

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

14th Oct 2020

News Highlights

Study to check vitamin D link with coronavirus protection

Researchers at Queen Mary University London are set to conduct a trial to see if Vitamin D supplements can provide some form of protection against the coronavirus, especially over the winter months. [The researchers will recruit 5,000 volunteers to take the supplement for six months and examine if they are at less risk of catching Covid-19](#)

Face masks made mandatory in South Korea despite drop in cases

South Koreans will have to mandatorily wear face masks in crowded facilities and on public transport to control the spread of Covid-19, [even as the country opens up its economy and local infections continue to drop](#). Violators of the policy face fines of 100,000 Won, or \$87, and facilities ignoring the mandates may be closed forcibly.

Cases surge in Europe while India sees drop in infection rate

As European nations continue to battle the second wave of the pandemic, several nations are contemplating reintroducing restrictions to fight the spread of the disease. [Italy and England are planning to enforce strict new curbs](#), joining Spain and France that have already placed restrictions on life in major cities. Meanwhile, [India registered 55,352 new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, its lowest single daily tally in almost two months](#). Daily cases have been declining in the country over the last few weeks but more than 100,000 are already dead and a possible second wave looms.

UK study finds Covid-19 may cause permanent hearing loss

Experts at University College London have found that in addition to the classic symptoms of loss of taste or smell, the coronavirus may also cause sudden, permanent hearing loss in some patients. [The virus has been found to affect the body in myriad ways](#), including causing long term damage to the heart, lungs and other vital organs.

Lockdown Exit

A Dose of Optimism, as the Pandemic Rages On

On March 16, back when White House news conferences were still deemed safe to attend, President Trump stood before reporters and announced that drastic nationwide restrictions — in schools, work places, our social lives — were needed to halt the coronavirus. The guidelines, “15 Days to Slow the Spread,” were accompanied by a grim chart. Based on a prominent model by London’s Imperial College, the chart illustrated with a sinuous blue line how many Americans might die if nothing were done to protect the public’s health. The line rose sharply as the estimated deaths went up, then drifted slowly down until finally, at the far right end of the graph, the number of new cases reached zero. Our national nightmare would end by October 2020 — that is, right about now. Along the way, if no action was taken, about 2.2 million Americans would die. Dr. Deborah Birx, one of Mr. Trump’s science advisers, referred to the graph as “the blue mountain of deaths.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/health/coronavirus-pandemic-vaccine-optimism.html>

San Francisco apartment rents fall up to 31%, the biggest drop in the US

New data released on Tuesday shows apartment rental trends across the US. San Francisco saw the biggest drop, with studio rents down 31% from last year. Detroit, New York, and Seattle were also among the cities dropping fastest. Meanwhile, parts of Florida, Oklahoma, Arizona and Texas saw rents rise. It comes as mass exodus from major cities continues amid the pandemic

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8835743/San-Francisco-apartment-rents-fall-31-biggest-drop-US.html>

South Korea mandates mask-wearing to fight Covid-19 as face coverings remain controversial in the US

South Korea is mandating the wearing of masks at all crowded facilities, on public transport and at demonstrations, even as the country eases up on coronavirus restrictions as the number of local infections shrinks. Anyone who violates the new face-mask policy, which kicks in next month, faces a fine of 100,000 won, or around \$87, and facilities which fail to follow preventative measures could face closure, health authorities said Monday. The East Asian nation is only the latest in the region to introduce a mask mandate, a sign of how vital face coverings have been found to be in controlling infections and preventing future outbreaks. In many cases, such as in Hong Kong, such orders are largely inconsequential, as almost everyone has been wearing a mask for months now, without being told to by the government, something which has been credited for keeping cases low.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/13/asia/south-korea-masks-coronavirus-intl-hnk/index.html>

India sees fewest new coronavirus cases in nearly two months

India has registered 55,342 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, its lowest single-day tally since the middle of August. The health ministry on Tuesday raised India's confirmed total to more than 7.18 million cases but said the country was showing a trend of declining daily cases over the last five weeks.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/13/india-sees-fewest-new-coronavirus-cases-in-nearly-two-months>

Lessons from China's 'golden week' lustre even amid Covid-19

So far in China, the mass movement of people for 'Golden Week' does not seem to have resulted in renewed Covid-19 outbreaks. How is this possible in the middle of a global pandemic? Having eradicated domestic transmission of Covid-19, mainland China is now the world's largest "Covid-19 safe" bubble. Both travellers and the government have behaved responsibly. People wear masks on planes and trains, although adherence is less stern at restaurants, shops and tourist spots, particularly outdoors. Mobile apps are mandated by provinces and cities to check that travellers have not been to high-risk locations, including overseas, in the last 14 days

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3105176/lessons-chinas-golden-week-lustre-even-amid-covid-19>

Exit Strategies

Study: There's work to be done before people feel ready for COVID-19 vaccine

A new study indicates some significant public messaging should be communicated before any COVID-19 vaccines are made available in the US. And with vaccines potentially being approved by the end of the year or early next year, the clock is ticking. The report, published in the journal Vaccines, shows that 68% of respondents are supportive of being vaccinated for COVID-19, but concerns remain about side effects, sufficient vaccine testing and vaccine effectiveness. "Messages promoting the COVID-19 vaccine need to alleviate the concerns of those who are already vaccine-hesitant," said senior study author Brian Poole, a professor of microbiology and molecular biology at Brigham Young University

