

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

22nd Oct 2020

News Highlights

Japan study shows coronavirus survives five times longer on skin than flu

Japanese researchers have found that the coronavirus survives on human skin for close to nine hours and re-emphasised the need for frequent hand washing to kill the virus. By comparison, [the flu virus survives on skin for only about 1.8 hours](#). The study, published this month in the Clinical Infectious Diseases journal, stated that the long nine-hour survival of the coronavirus increased the risk of contact transmission and has thus accelerated the pandemic.

Bolsonaro overrules own health minister, rejects Chinese Covid-19 vaccine

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro rejected the purchase of 46 million doses of CoronaVac, China's potential Covid-19 vaccine candidate, [only days after the purchase had been announced by Health Minister Eduardo Pazuello](#). Bolsonaro said on social media channels that the 'Brazilian people will not be anyone's guinea pig' and that the vaccine has not yet been tested adequately yet.

'Five-tier lockdown' could be introduced in Scotland, says Nicola Sturgeon

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced that a 'five-tier lockdown' system may be introduced soon to try and curb the rising coronavirus cases in the country. [The new system would be revealed on Friday and will come into effect on November 2](#). England already has a three-tier lockdown system in place and Sturgeon said Scotland will have additional interventions at the top and bottom of the tiers that already exist in England.

Pakistan government warns of new lockdown as Covid-19 mortality rate spikes

The National Command and Operations Centre (NCOC), the top body in Pakistan overseeing the country's coronavirus response, has warned that strict measures including lockdown may be imposed in the country to contain infection rates, [if citizens continue to violate government guidelines](#). Pakistan's Covid-19 mortality rate has shot up 140% compared to the last few weeks and the NCOC has stated that there is a clear resurgence in the virus along with an increase in deaths.

Lockdown Exit

Jacinda Ardern landslide is a vote for COVID-19 competence

For governments facing a growing wave of coronavirus cases as fall turns to winter, there's a stark lesson in Saturday's stunning election victory for New Zealand's incumbent Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern: Voters really want their governments to suppress the pandemic. A landslide victory means Ardern could govern with the first outright majority since her country adopted proportional representation in the 1990s, with her Labour party on track to win the largest share of the vote in 70 years. "The argument is strong for countries adopting a so-called zero-COVID strategy" like that in New Zealand, a team of authors in Singapore, Hong Kong, the U.K. and Norway argued in medical journal The Lancet last month.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2020/10/21/commentary/world-commentary/jacinda-ardern-landslide-coronavir>

[us/](#)

Friendly skies: App would help travellers comply with COVID tests

A public-interest foundation is testing a smartphone app that could make it easier for international airline passengers to securely show they have complied with COVID-19 testing requirements. It is an attempt to help get people back to flying after the pandemic sent global air travel down by 92 percent. The Switzerland-based Commons Project Foundation was conducting a test Wednesday of its CommonPass digital health pass on United Airlines Flight 15 from London's Heathrow to Newark Liberty International Airport, using volunteers carrying the app on their smartphones. Officials from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Customs and Border Protection were observing the test.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/10/21/friendly-skies-nonprofit-app-aims-to-help-restart-air-travel>

Socioeconomic factors drive COVID risks for minorities - UK govt report

The increased risk to ethnic minorities from COVID-19 is largely driven by factors such as living circumstances and profession and not the genetics of different groups or structural racism, a report into racial disparities from the pandemic has found. Several studies have shown a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on ethnic minorities, and the British government in June promised further work to look into the causes of the disparities. But the dynamics of whether certain groups are more likely to contract the virus to start with due to external factors, or are more susceptible to it once exposed, have been unclear.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-ethnicity/socioeconomic-factors-drive-covid-risks-for-minorities-uk-govt-report-idUKKBN2763CH>

Cyberattacks on coronavirus vaccine projects confirmed in Japan

Some Japanese research institutions developing coronavirus vaccines have been hit by cyberattacks, apparently from China, in what are believed to be the first cases of their kind in the country, a U.S. information security firm said Monday. Amid an intensifying race to develop vaccines against COVID-19, those bodies have been targeted by attacks since April but no reports of information leaks have been made, according to CrowdStrike. The government's National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity has urged drugmakers and research organizations to raise alert levels against such attempts to steal confidential information. The U.S. firm did not disclose the names of the targeted institutions, but said it suspects the attacks have been made by a Chinese hacker group, based on the techniques employed.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/cyberattacks-on-coronavirus-vaccine-projects-confirmed-in-japan/ar-BB1aadQB>

Coronavirus survives on skin five times longer than flu, Japan study finds

The coronavirus remains active on human skin for nine hours, Japanese researchers have found, in a discovery they said showed the need for frequent hand washing to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The pathogen that causes the flu survives on human skin for about 1.8 hours by comparison, said the study published this month in the *Clinical Infectious Diseases* journal. "The nine-hour survival of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus strain that causes COVID-19) on human skin may increase the risk of contact transmission in comparison with IAV (influenza A virus), thus accelerating the pandemic," it said. The research team tested skin collected from autopsy specimens, about one day after death. Both the coronavirus and the flu virus are inactivated within 15 seconds by applying ethanol, which is used in hand sanitizers

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/10/18/national/science-health/coronavirus-skin-study/>

