiry after identifying multiple instances of patients contracting Covid-19 within hospitals. Its work comes as new research by King's College London has found at least an eighth of Covid-19 hospital patients were infected while already in hospital. The

study looked at 1,564 Covid-19 patients admitted to 10 hospitals in the UK and in Italy during April.
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-nhs-hospital-infection-spread-safety-watchdog-winter-a9686991.html>

Thousands of Swedes got false positive COVID-19 result due to test kit fault

There were fears pregnant women were more vulnerable to catching Covid-19. Researchers looked at a total of 1.7million women from the UK, US and Sweden. There were no differences between pregnant and non-pregnant women. They had similar rates of symptoms and hospitalisations.
<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-sweden-testing/thousands-of-swedes-got-false-positive-covid-19-result-due-to-test-kit-fault-idUKKBN25L1YU>

Healthy pregnant women are not more vulnerable to Covid-19 and do not fall more seriously ill

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<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8662545/Healthy-pregnant-women-not-vulnerable-Covid-19-not-fall-seriously-ill.html>

New drool-based tests are replacing the dreaded coronavirus nasal swab

First, a technician pushes a pencil-length swab to the very back of your nasal passages. Then you pay \$100 or more, and wait days for an answer. But faster, cheaper, more pleasant ways to test for the novel coronavirus are coming online. This month, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted emergency use authorization for two tests that sample saliva instead of nasal fluid, and more innovations are likely after FDA relaxed rules to allow new tests to be adopted more quickly. One candidate was announced last week: an experimental test, potentially faster and cheaper, that analyzes saliva in a new way.
<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/08/new-drool-based-tests-are-replacing-dreaded-coronavirus-nasal-swab>

Doctors to trial treatment for Covid-19 patients with diabetes

Diabetes patients face a more-than-double risk of death if they catch Covid-19. High levels of sugar in the blood can make immune system unreliable. Drug used to reduce blood sugar could protect patients from severe illness. Trial will begin on UK patients in hospitals with 'mild to moderate' coronavirus.
<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8661631/Doctors-trial-treatment-Covid-19-patients-diabetes.html>

In FDA's green light for treating COVID-19 with plasma, critics see thin evidence—and politics

At a highly unusual Sunday night press conference, U.S. President Donald Trump revealed what he described as “a very historic breakthrough” in the fight against COVID-19 that “would save countless lives”: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for convalescent plasma to treat people with severe COVID-19. The authorization could allow more hospitalized patients to receive the antibody-rich plasma, which is donated by people who have recovered from the disease. But in the wake of Trump’s announcement, which came a day before the start of the Republican National Convention, researchers struggled to sort the politics from the medical and scientific import of the EUA.
<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/08/fda-s-green-light-treating-covid-19-plasma-critics-see-thin-evidence-and-politics>

Pharma giant AstraZeneca updates on Covid-19 antibody drug trial

AstraZeneca has revealed it has begun a UK-based trial on a potential antibody-based treatment for tackling the Covid-19 virus. The US-funded phase 1 trial, which includes up to 48 healthy

participants from the UK aged between 18 and 55, will evaluate the safety and tolerability of the treatment. It is being aimed at people who may not be able to have a vaccination or for high-risk populations where additional protection from the virus may be needed.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/business/pharma-giant-astrazeneca-updates-on-covid19-antibody-drug-trial-a4532366.html>

AstraZeneca starts Covid-19 antibody drug trial in UK

Trials of the Oxford coronavirus vaccine may have gathered enough data to show whether it works and is safe by the end of the year - but it will then need to go through the regulatory process, scientists say. Prof Andrew Pollard, the director of the Oxford Vaccine Group, said it is "just possible" that there may be enough clinical trial data on Oxford University's Covid-19 vaccine to put before the regulators this year. Prof Chris Whitty, England's chief medical officer, has said a vaccine may not be ready until next winter. Pollard suggested they were hoping to go faster. "I think that Chris Whitty is quite rightly being cautious, that it could take as long as that to first of all demonstrate a vaccine works and is safe and then to go through the processes of regulators looking at that very carefully to make sure everything's been done correctly," Pollard told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/aug/25/astrazeneca-covid-19-antibody-drug-trial-volunteers-vaccine>