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-10/byu-stw101320.php

Coronavirus: 'Stay home' advice to change for vulnerable groups in England

The 2.2 million mainly elderly people on the shielding list in England are to be sent letters telling

them they do not need to stay in their homes to keep safe. Instead, they will be given advice linked to the COVID alert level for their postcode, ranging from "meet others outside where possible" for Tier 1 areas, to "ask people in your household, support bubble or volunteers to collect food and medicines" for those whose homes are in Tier 3.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-stay-home-advice-to-change-for-vulnerable-groups-in-england-12103163>

Australia's most populous states eases COVID-19 curbs despite cases hitting six-week high

Australia's most populous state said it will ease restrictions despite reporting the biggest one-day jump in new COVID-19 cases in six weeks. New South Wales said that from Oct. 16 venues that offer outdoor dining will be allowed to have double the number of patrons outside. NSW previously required such venues to ensure four square metres (13 square feet) for each patron. "We know particularly in our state during this pandemic some of the hardest hit industries have been arts and recreation and hospitality," NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said. Australia's federal government hopes easing state restrictions will help revive the country's ailing economy

<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/australias-most-populous-states-eases-covid-19-curbs-despite-cases-hitting-six-week-high-508646/>

Police, permits and swabs: the pains of crossing Western Australia's hard border

Travel to Western Australia is now granted only in limited circumstances and with strict quarantine conditions, under the hard border rules designed to keep the state free of Covid-19, and it applies even to residents returning to the state. Melissa Davey writes about her experience of a strict lockdown while having a seriously ill father in another state. She writes: "I've interviewed so many families who lost loved ones in aged care. I have no problem with undergoing testing and socially distancing. But I have been living alone in Victoria for months in lockdown, wearing a mask to even go for a walk. There are less than 15 active cases per million people in the state, yet, even with active clusters under control, there are no signs state borders will reopen, especially not WA, which wants zero community transmission in the rest of the country. I'm increasingly realising this will never happen."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/13/police-permits-and-swabs-the-pains-of-crossing-was-hard-border>

Victoria's failure to hit roadmap targets shows 'foolhardy' strategy to eliminate virus, experts say

Victoria is "obviously failing" to reach its roadmap targets for lifting restrictions, but that has little to do with perceived weaknesses in its contact tracing system, epidemiologists and other experts have said. Prof Tony Blakely, an epidemiologist with the University of Melbourne, said the targets on the roadmap's third and final steps for reopening effectively required elimination of the virus, despite Daniel Andrews repeatedly saying suppression, not elimination, was the state's strategy. He said it now made sense to pivot towards a policy of safely opening up, and while that would mean clusters would continue to pop up, Victoria's contact tracing was in a position to emulate the success of NSW in keeping on top of the numbers.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/13/victorias-failure-to-hit-roadmap-targets-shows-foolhardy-strategy-to-eliminate-virus-experts-say>

Budget 2021: 'Do I need to be in Dublin city anymore?' self-employed businesswoman on working from home

Businesswoman Carol Ann Casey has been working from home during the pandemic - and she's delighted Budget 2021 has today provided "confidence" to workers and small business owners. Ms Casey runs her own company, CA Compliance, an independent investigations, governance and HR compliance service, from Dublin city centre. But since March, she's been working from home in

Rathmines, south Dublin. "The Budget has really given workers and business owners the certainty they need right now," Ms Casey told the Irish Independent.

<https://www.independent.ie/business/budget/budget-2021-do-i-need-to-be-in-dublin-city-anymore-self-employed-businesswoman-on-working-from-home-39619842.html>

Partisan Exits

Trump crows at Florida rally that he was 'right' about lifting lockdown orders

The World Health Organization has urged leaders to stop using lockdowns as a 'primary control method' amid the coronavirus pandemic, prompting President Trump to tell a Florida rally that he was right all along. Trump stepped out Monday for his first campaign event since testing positive for coronavirus and defended his stance on keeping the economy open after the WHO noted the devastating impact the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the poor. 'We recognize that at certain points, some countries have had no choice but to issue stay-at-home orders and other measures, to buy time,' WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Monday.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8833619/WHO-appears-admit-Trump-RIGHT-lockdowns-urge-not-used-primary-method.html>

Matt Hancock turns on Tory lockdown sceptics ahead of Covid votes

In England, Conservative rebels fired a warning shot at the government as 42 MPs voted against stricter Covid-19 curbs, amid angry scenes in the Commons, where Matt Hancock criticised lockdown sceptics. Tory rebels organised a symbolic vote against one of six restrictions approved by MPs on Tuesday night. Chris Green MP, a junior frontbencher, resigned from the government on Tuesday night ahead of the vote in protest at the restrictions in his Bolton constituency. "I believe that the cure is worse than the disease," he wrote in his resignation letter. "I believe there are better alternatives to the government's approach."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/hancock-turns-on-tory-lockdown-sceptics-ahead-of-key-covid-votes>

Across the world central governments face local covid-19 revolts

Speaking in Parliament, on October 12th, Boris Johnson, Britain's prime minister, grappled with a problem facing countries across the world: how to contain a resurgence of the coronavirus, without imposing a national lockdown. From northern England to the Mediterranean, local politicians are in revolt. In Manchester, the mayor has complained that the lack of discussion and consultation makes the government "impossible to deal with"; in Marseilles, the deputy mayor has grumbled that decisions from Paris "come like a stone dropped from a bridge"; a battle between the Spanish government and the local authorities in Madrid ended up in court. All three cities were aghast at new local lockdowns imposed by the central government.