Japanese research team develops COVID-19 breath testing system

Tohoku University and precision equipment maker Shimadzu Corp. have jointly developed a system that checks exhaled breath to detect novel coronavirus infections. The testing accuracy of the

system is about the same as the levels achieved by widely used polymerase chain reaction tests, according to a joint announcement by the university and Shimadzu on Friday. They aim to put the system into practical use within a few years after conducting clinical research for about six months. The system collects exhaled breath from testing subjects for five to 10 minutes to examine the water vapor contained in it.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/10/17/national/japan-research-coronavirus-breath-testing/>

Exit Strategies

Senate to take up \$500 billion COVID-19 stimulus package as relief talks continue

The Senate failed Wednesday to pass a \$500 billion COVID-19 aid package as negotiations drag on less than two weeks before Election Day. The bill would have given a federal boost to weekly unemployment benefits, sent \$100 billion to schools and allocated funding for testing and vaccine development. The vote was 51-44, short of the 60 votes required to allow the legislation to move forward. Nearly all Democrats opposed it over concerns that more money was needed to combat the virus and help Americans. The bill's \$500 billion price tag was far less than the roughly \$1.8 trillion package the White House offered and the \$2.2 trillion package Democrats backed. The two parties have spent months attempting to find a bipartisan agreement for one last batch of coronavirus relief before the election.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2020/10/21/covid-19-senate-take-up-500-billion-coronavirus-stimulus-bill/3713066001/>

Sunak scraps three-year spending review to focus on Covid-19

Rishi Sunak has cancelled the UK government's three-year spending review for the rest of parliament to allow Treasury ministers more time to focus on coping with the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. The chancellor said he would set out a one-year spending plan that would focus entirely on dealing with the budgeting needs of departments and the devolved governments during the pandemic. The move is a blow to Boris Johnson's ambition to reclaim the economic agenda with an upbeat outlook for the UK and the government's investment plans once the coronavirus has been brought under control.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/oct/21/sunak-scraps-three-year-spending-review-to-focus-on-covid-19>

Coronavirus updates: San Francisco to lift more restrictions, mayor says; stimulus talks inch forward

Covid-19 is likely to become as "endemic" as the annual flu virus, according to the U.K.'s chief scientific advisor. A vaccine is not likely to eradicate the virus, the advisor cautioned.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/20/covid-19-likely-to-become-as-endemic-as-flu.html>

Confusion persists over curfew plans for Madrid once state of alarm expires

Once again, Madrileños were left unsure as to their fate this weekend as the end of the current state of alarm – imposed by the central government in a bid to slow the spread of the coronavirus – approaches, with the emergency situation due to come to an end on Saturday. According to regional health chief Enrique Ruiz Escudero, the Madrid regional government is preparing a curfew order to restrict movement between midnight and 6am from Saturday onward, he said during an interview with state broadcaster TVE. "What we are determining are measures to establish more exhaustive control, principally from midnight to 6am, measures that will restrict movement and the concentration [of people] that produces these contagions," he explained.

<https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-10-21/confusion-persists-over-curfew-plans-for-madrid-once-state-of-alarm-expires.html>

Retailers hopeful for Christmas boost after turnover falls 1.5 per cent

Retailers are hoping the incoming Christmas trading season will bring relief from the challenging

conditions sparked by the coronavirus pandemic. Australian Retailers Association chief executive Paul Zahra said the latest monthly retail turnover figures for September should be interpreted as a sign of optimism that trading conditions are beginning to normalise ahead of the festive period. "Every day before Christmas counts," Mr Zahra said. "It is the all important trading period. Christmas trading is up to two-thirds of a retailer's (annual) profits." National data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows retail turnover for September slid 1.5 per cent compared to the prior month, primarily driven by falls in essential spending categories such as groceries and household goods.

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/australian-economy/retail-turnover-falls-15-per-cent-due-to-victorias-lockdown/news-story/2313ec2f5db947fe8205890dad7b1388>

Australia's Victoria state paves way for pop up dining as virus cases remain low

Australia's most heavily hit coronavirus state of Victoria logged a sixth consecutive day of low single digit new cases on Wednesday, as the state government said it was on track to announce fresh easing measures at the weekend. "We do genuinely hope on Sunday to make some announcements in the future and if these numbers stay on trend we will be able to do that," Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews told a news conference. Victoria, which has been under strict lockdown measures since early July, hopes to revitalise outdoor dining over the summer in the hard hit hospitality sector, by allowing pop up restaurants in public gardens and carparks in downtown areas.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-australia/australias-victoria-state-paves-way-for-pop-up-dining-as-virus-cases-remain-low-idUKKBN27605G>

Partisan Exits

Brazil's Bolsonaro rejects Chinese vaccine against COVID-19

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro overruled his own health minister on Wednesday, rejecting the announced purchase of 46 million doses of CoronaVac, a potential vaccine against COVID-19 being tested in Sao Paulo state. Health minister Eduardo Pazuello announced the purchase on Tuesday alongside Sao Paulo's Gov. João Doria, a foe of Bolsonaro's whose state government is participating in the vaccine's development. The cost of the acquisition was estimated at 2 billion Brazilian reais (\$360 million). "The Brazilian people will not be anyone's guinea pig," Bolsonaro said on his social media channels, adding that the shot made by Chinese pharmaceutical company Sinovac is yet to finish its testing phase — which is true of all potential vaccines. "My decision is to not purchase such a vaccine."

