

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

20th Nov 2020

News Highlights

First case of Covid-19 reported from Samoa as leader appeals for calm

Samoa, which was among a handful of nations that had not yet recorded a single case of Covid-19, [reported its first infection on Thursday, after a patient returned a positive result for the virus](#). Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi addressed citizens live and urged them to remain vigilant and take precautionary measures against the virus.

WHO says lockdowns could be avoided if 95% of people wore masks

Hans Kluge, WHO Europe's Regional Director, said in a news briefing on Thursday that lockdowns would not be needed if 95% of people wore masks instead of the current 60%. [Kluge said lockdowns should be a last resort and that masks should be used routinely along with other recommended safety measures in order to control the virus](#).

Six-day coronavirus lockdown imposed in South Australia as cases rise

Streets were empty in Adelaide, the capital of South Australia state, [on day one of the state-wide lockdown imposed by the government to control the rising numbers of coronavirus cases](#). Outdoor gatherings, weddings, funerals and takeaway food have been banned after health authorities recorded 23 cases from the latest cluster while also tracing 3,200 close contacts of those infected in quarantine.

FDA approves emergency use of remdesivir to treat Covid-19 even as WHO advises against the drug

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [approved the emergency use of Gilead's remdesivir in combination with Eli Lilly's arthritis drug, baricitinib](#), for the treatment of Covid-19 patients. However, [the WHO has said it does not recommend remdesivir for patients hospitalised with Covid-19](#) and that there is no evidence to show that the drug improves survival or reduces the need for ventilation.

Lockdown Exit

California orders nightly COVID-19 curfew on gatherings, non-essential activities

California's governor on Thursday ordered a curfew placed on all indoor social gatherings and non-essential activities outside the home across most of the state in a major escalation of measures to curb an alarming surge in coronavirus infections. The limited stay-at-home restrictions will go into effect from 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. each day, starting Saturday night and ending the morning of Dec. 21, covering 41 counties representing over 94% of the state's population, Governor Gavin Newsom said. "The virus is spreading at a pace we haven't seen since the start of this pandemic, and the next several days and weeks will be critical to stop the surge," Newsom said in a statement announcing the measure.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-usa/u-s-covid-19-hospitalizations-rise-by-nearly-50-in-two-weeks-ushering-in-new-shutdowns-idUKKBN27Z2GF?il=0>

The year of the pandemic: a view from South Korea

In the global coronavirus pandemic, South Koreans should be dropping like flies. But they aren't. Perched on the edge of China, the country is small, about the size of Indiana, though given that 70% of the land is uninhabitable, the realistic comparison is West Virginia. Packed into that space are 51 million people, the populations of Texas and Florida combined. The country should have been decimated after the first infected passenger off the three-hour flight from Wuhan, China, sneezed.

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/11/19/the-year-of-the-pandemic-a-view-from-south-korea/>

China expands its arsenal in COVID battle

Stringent monitoring of cold-chain food imports and the fine-tuning of lockdown and testing strategies are China's latest weapons in the battle against COVID-19 as the country braces for possible outbreaks this winter. While local transmission of the novel coronavirus has been under control for months, public health experts in China have highlighted the risk of new outbreaks linked to the virus hitching a ride on imports of frozen foods. As domestic life and production return to normal, experts have hailed local governments' efforts to replace blanket lockdowns and citywide tests with more targeted and economical measures to reduce disruption to socioeconomic development.