<https://www.economist.com/international/2020/10/12/across-the-world-central-governments-face-local-covid-19-revolts>

Renewed calls to end lockdown rejected by RACGP and other experts

Dozens of healthcare professionals have signed an open letter calling for the immediate end to Victoria's ongoing lockdown measures. The new letter states the response to the virus 'will cause more deaths and result in far more negative health effects than the virus itself'. Signatory and anaesthetist Dr Eamonn Mathieson said the 'ongoing physical, psychological, social and economic harm is creating a new health crisis that far outweighs any possible benefits from continuing the lockdown'. Overseas, more than 11,000 have now signed the US-based Great Barrington Declaration, which calls for the effective ring-fencing of vulnerable people, such as those in aged care, until herd immunity is achieved, while World Health Organization officials this week called lockdowns a last resort. But top Australian epidemiologists Professor James McCaw and Professor Catherine Bennett have cautioned that key measures must be in place before lockdowns can be eased.

<https://www1.racgp.org.au/newsgp/clinical/renewed-calls-to-end-lockdown-rejected-by-racgp-an>

Sorrento hotelier files High Court challenge to Melbourne's lockdown

The high-powered constitutional challenge to the validity of the Victorian lockdown has been lodged in the High Court as legal actions continue to pile up against the Andrews government's response to the coronavirus pandemic. The writ of summons was filed late on Monday afternoon amid mounting business anxiety over the expected continuation of strict lockdown restrictions past October 19. The plaintiff, prominent hospitality figure Julian Gerner, is asking the High Court to review the legality of the lockdown. The High Court writ says that the lockdown orders made under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act are unconstitutional, inappropriate and inconsistent with a system of representative and responsible government

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/sorrento-hotelier-files-high-court-challenge-to-melbourne-s-lockdown-20201013-p564p1.html>

Facebook to ban ads that discourage vaccines

Facebook will start banning advertisements that discourage people from getting vaccinated, the social media company said, as it also announced a new flu vaccine information campaign. The United States-based company said in a blog post on Tuesday that ads advocating for or against legislation or government policies around vaccines, including a COVID-19 vaccine, would still be allowed.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/13/facebook-to-ban-ads-that-discourage-vaccines>

'They refused to act': inside a chilling documentary on Trump's bungled Covid-19 response

A new documentary, 'Totally Under Control', recounts the early days of the pandemic in the US, revealing in clinical detail a disastrous federal response to a preventable crisis. It's a damning list of mistakes, foreseeable crises and political squabbling splayed across a coherent timeline intended to be released just ahead of the presidential election, "so that people could render a judgment about how the federal response had been", film-maker Alex Gibney says. The two-hour film focuses primarily on the early days of the pandemic: the missed opportunities from January through April which led to America's spiraling coronavirus present, an unending "first wave".

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/oct/12/they-refused-to-act-inside-a-chilling-documentary-on-trumps-bungled-covid-19-response>

Continued Lockdown

Coronavirus: World's strictest lockdowns as COVID-19 continues to ravage countries

While in New Zealand, people head to international test rugby matches, stroll around town, and prepare for the upcoming summer music festival season, others around the world continue to face harsh COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns. The University of Oxford's COVID-19 Government Response Stringency Index (GRSI) spotlights how countries are tackling the pandemic and provides a 0-100 scale to show their relative strictness. It's based on nine response indicators, including school closures, workplace closures, and travel bans. According to the Index, as of Thursday Argentina had the strictest measures in the world with a value of 91.67. Its value peaked in April at 100 and has been in either the late 80s or 90s ever since.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2020/10/coronavirus-world-s-strictest-lockdowns-as-covid-19-continues-to-ravage-countries.html>

Mental health crisis: One million 'lost' in coronavirus lockdown

More than a million Australians have sought mental health treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic, while ongoing lockdowns in Victoria have sparked a social crisis, with a 30 per cent rise in cases in the past four weeks. The first official data revealing the depth of the mental health disaster

in Victoria since the second wave outbreak reveals access to some crisis services has risen by up to 67 per cent in the space of four weeks. Demand for children's mental health has also skyrocketed in Victoria, with access to services jumping more than 30 per cent since September.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/mental-health-crisis-one-million-lost-in-coronavirus-lockdown/news-story/fc8c1da341ca392166fce6aba9ca4f69>

Talking about how lockdown affects mental health doesn't make you a Covid-denier

Owen Jones talks about the toll on our mental health taken by covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns. "Young people in particular have formed a cordon sanitaire around their older and more vulnerable fellow citizens, an unprecedented peacetime act of generational sacrifice – and at such cost to themselves. According to the Lancet, children's mental health deteriorated in lockdown more than any other age group, while eight in 10 young people reported that the pandemic had made their mental health worse, with one in four opting for "much worse".

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/13/lockdowns-mental-health-sacrifice-pandemic>

Ukraine extends coronavirus lockdown to December 31

Ukraine's government voted on Tuesday to extend until the end of the year a lockdown that Prime Minister Denys Shmygal told a televised cabinet meeting was aimed at containing a recent spike in coronavirus cases. The daily tally of new infections in Ukraine has climbed to record levels and 107 deaths were recorded in the 24 hours to Tuesday.