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/brazils-bolsonaro-rejects-chinese-vaccine-against-covid19-jair-bolsonaro-brazil-vaccine-sao-paulo-covid-b1206105.html>

A lockdown with insufficient financial support is the worst of both worlds

Greater Manchester will enter tier three, but without agreement on the extent of the region's financial support package, while Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield will enter tier three on Saturday (24 October). Although the gap between the British government and Greater Manchester is small in cash terms at £5m – an essentially meaningless sum in the context of government spending – the difference is large because of what the two sides want to spend it on. Andy Burnham wants to be able to top up the furlough scheme to its current level of 80 per cent. The Conservative government, particularly the Chancellor Rishi Sunak, meanwhile, want to avoid having to resume the furlough scheme at a nationwide level.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2020/10/lockdown-insufficient-financial-support-worst-both-worlds>

Coronavirus: Sweden a land of biological brawling and Covid contrariness

Anders Tegnell, Sweden's chief epidemiologist, defended his country's coronavirus strategy in an interview with the New Statesman, telling the newspaper that Sweden did not pursue "herd immunity" and "definitely had a virtual lockdown" — despite looser restrictions than most countries.

Why it matters: Sweden's more relaxed approach to the pandemic compared to other industrialized countries has been a source of controversy, with many libertarians and conservatives, including Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), arguing that the U.S. should have pursued a similar strategy.

<https://www.axios.com/sweden-coronavirus-strategy-epidemiologist-02b29922-6040-4b31-aafd-ff4ad01256be.html>

Continued Lockdown

Covid-19: Nottingham party students fined £40,000

Four university students have been fined £10,000 each after telling police who broke up their house party they were "spoiling their fun". Officers on patrol spotted a party in Lenton, Nottingham, on Tuesday night but were told everyone had left. But inside they found more than 30 people hiding and, when challenged, organisers complained they should be having the "time of their lives". Nottingham Trent University said the third-year students had been suspended. Mixing of households or support bubbles indoors has been banned since Nottingham went into tier two restrictions on 14 October.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-54631524>

Inmates locked up for 23 hours due to Covid is 'dangerous' warns chief of prisons

Inmates locked up for 23 hours due to Covid is 'dangerous' warns chief of prisons. In an interview with BBC Newsnight, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, Peter Clark, said keeping inmates in their cells for such lengthy periods under Covid restrictions impacted on their mental health. While the Prison Officers' Association (POA) claims the move to reduce the spread of the virus has led to a drop in violence and self harm, Clark disagrees claiming the argument is "shallow". He said self harm was in fact on the rise in women's prisons.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/10/21/inmates-locked-up-for-23-hours-due-to-covid-is-dangerous-warns-chief-of-prisons/>

Covid-19: Fraud Attempts Against Businesses In India Doubled In Lockdown

There was a doubling of online fraud attempts against businesses in India during the initial days of the lockdown and the same went down subsequently as the economy began unlocking, an American information and insights company said on Tuesday. TransUnion found that suspected online fraud attempts against Indian businesses increased 121% in the first phase of the pandemic (between March 11 to May as compared to before the pandemic (between Jan. 1 to March 10). As businesses began reopening (May 19 to July 25), there was a 29% decrease in suspected digital fraud attempts in India against businesses when compared to the first phase of the lockdown, it added.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/politics/fraud-attempts-against-businesses-in-india-doubled-in-lockdown-report>

Why Victoria's lockdown killed four newborn babies

Four Adelaide babies with heart issues died over course of the past four weeks Normally they would be transferred to Victoria's Royal Melbourne Hospital But this option was 'not tenable' due to the coronavirus pandemic, inquiry heard Adelaide's Women's and Children Hospital is not equipped for heart surgeries

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8861271/Why-Victorias-lockdown-killed-four-newborn-babies.html>

Scientific Viewpoint

AstraZeneca, J&J could resume COVID vaccine trials this week

Moncef Slaoui, the head of Operation Warp Speed, said he expects the U.S. trials of vaccines made by AstraZeneca Plc and Johnson & Johnson to restart as soon as this week. The two companies developing Covid-19 vaccines backed by Operation Warp Speed temporarily halted their trials because participants fell ill, slowing down the race for a shot to halt the pandemic. J&J paused its trial last week when a participant got sick. AstraZeneca's trial paused last month after a woman in the U.K. study developed neurological symptoms and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration has yet to

clear the study to resume in the U.S.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/10/21/astra-ji-vaccine-trials-may-resume-this-week-warp-speed-says>

Next up in hunt for COVID-19 vaccine: Testing shots in kids

The global hunt for a COVID-19 vaccine for kids is only just beginning — a lagging start that has some U.S. pediatricians worried they may not know if any shots work for young children in time for the next school year. Older adults may be most vulnerable to the coronavirus, but ending the pandemic will require vaccinating children, too. Last week, Pfizer Inc. received permission to test its vaccine in U.S. kids as young as 12, one of only a handful of attempts around the world to start exploring if any experimental shots being pushed for adults also can protect children. "I just figured the more people they have to do tests on, the quicker they can put out a vaccine and people can be safe and healthy," said 16-year-old Katelyn Evans, who became the first teen to get an injection in the Pfizer study at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Multiple vaccine candidates are in final-stage studies in tens of thousands of adults, and scientists are hopeful that the next few months will bring evidence that at least some of them are safe and effective enough for widespread use.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/next-up-in-hunt-for-covid19-vaccine-testing-shots-in-kids-adults-us-children-children-pfizer-inc-b1207273.html>

Volunteer in Oxford COVID-19 vaccine trial has died, Brazil health authority says

Brazilian health authority Anvisa said on Wednesday that a volunteer in a clinical trial of the COVID-19 vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University had died but added that the trial would continue. Oxford confirmed the plan to keep testing, saying in a statement that after careful assessment "there have been no concerns about safety of the clinical trial." AstraZeneca declined to comment immediately. A source familiar with the matter told Reuters the trial would have been suspended if the volunteer who died had received the COVID-19 vaccine, suggesting the person was part of the control group that was given a meningitis jab.