Coronavirus: Metabolic syndrome sufferers' death risk 300% higher

Researchers looked at hospitalized coronavirus patients with metabolic syndrome compared to those without it. The syndrome occurs when someone has three out of the five conditions: high blood sugar, hypertension, high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol and obesity. Coronavirus patients with metabolic syndrome were 3.4 times more likely to die. They were also five times more likely to be admitted to the ICU or be placed on a ventilator

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8662271/COVID-19-patients-three-times-likely-die-metabolic-syndrome-study-finds.html>

India is key for global access to a COVID-19 vaccine - here's why

The great COVID-19 vaccine race is on. Pharmaceutical companies around the world are going head to head, while governments scramble to get priority access to the most promising candidates. But a richest-takes-all approach in the fight against the deadliest pandemic in living memory is bound to be counter productive, especially for the recovery of low and middle income countries. If governments cannot come together to agree a global strategy, then the global south may need to pin its hopes on the manufacturing might of India.

<https://theconversation.com/india-is-key-for-global-access-to-a-covid-19-vaccine-heres-why-144772>

Six of the most promising treatments for Covid-19 so far

Many different drugs and therapies are being trialled and used on patients with Covid-19. There are some positive results, which may be beginning to bring the hospital death toll down, but there is still a long way to go towards something that will cure all comers. These are some of the most promising.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/24/six-of-the-most-promising-treatments-for-covid-19-so-far>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Covid-19: South Korea closes Seoul schools amid rise in cases

South Korea has ordered the closure of all schools and kindergartens in the greater Seoul area following a rise in coronavirus cases there. Nearly 200 staff and students have been infected in the greater Seoul area over the past two weeks. Remote learning will continue until 11 September, the Ministry of Education said. Health authorities have warned that the country is on the brink of a nationwide outbreak. All students in the greater Seoul area, home to over 25 million people, will now

take classes online with the exception of those in their final year of high school who are due to take university entrance examinations in December. Schools with fewer than 60 students and special education schools are allowed to choose whether to follow the ministry's guidelines, the Korea Times said.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53901707>

Report shows Covid-19 cases popping up on Florida campuses

More than 700 coronavirus cases have been linked to K-12 schools and higher-education institutions over the course of two weeks.

<https://www.bizjournals.com/tampabay/news/2020/08/25/report-shows-covid-19-cases-popping-up-on-campuses.html>

Young Italians blamed for rise in coronavirus cases

Cases of the coronavirus have surged in Italy, topping 1,000 on both days of the weekend and raising fears that the country may be facing a devastating second wave. The new clusters are scattered around the country and are being blamed on young holidaymakers who ignore government guidelines as they drink and socialise. Yesterday there were 953 new cases and four deaths. Several German states said that they were preparing to restrict gatherings to try to control a rise in infections there. Italy was the first European country to be engulfed by the pandemic and one of the first to emerge after a strict 70-day national lockdown.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/young-italians-blamed-for-rise-in-coronavirus-cases-3gz6nmcxc>

These Holidays Are Sick: Italy Worried About Travelers' Role In Contagion Surge

As the summer season comes toward an end, Italy becomes increasingly worried about people getting ill with coronavirus while on vacation. With a struggling tourism and an economy on the verge of recession, since the beginning of the season the country has lifted most of its restrictions and opened its borders, trying to support travel and commerce. But much like its neighboring countries struggling with increasing contagion rates, over the summer Italy has witnessed a surge in coronavirus cases: currently there are 19,195 positives, about 1,000 more every day. While experts assure that the situation is not comparable to what it was like during the spring, the government decided to take action: mandatory testing in airports for people coming from Spain, Greece, Croatia and Malta, shutdown of dancing clubs and obligation to wear a mask outdoors, starting from 6 p.m., in all places where gatherings may take place, such as bars and beach promenades.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/irenedominioni/2020/08/25/these-holidays-are-sick-italy-worried-about-travelers-role-in-contagion-surge/>