<https://www.metro.us/ukraine-extends-coronavirus-lockdown/>

Scientific Viewpoint

Poor numerical literacy linked to greater susceptibility to Covid-19 fake news

People with poor numerical literacy are more likely to believe Covid-19 misinformation, according to a survey conducted in five countries. Researchers at Cambridge University said the findings suggested improving people's analytical skills could help turn the tide against an epidemic of "fake news" surrounding the health crisis. Five national surveys – reflecting national quotas for age and gender – were conducted this year to evaluate susceptibility to coronavirus-related misinformation and its influence on key health-related behaviours. The study found the most consistent predictor of decreased susceptibility to misinformation about Covid-19 was numerical literacy – the ability to digest and apply quantitative information broadly.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/14/poor-numerical-literacy-linked-to-greater-susceptibility-to-covid-19-fake-news>

Pfizer to start testing its Covid-19 vaccine in children as young as 12

Drugmaker Pfizer has plans to start testing its experimental coronavirus vaccine in children as young as 12, and parents have already expressed interest in enrolling their kids, the researcher leading the trial told CNN Tuesday. It will be the first coronavirus vaccine trial to include children in the United States. A team at Cincinnati Children's Hospital will begin vaccinating teenagers aged 16 and 17 this week, and will move to enroll 12-to 15-year-olds later, said Dr. Robert Frenck, director of the Vaccine Research Center at the hospital. The company confirmed on its website it has approval from the US Food and Drug Administration to enroll children as young as 12 in its trial.

https://edition.cnn.com/2020/10/13/health/covid-vaccine-pfizer-kids-bn/index.html?utm_term=link&utm_content=2020-10-14T02%3A35%3A37&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twCNNi

Harvard study finds patients with severe COVID-19 infections have protection up to four months

People who survive severe cases of the novel coronavirus may have immunity that is longer-lasting, a new study suggests. Researchers found antibodies levels remained high in patients who were hospitalized with COVID-19 for up to four months. What's more, these antibodies were linked to

other neutralizing antibodies that kill the virus on contact and stop it from reinfecting.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8834889/Harvard-study-finds-patients-severe-COVID-19-infections-protected-on-four-months.html>

France launches flu vaccine campaign amid COVID-19 crisis

France launched a flu vaccine campaign Tuesday in an effort to avoid facing another epidemic peak as the coronavirus is spreading rapidly in the country. French health authorities have issued official recommendations to prevent potential shortages of flu vaccine, which they fear might happen amid increased demand because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/france-launches-flu-vaccine-campaign-amid-covid19-crisis-french-coronavirus-country-paris-ap-b1014584.html>

Doctors will trial whether vitamin D can protect people from Covid-19

Doctors will finally trial whether vitamin D can actually protect people from Covid-19 amid mounting evidence the 3p-a-day supplement could be a life-saver. Researchers from Queen Mary University of London will recruit 5,000 volunteers to take the vitamin for six months if they do not already take high doses. Experts will then assess whether participants are at less risk of catching the virus and developing a severe bout of the disease over the winter months.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8834307/Doctors-trial-vitamin-D-protect-people-Covid-19.html>

J&J's late-stage COVID-19 vaccine trial halted after 'unexplained illness' -

Johnson & Johnson has paused further dosing in its COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial following an "unexplained illness" in a study participant. The company said it had voluntarily put the phase 3 ENSEMBLE trial on hold after the incident, the details of which are being kept under wraps. J&J is not saying whether the patient was given a placebo or the experimental vaccine, which is being developed by the company's Janssen pharma unit.

<https://pharmaphorum.com/news/jjs-late-stage-covid-19-vaccine-trial-halted-after-unexplained-illness/>

Covid-19: training dogs to sniff out the virus

What does a disease smell like? Humans might not have the answer, but if they could talk, dogs might be able to tell us. Able to sniff out a range of cancers and even malaria, canines' extraordinary noses are now being put to the test on Covid-19. Nicola Davis hears from Prof Dominique Grandjean about exactly how you train dogs to smell a virus, and how this detection technique could be used in managing the spread of Covid-19

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/audio/2020/oct/13/covid-19-training-dogs-to-sniff-out-virus>

Covid-19: Are we still listening to the science?

Cases of Covid-19 are increasing across England and the number of people in hospital is now higher than before the full lockdown. It is at this critical moment that the gulf between the official scientific advice and the political decisions made by government has been laid bare. Documents released by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage) reveal a call to action three weeks ago. Prof Calum Semple, who was at the Sage meeting on 21 September, said the three-tier system had come too late and he believes that a short national lockdown could be needed within weeks. Sage is also damning of the government's supposedly world-beating test-and-trace system.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54514387>

UK Covid-19: Boris Johnson Clashes With Own Scientific Advisers

Boris Johnson clashed with his own government's scientific advisers who wanted tougher action against the resurgent coronavirus outbreak in the U.K. in September. The British prime minister announced Monday that bars and pubs will be closed in the worst-hit parts of England to control the pandemic as he tried to restore clarity and credibility to his much-criticized strategy. He said he hoped to avoid another full national lockdown and that his plan would work if people followed the

advice. Prime Minister Holds Virtual Briefing As UK Imposes New Covid-19 Rules. But England's Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty warned the new measures won't be enough, and newly released papers showed the government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) recommended national or regional restrictions to slow the spread of the virus last month.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-13/top-u-k-scientists-clash-with-boris-johnson-over-lockdown-plans>

SAGE scientists recommended a UK lockdown 3 weeks ago - and that universities should not return

The UK government rejected the urgent warnings of the Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies (SAGE), it has been revealed. According to documents released on 12 October, the group called for a raft of measures three weeks ago to prevent "a very large epidemic with catastrophic consequences."