<https://www.msn.com/en-au/lifestyle/wellbeing/astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-trial-volunteer-has-died-brazil-health-authority-says/ar-BB1agolW>

COVID-19 vaccines will be stored in secret locations to prevent theft

Vaccine candidate Pfizer Inc. is among the vaccine makers that will have GPS software on shipments. The company is also planning to carry out fake shipments in dummy trucks in a bid to confuse any potential thieves. The safeguards are being put in place amid concerns that the highly-awaited vaccines could be stolen when being distributed. Health authorities fear criminal rings will try and steal the vaccine when it is being given to prioritized groups and before it is made publicly available. Moderna, another maker, says it has enhanced security as the leading candidates inch closer to having a vaccine

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8864015/COVID-19-vaccines-stored-secret-locations-prevent-theft.html>

World could get a Covid-19 vaccine in the next few months but the virus will exist 'forever'

SAGE member Professor John Edmunds said a vaccine may come this winter But he told MPs it would only manage the virus because it was not going away Sir Patrick Vallance, the UK's top scientist, says a vaccine before 2021 is possible Number 10 has already bought 340million doses of various jabs in preparation

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8863999/World-Covid-19-vaccine-months-virus-exist-forever.html>

Urgent appeal for plasma donations from Covid-19 survivors

People from Greater Manchester who have had the coronavirus are being urged to register as blood plasma donors to save lives. They can donate their antibody-rich plasma which could help those who are seriously ill with Covid-19 to survive. Around 1,700 donations have been made in Manchester so far, at the donor centre in Norfolk House and Plymouth Grove. People can register as online donors.

Around 70 people have received transfusions of plasma at hospitals in Greater Manchester since the treatment began in April. NHS Blood and Transplant is collecting blood plasma for coronavirus treatment - known as convalescent plasma - around the country. The neutralising antibodies in the plasma could stop the virus spreading.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/urgent-appeal-plasma-donations-covid-19141037>

Sir David Attenborough says Covid-19 is 'threat to environment'

Sir David Attenborough said the Covid-19 pandemic was a threat to the environment as politicians deal with the crisis instead of climate change. The naturalist and broadcaster expressed his fears to environmental activist Greta Thunberg at a virtual wildlife film festival in Bristol. The 94-year-old said Thunberg had given the world hope by energising young people to fight for the environment. The teenager also praised Sir David's new film A Life On Our Planet. Sir David said several international climate conferences had been cancelled because of Covid-19. "I am worried that people will take their eyes off the environmental issue because of the immediate problems they have on Covid-19," he said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-54624129>

Research to understand COVID-19 spread on public transport

A major scientific study has been launched to understand the risks of COVID-19 transmission on buses and trains - and to identify the best measures to control it. Led by the University of Leeds and with support from the Department for Transport and several transport organisations, the investigation will involve taking air and surface samples on parts of the transport network to measure background levels of the coronavirus. The researchers will develop detailed simulations of the way the virus could potentially spread through airflow, from touching contaminated surfaces and from being close to someone infected with the virus.

https://www.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/4694/research_to_understand_covid-19_spread_on_public_transport

Suicidal thoughts increased among UK population during lockdown, study finds

One in 10 people had experienced suicidal thoughts by the end of the first six weeks of lockdown, according to new research. The study, which looked at three "waves" of lockdown between March 31 and May 11, found the restrictions had a major impact on the UK population's mental health. It found young people, women, those from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds and individuals with pre-existing mental health problems reported the worst mental health outcomes in the initial phase of the national restrictions. The research, led by the University of Glasgow, found suicidal thoughts increased over the first six weeks of lockdown, with one in 10 people reporting them (9.8%) by the end of this period.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/suicidal-thoughts-increased-among-uk-population-during-lockdown-study-finds-39650167.html>

Coronavirus: UK faces second peak at Christmas, SAGE adviser warns

But they are still a far-cry from the true numbers seen during the peak of the first Covid-19 wave in the spring. Deaths are also rising in line with the growing outbreak, with today's figure a 40% rise on the 137 last week. Professor John Edmunds was questioned by MPs on the Science & Technology Committee this morning. He said Government 'not being as cautious as I would like' and he would not use the same strategy. Warned 'we're looking at very high numbers of deaths' and a 'severe' peak of cases at Christmas. 'Nobody expects' Tier Three lockdowns to get R rate below one, he said, so they will only stabilise outbreaks

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8863559/Britain-faces-second-Covid-19-peak-CHRISTMAS-SAGE-adviser-warns.html>

India is facing a double health threat this winter: pollution and the pandemic

A familiar scene is taking place in northern India. Vast fields burn, flames engulfing bare stalks of already-harvested crops. Billowing smoke travels across state borders. In towns and cities, the air is thick with yellow haze. Stubble burning, the practice of intentionally setting fire to cultivated fields to prepare the land for its next crop, is one of the chief drivers of India's so-called annual pollution season, which begins each winter. It is especially bad in cities like the capital New Delhi, where smog from the burning crop fields, vehicular emissions, power plants, construction sites, and smoke from Diwali firecrackers combine to create a toxic cloud that lingers until spring.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/21/asia/india-pollution-covid-intl-hnk-scw-wellness/index.html>