Spain ready to send in troops to tackle coronavirus resurgence

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Tuesday that troops would be made available to help regions overcome a resurgence of the coronavirus, following Spain's worst week for infections since the epidemic's peak in late March. He also said regional administrations could make decisions themselves on how to handle the fight against the epidemic rather than have the central government take charge. The government would support requests by regional leaders to declare localized states of emergency, Sanchez said. "The pandemic data curve is worrying and has to be contained. We have to be calm and vigilant," Sanchez said after the first cabinet meeting following the summer recess.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain/spain-ready-to-send-in-troops-to-tackle-coronavirus-resurgence-idUKKBN25L1RP>

Pedro Sanchez rejects any new national lockdown as COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Spain

Spain's Prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez, has today (August 25) dismissed any notion of a national return to lockdown restrictions implemented under the State of Alarm during the spring. He said that he would bring back any emergency measures from the regional governments and announced that

2,000 soldiers will be made available to them to improve coronavirus contact tracing.

<https://www.theolivepress.es/spain-news/2020/08/25/pedro-sanchez-rejects-any-new-national-lockdown-as-covid-19-cases-continue-to-rise-in-spain/>

Spanish PM Rejects New Lockdown Amid Surge in Virus Cases

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez rejected a new national lockdown, putting pressure instead on regional authorities to come up with a response to the nation's resurgent coronavirus outbreak. In his first public comments in three weeks, Sanchez said Tuesday that the central government will provide whatever support required by the regions -- which oversee health policy -- and that they will be authorized to declare a local state of emergency if necessary.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-25/sanchez-rejects-new-spanish-lockdown-amid-surge-in-virus-cases>

Spain warned of dire impact of second coronavirus lockdown

As officials across Spain wrestle with a surge in the number of coronavirus cases, a chorus of voices is warning that another lockdown could have dire consequences for a country that just months ago emerged from one of Europe's strictest confinements. While cases of the virus have climbed across Europe, Spain has led the pack in recent days. More than 78,000 cases have been detected in the past two weeks, pushing the 14-day infection rate to 166 per 100,000, compared with 67 in France and 22 in the UK. The steady rise has raised the spectre of fresh lockdowns in the coming weeks, particularly in Madrid where unions have warned that the primary care system is "on the edge of collapse", due to a lack of staff and testing resources. "If things continue as they are going, we'll probably have to return to some sort of confinement, at least partially," José Felix Hoyo Jiménez of the Spanish non-profit Médicos del Mundo told the broadcaster TeleMadrid on Monday. While the recent rise had been steady, it was likely to be less pronounced than what the country experienced in March and April, he added.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/25/spain-warned-of-dire-impact-of-second-coronavirus-lockdown>

Madrid lockdown looms after 15,000 coronavirus infections

Madrid could be put back under lockdown, the official in charge of Spain's health emergencies said last night. "If the numbers continue to rise, drastic measures will have to be taken," Fernando Simón said. The region of Madrid, which includes the capital, registered more than 15,000 new cases last week. Mr Simón said that apart from "a type of lockdown", without specifying details, other strategies to combat the contagion could be considered. One small town in the Madrid region, Tielmes, is already under partial lockdown, with all restaurants and bars closed.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/china-xinjiang-residents-chained-up-for-leaving-homes-during-lockdown-1n10fn39k>

S. Korea faces hard choices on near-lockdown as coronavirus resurges

South Korea now stands at a coronavirus crossroads. It must quickly decide whether reintroducing intense physical distancing is necessary, as infection numbers rise again to initial levels seen nearly half a year ago. With public health authorities anticipating a worse trajectory this time, talks of mitigation actions akin to a lockdown are being floated. The anti-virus scheme of an unprecedented intensity will come at heavy economic costs, according to some forecasts. The Bank of Korea's Aug. 18 report said "a job crisis of a significant magnitude" may be on the horizon if the country were to withstand a lockdown. The report said about 35 percent of all jobs are "nonessential, low-skilled positions" or in a sector that cannot telecommute. For most, the economic wounds from March and April when the country went into "intensive" physical distancing are still fresh.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200824000927>