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/sage-scientists-recommended-uk-lockdown-3-weeks-ago-and-universities-should-not-return-3001396>

Covid: Sage scientists called for short lockdown weeks ago

The government's scientific advisers called for a short lockdown in England to halt the spread of Covid-19 last month, newly released documents show. The experts said an immediate "circuit breaker" was the best way to control cases, at a meeting on 21 September. Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick insisted the government had taken "robust action" that "balanced" the impact on the economy. But Labour has described the documents as "alarming". It comes as the Liverpool region prepares to enter a "very high" Covid alert level from Wednesday, the highest of a new three-tier system for coronavirus restrictions in England.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54518002>

UK moves closer to infect healthy people with Covid-19 to aid vaccine efforts

Such studies may help speed development of vaccines and give scientists new insights into a disease that has spread to more than 37 million people globally, but would expose participants to a threat for which there's no cure.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/coronavirus/coronavirus-vaccine-united-kingdom-boris-johnson-lockdown-6723133/>

The West is being left behind as it squanders Covid-19 lessons from Asia-Pacific

While the Asia-Pacific region treads water until a coronavirus vaccine is found, the West's biggest economies are drowning as a second wave firmly establishes itself in Europe. Europe is now reporting more daily infections than the United States, Brazil, or India — the countries that have been driving the global case count for months — as public apathy grows towards coronavirus guidelines. Several countries are seeing infection rates spiral again after a summer lull that saw measures to contain the virus and travel restrictions relaxed. In the United Kingdom, for example, questions are being asked about whether Prime Minister Boris Johnson's decision to lift the country's lockdown in June was premature. Northern England's current high rates of Covid-19 are down to the fact that infections "never dropped as far in the summer as they did in the south," Jonathan Van-Tam, Britain's deputy chief medical officer, told a press conference on Monday.

<https://abc17news.com/news/national-world/2020/10/12/the-west-is-being-left-behind-as-it-squanders-covid-19-lessons-from-asia-pacific/>

Covid-19: Leading doctors argue against local lockdowns

The UK government's own scientific advisers and other leading experts argued against a policy of increased restrictions in local areas to control the covid-19 pandemic, instead calling for a national short period of lockdown or "circuit breaker," documents show. The newly released documents reveal that the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies recommended on 21 September that such an immediate circuit breaker was the best way to control cases. Rumours about SAGE's advice had

been circulating for some weeks, but the minutes were officially released only after the prime minister announced a new three tier system for England, with Liverpool facing the most stringent restrictions.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3959>

China's COVID lockdown significantly cut air-pollution-related hospitalizations

The stringent lockdown imposed by the Chinese government to slow the spread of COVID-19 early this year significantly eased the strain on hospitals there. Admissions due to non-COVID respiratory illnesses decreased by nearly 5,000, a new study by an international team of scientists shows. "The number of decreased hospitalizations due to air pollution was about the same size or slightly larger than the number of people who went to a hospital for COVID during the same period," said Drew Shindell, Nicholas Distinguished Professor of Earth Science at Duke University.

<https://phys.org/news/2020-10-china-covid-lockdown-significantly-air-pollution-related.html>

Covid-19: Leading public health expert 'irate' over WHO lockdown advice

A leading Covid-19 expert is "irate" after a World Health Organisation (WHO) official asked world leaders to stop using lockdowns as a primary method of controlling the pandemic. WHO's special envoy on Covid-19, Dr David Nabarro, told British magazine The Spectator that lockdowns should only be used to buy authorities time to set up systems that allow society to live with the virus. But his comments are "inappropriate" and don't apply to New Zealand and other Pacific countries where lockdowns have worked, according to epidemiologist Professor Michael Baker, who advises the New Zealand Government on Covid-19. "David Nabarro is one of their most senior advisors and is quite fond of pronouncing some things," he said.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/123068546/covid19-leading-public-health-expert-irate-over-who-lockdown-advice>

Eli Lilly pauses COVID-19 antibody trial due to safety concern

US drugmaker Eli Lilly and Co said on Tuesday that the government-sponsored clinical trial of its COVID-19 antibody treatment has been paused because of a safety concern. "Out of an abundance of caution, the ACTIV-3 independent data safety monitoring board (DSMB) has recommended a pause in enrollment," Lilly spokeswoman Molly McCully said in an emailed statement. "Lilly is supportive of the decision by the independent DSMB to cautiously ensure the safety of the patients participating in this study."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/10/13/eli-lilly-pauses-covid-19-antibody-trial-due-to-safety-concern>

China considers giving students experimental COVID-19 vaccine

One of China's leading vaccine developers is working on a plan to inoculate students going overseas with Covid-19 shots that are yet to get regulatory approval, according to people familiar with the matter, as the country pushes scientific boundaries in the race for a viable immunization. China National Biotec Group Co., or CNBG, a subsidiary of state-owned Sinopharm Group Co., is in talks with the Chinese government about giving students headed abroad to study its experimental vaccines, said the people, who asked not to be identified as they're not authorized to speak publicly. Various government agencies are still working on the plan and no final decision has been made, the people said.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/10/13/china-considers-giving-students-vaccines-still-under-trial>

Dutch woman dies after catching Covid-19 twice, the first reported reinfection death

An elderly Dutch woman has become the first known person to die from catching Covid-19 twice, according to experts, raising serious questions about how long immunity and antibodies can last. The woman, 89, suffered from a rare type of bone marrow cancer called Waldenström's macroglobulinemia. Her immune system was compromised due to the cell-depleting therapy she received, the researchers at Maastricht University Medical Center in the Netherlands wrote in a

paper accepted for publication in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases. However, the researchers said her natural immune response could still have been "sufficient" to fight-off Covid-19, as the type of treatment she received for cancer "does not necessarily result in life threatening disease."