What South Africans must do to avoid a resurgence of COVID-19 infections

South Africa's stringent lockdown earlier this year may have saved lives by containing the spread of COVID-19. New COVID-19 infections have been declining and lockdown restrictions relaxed. But this has triggered fears of a new wave of infections.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-10-south-africans-resurgence-covid-infections.html>

What South Africans must do to avoid a resurgence of COVID-19 infections

South Africa's stringent lockdown earlier this year may have saved lives by containing the spread of COVID-19. New COVID-19 infections have been declining and lockdown restrictions relaxed. But this has triggered fears of a new wave of infections. Several countries have experienced a spike in infections following the easing of harsh lockdown measures. These include South Korea, Canada, Spain and the UK. Health systems are once again becoming overwhelmed, and countries have resorted to stringent lockdown measures once again. The new round has been characterised by increases in cases - mostly driven by infections among younger groups - but not necessarily increased deaths.

<https://theconversation.com/what-south-africans-must-do-to-avoid-a-resurgence-of-covid-19-infections-148132>

Covid: Lockdown had 'major impact' on mental health

Lockdown had a major impact on the UK's mental health, including increased rates of suicidal thoughts, according to new research. The study, led by the University of Glasgow, examined the effects of Covid-19 during the height of the pandemic. Certain groups are said to be particularly at risk, including young people and women. The Department of Health in England said it was increasing investment in mental health services.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54616688>

newsGP - Pandemic's mental health impact on young people a 'national crisis'

One in two. That is the number of young people that were unable to carry out their daily activities due to a decline in wellbeing, up from two in five in 2018. That is among the findings from headspace's 2020 National Youth Mental Health Survey of more than 1000 Australians aged 12-25. Conducted between 25 May and 21 June, when much of the country was in or emerging from enforced lockdown restrictions, the research has confirmed concerns over the pandemic's impact on the wellbeing and mental health of young Australians. The survey found that psychological distress among young people remains high, with one-third (34%) reporting high or very high levels of distress, particularly among 15-17-year-old young men, at 29% up from 20% in 2018.

<https://www1.racgp.org.au/newsgp/clinical/pandemic-s-mental-health-impact-on-young-people-a>

Australia Covid-19 quarantine blood-testing blunder prompts calls for hundreds to take HIV test

More than 200 former residents of coronavirus quarantine facilities in Australia are being urged to test for blood-transmitted diseases, including HIV, after authorities admitted they used the same blood-testing devices for multiple guests. It's the latest in a series of Covid-19 setbacks to hit the country and the state of Victoria in particular. Earlier breaches at Victoria quarantine hotels led to a Covid-19 outbreak in Melbourne, prompting the country's second biggest city to spend months

under a strict lockdown. In a statement Monday, Victorian health agency, Safer Care Victoria, said it was contacting 243 people who had a blood glucose level test before August 20 as there was a risk of cross-contamination and blood-borne viruses, including HIV.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/20/australia/australia-covid-quarantine-blood-testing-hiv-intl-hnk/index.html>

UK doctor praises NZ's COVID-19 approach, says it's too late for them

A UK doctor has praised New Zealand's COVID-19 approach on locking down the country early and says he's disappointed with the situation in the UK. With more than 700,000 confirmed cases so far, Dr Asad Khan, Respiratory Physician at Manchester Hospital says it's been a "very very difficult time". "We have quite a number of acute hospitals here and some of them are already full," he told The Project on Wednesday. "We have fewer than the normal number of doctors that we'd have at this time of the year, and that's because a number of them are off with COVID or they are having to self isolate because they have been in contact with COVID."

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2020/10/uk-doctor-praises-nz-s-covid-19-approach-says-it-s-too-late-for-them.html>

What NZ can learn from Taiwan about pandemic preparedness

New Zealand's approach to the Covid-19 pandemic won international acclaim after measures such as border closures, widespread testing and initiating a historic nationwide lockdown helped eliminate the deadly virus from within our midst. But it's the proactive stance adopted by another island nation some 9000 kilometres away that has been singled out as the "most effective and least disruptive of any country" in the world. Taiwan's pandemic response is lauded in a study involving Otago University researchers in Wellington published in The Lancet Regional Health: Western Pacific medical journal on Wednesday night.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/123144103/what-nz-can-learn-from-taiwan-about-pandemic-preparedness>

Volunteer in Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine trial dies in Brazil - but scientists say there are NO safety concerns and trial will continue

A volunteer in the Brazilian arm of AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford's coronavirus vaccine trial has died. He was confirmed to be Dr João Pedro R. Feitosa, a 28-year-old from Rio De Janeiro, who passed away on October 15 from COVID-19 complications. Reports say he was not part of the group that received the experimental jab. Oxford and Brazilian health authority Anvisa say testing will continue and that there are no safety concerns. The news comes as the FDA keeps the US arm of AstraZeneca's trial on hold after a British patient developed a rare spinal complication.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8865039/Volunteer-AstraZenecas-coronavirus-vaccine-trial-dies-Brazil.html>

CDC updates its guidelines for close Covid-19 contact after prison guard gets infected