South Korea Closes Schools, Imposes Mask Mandate Amid 'Severe Emergency'

South Korea, a country hailed throughout the pandemic for its response to Covid-19, imposed new social distancing measures Monday and warned a stricter lockdown could be coming, as a new

outbreak tied to a far-right church has spurred what President Moon Jae-in called Monday a “severe emergency.” “We are facing a new crisis. It's a much more severe emergency than the Shincheonji situation in the early days of the Covid-19 crisis,” Moon said Monday, referring to a previous church-linked outbreak that infected more than 5,000 people. “Seoul and the metropolitan area have become the centers of spread, and nowhere else in the country is safe.”

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2020/08/24/south-korea-closes-schools-mask-mandate-amid-covid-19-coronavirus-severe-emergency-outbreak/>

Australia's COVID-19 daily cases creep higher but below record levels

Australia surpassed 25,000 COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, tipped over the milestone by the recent outbreak in Victoria state and prompting a warning from authorities about declining test numbers. Australia recorded 151 new infections over the past 24 hours, up from 121 a day earlier, with Victoria responsible for the bulk of the cases and New South Wales accounting for the remainder. The daily numbers were well down from a peak during Australia's second wave of more than 700 in a single day earlier this month, but officials expressed concern about a drop-off in the number of people presenting themselves for COVID-19 tests. “We are seeing some decrease in the amount of testing ... please, if you have symptoms, do go and get tested,” national Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Alison McMillan said during a televised media conference in Canberra.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/australia-victoria-state-reports-148-231733544.html>

Australia reaches 25,000 coronavirus cases, officials urge more testing

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<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia/australia-reaches-25000-coronavirus-cases-officials-urge-more-testing-idUKKBN25L019>

Spain's coronavirus cases top 400,000 after new surge last week

Spain's cumulative tally of coronavirus cases hit 405,436 on Monday after a surge in infections last week, making it the worst week for infections since late March. The country's health ministry added nearly 20,000 infections for last week after revising upwards the number of cases for at least four of the days in that week. Infections have risen sharply since Spain lifted a three-month lockdown in late June, but deaths have been much lower than during the epidemic's late-March peak. Three people died in the past 24 hours, with the total death toll at 28,872. In the past 24 hours, 2,060 cases have been diagnosed, the ministry said, a lower level than seen last week. “Right now there is a certain level of community transmission across Spain,” health emergency chief Fernando Simon told a news conference.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain/spains-coronavirus-cases-top-400000-after-new-surge-last-week-idUKKBN25K1YW?il=0>

New Lockdown

Xinjiang residents handcuffed to their homes in Covid lockdown

Residents in the capital of Xinjiang are being forced to take traditional Chinese medicine, being handcuffed to buildings and ordered to stay inside for weeks as part of a harsh range of measures to tackle coronavirus, according to posts online. Urumqi, the capital of the semi-autonomous region

known for its draconian security measures, has been in a “wartime state” of lockdown for more than a month after a cluster of cases emerged in July, when the outbreak had been mostly contained elsewhere in China.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/25/xinjiang-residents-handcuffed-to-their-homes-in-covid-lockdown>

China Locks Down Xinjiang to Fight Covid-19, Angering Residents

The restrictions, which remain even after new coronavirus infections subsided, have ruined livelihoods and damaged Beijing’s efforts to project harmony in the troubled region. First came the notices that Chinese officials had declared a “wartime” state. Then the authorities started going door to door, sealing off apartments and warning residents to stay inside. The Chinese government in recent weeks has imposed a sweeping lockdown across the Xinjiang region in western China, penning in millions of people as part of what officials describe as an effort to fight a resurgence of the coronavirus. But with the outbreak in Xinjiang seemingly under control and the restrictions still in place more than a month after the outbreak there began, many residents are lashing out and accusing the government of acting too harshly.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/world/asia/china-xinjiang-covid.html>