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/13/europe/covid-19-dutch-woman-reinfection-death-intl/index.html>

Another Vaccine Trial Halt | In the Pipeline

The first advice is "Don't panic". You will have heard that last night J&J announced that their coronavirus vaccine dosing has been paused while they investigate an adverse event in the trial. And while you never like to hear that, considering the size of their effort, this sort of thing is likely to happen even if the vaccine turns out to have no real safety issues. Just this morning, the company's CEO told analysts on a conference call that they don't even know yet if the affected patient is in the treatment group or the controls: that's how early this is. Now, there are definitely ways that this could go that would be concerning, but we're not there yet.

<https://blogs.sciencemag.org/pipeline/archives/2020/10/13/another-vaccine-trial-halt>

Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine study paused due to unexplained illness in participant

The study of Johnson & Johnson's Covid-19 vaccine has been paused due to an unexplained illness in a study participant. A document sent to outside researchers running the 60,000-patient clinical trial states that a "pausing rule" has been met, that the online system used to enroll patients in the study has been closed, and that the data and safety monitoring board — an independent committee that watches over the safety of patients in the clinical trial — would be convened. The document was obtained by STAT. Contacted by STAT, J&J confirmed the study pause, saying it was due to "an unexplained illness in a study participant." The company declined to provide further details.

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/10/12/johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine-study-paused-due-to-unexplained-illness-in-participant/>

Covid may cause sudden, permanent hearing loss - UK study

Covid-19 may cause sudden and permanent hearing loss, experts have found, adding that such problems need early detection and urgent treatment. The coronavirus has been found to affect the body in myriad ways, from a loss of taste and smell to organ damage. Now doctors have reported fresh evidence that Covid could also affect hearing. Writing in the journal BMJ Case Reports, experts at University College London report the case of a 45-year-old man with asthma who was admitted to intensive care with Covid, ventilated, and given drugs including the antiviral remdesivir and intravenous steroids. A week after leaving intensive care he developed a ringing sound - tinnitus - and then hearing loss in his left ear.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/covid-may-cause-sudden-permanent-hearing-loss-uk-study>

Coronavirus Resurgence

'Hunker down': The fall Covid-19 surge is here

As predicted, the US is now grappling with a new Covid-19 surge -- one that could overwhelm hospitals, kill thousands of Americans a day by January and leave even young survivors with long-term complications. "We went down to the lowest point lately in early September, around 30,000-35,000 new cases a day. Now we're back up to (about) 50,000 new cases a day. And it's going to continue to rise," Dr. Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, said Tuesday. "This is the fall/winter surge that everyone was worried about. And now it's happening. And it's happening especially in the northern Midwest, and the Northern states are getting hit very hard -- Wisconsin, Montana, the Dakotas. But it's going to be nationally soon enough. "Across the country, more than 30 states have reported more Covid-19 cases this past week than they reported the previous week, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

https://edition.cnn.com/2020/10/13/health/us-coronavirus-tuesday/index.html?utm_source=twCNN&utm_medium=so

[cial&utm_term=link&utm_content=2020-10-14T01%3A34%3A02](#)

Covid-19: Protests as Argentina's cases pass 900,000

Thousands have joined anti-government protests in Argentina as confirmed coronavirus infections continue to rise, passing 900,000 on Monday. Many Argentines are angry at the government's handling of the crisis and the economic effect of lockdowns, as well as issues such as corruption. A strict lockdown early in the pandemic meant that the number of cases grew slowly at first. But following an easing of restrictions cases have been rising steeply.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-54522428>

COVID-19: Council adopts a recommendation to coordinate measures affecting free movement

Today the Council adopted a recommendation on a coordinated approach to the restrictions of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This recommendation aims to avoid fragmentation and disruption, and to increase transparency and predictability for citizens and businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our daily lives in many ways. Travel restrictions have made it difficult for some of our citizens to get to work, to university or to visit their loved ones. It is our common duty to ensure coordination on any measures which affect free movement and to give our citizens all the information they need when deciding on their travel.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/10/13/covid-19-council-adopts-a-recommendation-to-coordinate-measures-affecting-free-movement/>

EU waters down Covid-19 traffic-light travel zones concept

EU member states on Tuesday (13 October) will adopt common standards to coordinate coronavirus travel restrictions, including a 'traffic-light' system of affected areas - in a bid to prevent a recurrence of individual and unilateral measures, as seen during the first Covid-19 wave. Under the proposal of the German presidency, endorsed by EU ambassadors last Friday, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) will publish a map, updated weekly, that categories EU regions into green, orange and red zones (or grey, for insufficient data), according to Covid-19 infection rates. The map will be available in the coming days.

<https://euobserver.com/coronavirus/149725>

Germany's Merkel concerned by rising coronavirus cases across EU

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Tuesday she was concerned by rising coronavirus cases across Europe. "I am watching with great concern the renewed increase in infection numbers in almost every part of Europe. And I must say the situation continues to be serious," Merkel said during a debate on the German presidency of the European Union at the bloc's Committee of the Regions. "We mustn't throw away what we achieved via restrictions over the past months. These restrictions haven't been easy for any of us," she added. "Many have lost their lives. And that makes it all the more important that we make sure that a further lockdown won't be needed."