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has updated its definition of a close contact with a Covid-19 patient to include multiple, brief exposures, after a Vermont prison worker appears to have been infected that way, CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield said Wednesday. The new definition includes exposures adding up to a total of 15 minutes spent six feet or closer to an infected person. Previously, the CDC defined a close contact as 15 minutes of continuous exposure to an infected individual. The agency changed the definition after a report from Vermont of a corrections officer who became infected after several brief interactions with coronavirus-positive inmates -- none of them lasting 15 minutes, but adding up over time.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/21/health/cdc-covid-close-contact-guidelines-cumulative/index.html>

Brazil COVID-19 vaccine trial continues after volunteer dies

Brazil's National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) said on Wednesday that a volunteer in a clinical trial of the COVID-19 vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University had died, but said the trial would continue. It was not immediately clear whether the volunteer received the

vaccine or the placebo.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/21/brazilian-volunteer-in-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-trial-dies>

Number of Covid deaths in Britain could have been HALVED by imposing lockdown earlier, report claims

Professor Andrew Harvey said lockdown on March 19 would have halved deaths. This suggests between 21,900 and 29,400 deaths could have been avoided. His calculations support those of Professor Neil Ferguson in June. A lockdown on March 23 is considered a key failure of the Government. They had been given predictions of 500,000 deaths nine days before lockdown.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8858873/Number-Covid-deaths-Britain-HALVED-imposing-lockdown-earlier-report-claims.html>

Coronavirus Resurgence

US is nearing 'rapid acceleration' of Covid-19 cases, expert warns, as daily infections hit about 60,000

With the number of people with Covid-19 being admitted to hospitals rising, several states are looking at their supply of beds. On Wednesday, an overflow medical facility set up at the Wisconsin State Fair Park in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis received its first patient. "We are thankful to have this facility available to Wisconsinites and our hospitals, but also saddened that this is where Wisconsin is at today," Gov. Tony Evers said. "Folks, please stay home. Help us protect our communities from this highly contagious virus and avoid further strain on our hospitals." The facility will take patients who meet specific criteria, and doctors and nurses there can give remdesivir and oxygen treatment, according to the governor's statement.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/21/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

Why the second wave of Covid-19 appears to be less lethal

While coronavirus infections have been surging again across Europe since late summer, the chances of surviving the respiratory disease seem to have improved from the first phase of the outbreak. The number of Covid-19 patients ill enough to go to hospital has risen less steeply — and mortality more slowly still, according to an FT analysis. Health services are not overwhelmed as they would have been if severe disease had followed infection in the way it did between March and April. "In western Europe, pretty much every country including the UK is still seeing a much smaller per capita death rate in this second wave than in the first one during the spring," said Mark Woolhouse, professor of infectious disease epidemiology at the University of Edinburgh.

<https://www.ft.com/content/b3801b63-fbdb-433b-9a46-217405b1109f>

Greece reports new peak in COVID-19 cases

Greece on Wednesday reported 865 new cases of COVID-19, a new peak since an outbreak in late February, and authorities announced a regional lockdown of a northern district. Authorities declared the northern region of Kastoria on an elevated risk,

<https://news.yahoo.com/greece-reports-peak-covid-19-170739965.html>

COVID-19: U.S. Northeast states discourage travel; California rebuffs theme parks

New York, New Jersey and Connecticut on Tuesday urged their residents to not travel between the three states as the U.S. Northeast sees a rise in COVID-19 cases, while California said major theme parks including Disneyland would not be opening anytime soon.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-usa/covid-19-u-s-northeast-states-discourage-travel-california-rebuffs-theme-parks-idUKKBN2752MW>

Coronavirus is 'back with full force' in Germany, state premier says

France will extend its curfews after the number of people in ICU rose above 2,000 for the first time since May. The Czech prime minister admitted that measures so far have 'failed' to halt the worst

infection rate in Europe. In Germany, one Alpine district is already back in lockdown amid fears that virus could spread out of control Belgium is having to ration testing to people with symptoms while Italy is urging people to stay at home

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8863973/Coronavirus-force-Germany-state-premier-says.html>

'We'll see more local lockdowns in Germany': Experts warn of tough measures as Covid-19 cases rise

The first local lockdown in the autumn coronavirus resurgence was announced in southern Bavaria this week. Is it likely that more districts will follow? The popular alpine beauty spot of Berchtesgadener Land went into lockdown on Tuesday afternoon for two weeks after cases of coronavirus shot up. But politicians, health experts and district representatives believe that similar measures may be necessary elsewhere in Germany as Covid-19 numbers continue to go up. How tough the measures are depends on the incidence of infection and the ability of health authorities to contain it, said federal Health Minister Jens Spahn of the Christian Democrats (CDU) on broadcaster ZDF. If numbers spiral out of control, "this may indeed lead to appropriate measures in other areas at local and regional level," said Spahn.

<https://www.thelocal.de/20201021/we-will-see-more-lockdowns-in-germany-health-experts-warn-of-more-tough-measures-as-covid-19-cases-rise>

Italian PM Considers New Curbs After Regions Tighten Restrictions

Italy reported record new coronavirus infections on Wednesday as Rome and Milan, the country's political and financial capitals, prepare for a night-time curfew. New cases rose by 15,199, a 40% increase compared to Tuesday and well above the previous record of 11,705. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said he cannot rule out further regional curbs as the country faces an accelerating pandemic.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/onweb/contе-weighs-new-italy-curbs-as-regions-enact-stronger-measures>

Europe Takes a Swedish Turn on Tackling Covid-19

Last spring, as the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic swept through Europe, Sweden became the continent's controversial exception on how to tackle the virus. As other countries — from Italy to the U.K. — enforced draconian lockdowns, the Swedes went for a light touch. That sparked outrage among people concerned by a seemingly cavalier approach to the death toll and enthusiasm from those more worried about individual freedom and protecting the economy. The result was a fatality rate higher than Sweden's Nordic neighbors, but a smaller hit on the economy than most other European countries (the likes of Denmark excepted).