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-eu-merkel/germanys-merkel-concerned-by-rising-coronavirus-cases-across-eu-idUKKBN26Y1Y8?il=0>

Italy tells citizens they must wear a mask if a friend visits your home

Italy has introduced stricter lockdown measures which will see people required to wear facemasks when other people visit them in their own homes. The country has seen a large spike in cases in recent weeks which led prime minister Giuseppe Conte to reintroduce several of the social distancing rules which were eased over the summer months. The new legislation will affect gatherings, restaurants, sports and school activities and will take effect within 24 hours, remaining valid for 30 days. Parties in restaurants, clubs or in the open air are banned and the government has strongly recommended that people do not hold parties in their homes or host more than six guests at any time.

<https://uk.sports.yahoo.com/news/italy-coronavirus-social-distancing-measures-mask-122417399.html>

New measures serve to avert new lockdown - Di Maio

The government's new anti-COVID measures will serve to avert a fresh national lockdown, Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio said Tuesday. This is despite acknowledgement that virus contagion rates are rising across the country, he said "Infection rates are high, that is true," Di Maio said on Facebook. "But by bringing in all the anti-COVID norms it is possible to stop the virus. "More stringent measures have been launched in Italy, because if we intervene now we can preserve citizens' health, the health of the country, and avert a new lockdown". Di Maio also said Italy should "act like a team" to get the EU's Recovery Fund funding as soon as possible. Premier Giuseppe Conte's government passed a decree overnight imposing new restrictions aimed at combatting the spread of COVID-19.

https://www.ansa.it/english/news/politics/2020/10/13/new-measures-serve-to-avert-new-lockdown-di-maio_b7c8c480-a4a2-474b-865b-1d7f908aae99.html

Italy Targets Bars, Restaurants, Parties in New Virus Curbs

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte imposed a series of new curbs on nightlife, social events and amateur sports as the coronavirus pandemic intensifies throughout the country, albeit at a slower pace than in other major European nations. Conte signed a decree that focuses especially on bars and restaurants, as the government seeks to avert a new national lockdown that the economy, ravaged by one of the strictest and longest in the continent earlier this year, could ill afford.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-13/italy-targets-bars-restaurants-parties-in-new-virus-curbs?srnd=politics-vp>

Coronavirus: Czech schools and bars shut in new emergency

The Czech Republic is imposing a three-week partial lockdown shutting schools, bars and clubs, as Europe struggles to contain a sharp rise in Covid-19 cases. The country has the region's highest new infection rate per 100,000 people. Restaurants will be closed and public consumption of alcohol is banned. In the Netherlands, a partial lockdown was announced, and masks have become compulsory in public indoor spaces. Meanwhile, hospital admissions are rising fast again in many countries.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-54522279>

Italy PM says avoiding new lockdown is main aim of new COVID curbs

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said on Tuesday the main aim of the government's new COVID-19 restrictions is to avoid a surge in infections which might lead to a nationwide lockdown. The government decree he signed on Tuesday imposes new curbs on public gatherings, restaurants, sports and school activities after Italy saw its daily coronavirus cases double last week, nearing 6,000 infections on Saturday. "We must avoid plunging the country into a general lockdown, the economy has started to run again," Conte told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-italy-pm/italy-pm-says-avoiding-new-lockdown-is-main-aim-of-new-covid-curbs-idUSR1N2BQ01I>

France considers local lockdowns as Covid-19 numbers soar

French President Emmanuel Macron met senior cabinet ministers on Tuesday to discuss possible further measures to fight the coronavirus pandemic following a surge in Covid-19 cases and hospitalisations. The French president is set to deliver a televised address Wednesday on possible means to stem a second wave in the country. The meeting came a day after coronavirus intensive care treatments exceeded a May 27 peak as France, like neighbouring Spain and Britain, grapples with how to slow the virus's spread and ease pressure on a once-again strained healthcare system while keeping its 2.3 trillion euro (\$2.71 trillion) economy open and protecting jobs.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20201013-french-cabinet-discusses-covid-19-measures-as-cases-hospitalisations-surge>

Russia's daily coronavirus cases, deaths rise to record highs

Russia on Tuesday reported record high daily coronavirus cases and deaths, pushing total infections to 1,326,178, but authorities said they do not plan to impose lockdowns across the vast country. Anna Popova, head of the consumer safety watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, said on Tuesday Russia saw no need to impose restrictions on economic activity in response to the spike in cases. "Despite a growing number of cases, today in Russia we are not talking about blocking the economy, suspending some business activities, some sectors of the economy, because we see no reason to do this," Popova said in comments carried by Russian news agencies.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-russia-cases/russias-daily-coronavirus-cases-deaths-rise-to-record-highs-idUKKBN26Y0W3>

The French prime minister warns that local lockdowns may be imposed as cases surge.

France is weighing the possibility of local lockdowns as the country battles a second wave of the coronavirus epidemic, Prime Minister Jean Castex said Monday. Mr. Castex told Franceinfo that France faces an unprecedented surge in cases that is putting increasing pressure on hospitals, saying that many citizens were not taking health warnings seriously. Nearly 27,000 new infections were reported by health authorities on Saturday — a record — and the rate of positive results from testing passed 11 percent. The number of deaths is increasing at a higher rate than over the summer, though much more slowly than in the spring, and hospitalizations, including in intensive care units, are rising.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/world/the-french-prime-minister-warns-that-local-lockdowns-may-be-imposed-as-cases-surge.html>

New Lockdown

Coronavirus: Northern Ireland set to impose 'circuit breaker' lockdown for four weeks

Northern Ireland is set to become the first full region of the UK to impose a "circuit breaker" lockdown. Tighter restrictions will be in place for four weeks - with schools closing for two of them, Sky News understands. According to the PA news agency, the new measures will mean pubs and restaurants have to close, with the exception of takeaways. PA said closures of hospitality outlets would begin on Friday 16 October and other measures from Monday 19 October

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-northern-ireland-set-to-impose-circuit-breaker-lockdown-for-four-weeks-12103640>

Keir Starmer urges PM to impose 'circuit breaker' lockdown on England

Keir Starmer called on the government to "follow the science" and impose a national "circuit breaker" lockdown of at least two weeks as the death toll from Covid-19 soared to a four-month high. In a significant escalation, the Labour leader said Boris Johnson had "lost control of the virus" and must take urgent action to impose a near-total shutdown across England over October half-term. "If we don't, we could sleep-walk into a long and bleak winter. That choice is now for the prime minister to make. I urge him to do so," he said. The call was backed by metro mayors across northern England as official figures showed 143 UK deaths in a single day - the highest since early June. Last month the chief scientific adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance, warned the country could see 200 daily deaths by mid-November without fresh controls.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/keir-starmer-urges-pm-to-impose-circuit-breaker-lockdown-on-england>

Shutdowns, alerts and more rules: This is how UK lockdown is going to work

The U.K. revealed further measures aimed at curbing a rapid spread of coronavirus cases in England with a three-tier alert system put in place, in addition to local lockdowns and nationwide restrictions. The measures are meant to simplify the rules in different parts of the country. The U.K. is the third worst-hit country in Europe in terms of coronavirus cases.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/13/uk-lockdown-a-guide-to-the-alert-system-shutdowns-and-rules.html>

Painful but effective? UK can look to Israel for example of short lockdown

Days before UK ministers rejected advice to impose a shortened “circuit breaker” lockdown in late September, Israel made the opposite decision and enforced the unpopular and painful policy to stem the spiralling number of virus infections. The country of 9 million – less than 15% of the population of Britain – was shut down for a second time, with Israeli officials arguing it was essential to halt infections or risk overloading hospitals. As the UK and other countries consider implementing shorter lockdowns, Israel presents an example of their benefits and perils. While clearly stalling infections, the second lockdown has further pummelled the economy and infuriated much of the public, some of whom have defied the rules out of frustration and apathy.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/13/painful-but-effective-uk-can-look-to-israel-for-example-of-short-lockdown>

Europe Tightens Restrictions to Counter Record Virus Surge

European governments are adding new restrictions and calling on citizens to make sacrifices in a bid to contain a record increase in coronavirus cases, with the Czech Republic closing schools and the Netherlands shutting down virtually all nighttime activity. Saying measures needed to stop the virus “will hurt,” Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced what he called a “partial lockdown” on Tuesday evening, with sales of alcohol to be banned after 8 p.m. and bars, restaurants and coffee shops to be closed altogether. Citizens are being urged to avoid public transportation where possible.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-13/german-new-coronavirus-cases-rise-at-fastest-pace-since-april-3>

Sevilla town in Spain’s Andalusia to enter new lockdown after 25 COVID-19 outbreaks linked to family gatherings

ECIJA will enter a new lockdown after recording a coronavirus incidence rate of 925.4 cases per 100,000 inhabitants over the past two weeks. The Sevilla town, with a population of 39,873, has recorded 369 new cases of the virus over the same period.

<https://www.theolivepress.es/spain-news/2020/10/13/sevilla-town-in-spains-andalusia-to-enter-new-lockdown-after-25-covid-19-outbreaks-linked-to-family-gatherings/>

England's pubs ponder if pasties or chips make a meal amid COVID lockdown

Pub owners across England’s COVID-19 hotspots were on Tuesday pondering a question that could decide if they survive or sink due to the coronavirus lockdown - when is a pub a pub, and when does it become a restaurant? The question has sparked a bizarre discussion about some of England’s favourite snacks: fries, chips and pork scratchings - roasted pork rind - do not count as a meal, according to a government minister quizzed on the status of the delicacies. But Cornish pasties, a much-loved meat and vegetable pie that dates back to England’s ancient tin mines, do count as a meal.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKKBN26Y00Z>

Britain's hospitality industry sets legal challenge to lockdown restrictions

A group of English pub and night club owners have paused plans for a legal challenge against new COVID-19 shutdowns after the government limited closures to the Merseyside region. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson set out new measures on Monday, but so far Liverpool and the surrounding area is the only one that will have to close pubs, clubs, gyms, leisure centres, betting shops, adult gaming centres and casinos. Britain’s pub, restaurant, night club and event industry has been hammered by the coronavirus crisis and after months of lockdown in the spring, a second wave and new measures limiting socialising now threaten hundreds of thousands more jobs.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-hospitalit/britains-hospitality-industry-sets-legal-challen>

[ge-to-lockdown-restrictions-idINKBN26X01R](#)

Strict rules loom across Europe as second wave of Covid-19 intensifies

European countries including Italy and England are mulling strict new measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus, as cases on the continent continue to soar. More leaders are preparing to take drastic action, which will likely damage their economies, to contain a second wave of Covid-19 -- following in the footsteps of nations such as France and Spain, which have been forced to tighten restrictions in major cities.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/12/europe/europe-restrictions-covid-intl/index.html>