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-10-20/europe-s-approach-on-tackling-covid-19-looks-like-sweden-s>

Spanish government mulling curfews to tackle Covid-19 resurgence

The Spanish government announced that was considering fresh curfews to tackle a resurgence in the number of new cases. Addressing the media here on Tuesday, Health Minister Salvador Illa said that imposing a curfew on Madrid, and in some other parts of the country, would require invoking a State of Emergency

<https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/spanish-government-mulling-curfews-to-tackle-covid-19-resurgence/articleshow/78785981.cms>

Coronavirus: France considers extending COVID state of emergency until mid-February

France's government is considering extending its state of emergency until 16 February next year. Government spokesperson Gabriel Attal also said several more regions of the country will enter red-alert status, meaning they will see curfews imposed. The proposed new end date to the health state of emergency means 9pm to 6am curfews already in place in France's biggest cities could be extended.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-france-considers-extending-covid-state-of-emergency-until-mid-february-121>

Pakistan coronavirus mortality rate increases by 140 per cent, govt warns new lockdown

Pakistan's top body, which oversees response to the coronavirus pandemic, on Wednesday warned that strict measures, including lockdown, could be initiated to contain the infection if people don't stop violating government guidelines, as the country's COVID-19 mortality rate increased by 140 per cent compared to past few weeks. "The National Command and Operations Centre (NCOC) is closely monitoring the situation. If there is no improvement in SOPs compliance observed, NCOC will have no choice but to revert to strict measures leading to re-closures of services," the body said in a statement on Wednesday. During a special session of the NCOC to monitor an increase in cases, the body led by Minister for Planning Asad Umar was informed that there is a clear resurgence of the virus while deaths are also increasing. All chief secretaries were directed to "strictly implement" standard operating procedures (SOPs), Geo TV reported, citing the statement.

<https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/world/pakistan-coronavirus-mortality-rate-increases-by-140-per-cent-govt-warns-new-lockdown-658757>

A Third Coronavirus Surge Has Taken Root in the U.S.

The latest wave — which is raging most acutely in the Midwest and the West, but is also spreading in various areas around the country — threatens to be the worst of the pandemic yet. Its arrival comes as cooler weather is forcing people indoors, setting up a grueling winter that will test the discipline of many Americans who have grown weary of wearing masks and turning down invitations to see family and friends. Over the last week, the country has averaged about 59,000 new cases a day, the most since the beginning of August. The daily total could soon surpass 75,687, a record previously set on July 16.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates/a-third-surge-of-coronavirus-infections-has-now-firmly-taken-hold-across-much-of-the-united-states>

New Zealand records nearly a dozen new Covid-19 cases after eliminating virus — twice

Eleven fishermen have tested positive for coronavirus while quarantining in a New Zealand hotel, ending the country's second extended streak of zero cases. The workers reportedly flew in from Moscow via Singapore on Friday, and are among 440 fishermen from Russia and Ukraine currently quarantining in Christchurch's Sudima Hotel. All of the men are believed to have tested negative for the virus before leaving their countries. A further 14 cases from within the group are also now "under investigation", the country's Health Ministry has said. The 11 new cases were discovered during "routine" coronavirus testing and, as a result, the hotel was put into lockdown on Tuesday.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/new-zealand-records-nearly-a-dozen-new-covid-19-cases-after-eliminating-virus-e2-80-94-twice/ar-BB1aexFh>

Why is Ireland choosing a 'seesaw' approach to tackling Covid-19?

Taoiseach Micheal Martin on Monday night confirmed the entire country will move to Level 5 of Covid-19 restrictions for six weeks from Thursday onwards in a bid to tackle a spike in cases. He then stated that Ireland strategy's will involve working to "suppress the virus when it is growing" and reopening "as much of our society and economy as possible when it is safe to do so". "Until we have a safe vaccine, we must continue in that pattern. This is the reality in the rest of the world and it is unfortunately the reality here," Martin said. Although not named as such by government, some people have been critical of this so-called 'seesaw' approach that has been signposted as Ireland's path through the pandemic. Martin said it is "the core responsibility" of the government "to protect lives and to protect public health, while also protecting livelihoods and supporting the wider economy and society".

<https://www.thejournal.ie/covid-19-lockdown-ireland-5238525-Oct2020/>

Poland's Covid-19 cases double in three weeks

Italy has registered 15,199 new coronavirus infections over the past 24 hours, the health ministry said, the highest daily tally since the start of the country's outbreak and up from a previous record of 11,705 posted on Sunday. Yesterday saw 10,874 new cases of Covid-19. The ministry also reported 127 virus-related deaths today, up from 89 the day before, but still far fewer than at the height of the pandemic in Italy in March and April, when a daily peak of more than 900 fatalities was reached. After declining over the summer, infections have steadily accelerated in the last few months.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2020/1021/1172872-coronavirus-global/>

Turkey said to consider a return to some coronavirus curbs

Turkey is considering re-imposing some measures to stem rising coronavirus cases such as stay-home orders for younger and older people or even weekend lockdowns, but will avoid hurting the economic recovery, a senior official said. The official, who requested anonymity, said the total number of COVID-19 cases is about five times that reported in the government's daily tally - echoing concerns by Turkey's top medical association and opposition lawmakers. Health ministry officials were not immediately available to comment. Health Minister Fahrettin Koca has warned about the uptick in numbers and urged Turks to abide by nationwide distancing and mask rules, which are subject to fines.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-turkey/turkey-said-to-consider-a-return-to-some-coronavirus-curb-s-idUSL8N2HC2GV>

No plans for new coronavirus lockdown measures, says Kremlin

The Kremlin said on Wednesday it was not planning any new lockdown measures to contain the novel coronavirus, even as deaths in Russia from COVID-19 hit a record daily high of 317. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia's health system is now better equipped than earlier in the pandemic to cope with the rise in cases. Russia reported another 15,700 new coronavirus infections on Wednesday.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-kremlin/no-plans-for-new-coronavirus-lockdown-measures-says-kremlin-idINR4N2GK00Q>

Coronavirus risks running out of control in Germany, warns Soeder

The leader of Bavaria's Christian Social Union (CSU), Markus Soeder, warned on Wednesday that the coronavirus is at risk of spiraling out of control in Germany. While Germany's infection rates are lower than in much of Europe, they have been accelerating and hit a daily record of 7,830 on Saturday, according to the Robert Koch Institute. "Corona is back with full force ... the second wave is here," Soeder told the Bavarian state assembly, adding caution and prudence were required.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-bavaria/coronavirus-risks-running-out-of-control-in-germany-warns-soeder-idUKKBN2761QU>

New Lockdown

Is Italy Headed For Another Coronavirus Lockdown?

As Italy's daily coronavirus cases continue to pass the 10,000 mark, the unwelcome prospect of another lockdown may be on the cards for some regions. The northern region of Lombardy is already leaning towards lockdown with an evening curfew while the southern region of Campania has closed schools until the end of the month. Other regions are also looking at heightening restrictions.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccahughes/2020/10/21/is-italy-headed-for-another-coronavirus-lockdown/>

Czech government to impose lockdown

The Czech Republic will go into lockdown mode again to try and contain the coronavirus, the government announced Wednesday. "From October 22 at 6 a.m. [until November 3 at 11:59 p.m.], free movement of the population will be prohibited, with a few exceptions," it said on Twitter, adding

that these include "travel necessary to work, to visit family, to purchase basic necessities, to see a doctor or the authorities." In addition, non-essential shops will have to close from Thursday, "with exceptions similar to those during the spring measures," such as grocery stores and pharmacies, the government said.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/czech-government-to-impose-lockdown-measures/>

There's a Middle Ground in the Lockdown Debate

As the coronavirus pandemic continues its sweep through the U.S., India and Brazil, the dreaded second wave is now gathering strength in nations that had once contained the virus. Numbers are rocketing upward, especially in Europe, even as winter approaches, which will bring the added burden of seasonal illnesses such as influenza. Attempting to tamp things down, and to avoid overwhelming their health services, authorities in France, Germany and the U.K. are now considering stronger social distancing measures, with others — including in Ireland and Israel — ordering short, strict "circuit breaker" lockdowns.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/covid-19-lockdowns-don-t-have-to-be-all-or-nothing>

Nicola Sturgeon: Scotland may introduce 'five-tier lockdown' system

The First Minister said that a different regime may be adopted north of the Border to the three-tiered approach operating in England. The new approach will officially be unveiled on Friday and come into effect on November 2. It was confirmed today the current restrictions on hospitality which has seen a complete shutdown of pubs and restaurants in the Central Belt, will be extended until the new tiered approach comes into effect.

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/nicola-sturgeon-scotland-may-introduce-five-tier-lockdown-system-3010624>

Coronavirus: Nicola Sturgeon reveals five levels of lockdown will be applied in Scotland over winter

Nicola Sturgeon has outlined what the system will be when the new strategy for tackling coronavirus takes effect in 12 days time. She confirmed there will be a five-tier system of different levels of intervention which could be applied across the country or in different health board or council areas. The First Minister said Scotland will have two more levels in addition to those in place in England.

<https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/18811088.coronavirus-nicola-sturgeon-reveals-five-levels-lockdown-will-apply-d-scotland-winter/>

Lockdown rules: Different coronavirus restrictions across UK will soon show which system has biggest impact

In the absence of a clear road map from the Government on coronavirus restrictions, the words of the Prime Minister's leading scientific experts must be examined more closely than ever. Professor Jonathan Van-Tam made it clear that sticking to regionally imposed tiers was the way forward. This will have brought some satisfaction to Boris Johnson, standing at a podium two metres away, who is resisting calls from Sir Keir Starmer and others for a short nationwide "circuit breaker" in England to allow it to get on top of the outbreak.

<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/comment/lockdown-rules-different-coronavirus-restrictions-system-impact-analysis-732427>

More of northern England put into highest COVID-19 lockdown tier

South Yorkshire in northern England will move into the very high lockdown tier on Saturday to tackle rising levels of COVID-19 infections, the mayor of the Sheffield City Region Dan Jarvis said on Wednesday. The area has agreed a funding package worth 41 million pounds (\$53.5 million) to support businesses that will have to close and for additional public health measures. Regions in the north of England have been most severely affected by the second wave of COVID-19. South Yorkshire will join Liverpool and Lancashire in the highest tier. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Tuesday he would impose the same measures in Manchester after failing to agree a support

package with local leaders.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain/more-of-northern-england-put-into-highest-covid-19-lockdown-tier-idUKKBN2760P0>