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202011/19/WS5fb5ab67a31024ad0ba9502e.html>

Graduate international students locked out of New Zealand plead for exemption

Recent graduates who spent thousands on their education in New Zealand are questioning why they were left out of a border exemption to get them back to their homes and jobs. After months of being locked out of New Zealand, many say they feel abandoned by the government after years of living here and paying taxes. Protests have been held around India, including 150 people at a demonstration in Delhi this week bearing banners of #Migrantlivesmatter, and another is planned for Monday. In September, the government announced that immigrants holding work-to-residence, essential skills or entrepreneur visas would be allowed to travel to New Zealand.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/431017/graduate-international-students-locked-out-of-new-zealand-plead-for-exemption>

Covid could change our tolerance of flu deaths

Another, more lethal seasonal risk is the flu — in a bad year, as many as 25,000 people die from the virus in England alone. Yet this year, thanks in large part to lockdowns, flu cases are way down across the world and are likely to stay that way. That's because the habits we've adopted to limit the spread of coronavirus — handwashing, mask-wearing and distancing — are effective for other respiratory pathogens too. "The measures we're taking are enough to essentially eliminate flu," says David Spiegelhalter, chair of the Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication at Cambridge University. A study by the US Centers for Disease Control has found huge falls in flu activity both in the southern hemisphere's winter and in the US summer season.

<https://www.ft.com/content/3ba60e3d-43e3-4419-977c-0e255c7b0049>

Europe is seeing one Covid death every 17 seconds, with 29,000 fatalities last week - an 18 per cent rise - WHO warns

Europe is once again the global epicentre for the coronavirus, the WHO warned WHO's European director said Europe accounts for 28 percent of global cases Hans Kluge said lockdowns were 'avoidable' and should be seen as a 'last resort' He said primary schools should stay open as they are in UK, France and Germany Glimmer of hope seen as cases fell this week for the first time in three months Dr Kluge emphasised the importance of mask wearing and social distancing

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8965619/WHOs-Europe-chief-says-mask-use-avoid-lockdowns.html>

Sweden finds coronavirus in mink industry workers

Sweden's health agency said on Thursday a number of people who work in the mink industry had tested positive for the coronavirus. Authorities are analysing virus from the infected people and from

infected minks to see if there is a link between the strains, the health agency said in a statement. It did not specify how many people had tested positive. Neighbouring Denmark earlier on Thursday said a new, mutated strain of the coronavirus stemming from mink farms in the country was “most likely” extinct.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sweden-minks/sweden-finds-coronavirus-in-mink-industry-worker-s-idUKKBN27Z1UP>

UK will set up dozens of mass vaccination centres as soon as vaccines are available - the Telegraph

Britain will set up dozens of mass vaccination centres to immunize people against coronavirus as soon as vaccines are available, the Telegraph reported. One of the first locations for administering Pfizer Inc vaccine from mid-December has been confirmed as being in Derby, the newspaper added.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-vaccine-idUKKBN27Z38E>

Coronavirus cases in Africa cross two million mark: AU tally

Total coronavirus cases in Africa have surpassed the two million mark despite a slow addition of reported infections compared with other regions around the world, the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said. With the African Union’s health body reporting 2,013,388 cases on Thursday, the continent now represents less than 4 percent of the world’s total cases, which many experts believe to be an undercount. They believe many COVID-19 infections and related deaths in Africa are likely being missed as testing rates in the continent of about 1.3 billion people are among the lowest in the world, and many deaths of all types go unrecorded. Africa has reported less than 48,000 coronavirus deaths so far.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/19/coronavirus-cases-in-africa-surpass-2-million-reuters-tally>

Exit Strategies

To beat Covid-19 will take far more than a new vaccine

We are entering a new phase of Covid-19 as interim data, first from Pfizer and BioNTech, and then Moderna, show promise of a safe and effective vaccine. More candidates are expected to follow — Sanofi has two vaccines in trials. One, a collaboration with GSK, is based on our flu vaccine and data from phase 1 and 2 studies will come shortly. The second is a messenger RNA vaccine similar in approach to Pfizer and Moderna. But, having a vaccine is only one facet in the complicated war to contain the virus. Distribution is perhaps the biggest hurdle. Vaccines are not interchangeable and ensuring that individuals get two doses, if required, of the same vaccine is critical. There may also be issues with safeguarding potency. Moderna’s and Pfizer’s vaccines need to be stored at minus 20C and about minus 70C respectively, and used within five or 30 days of being refrigerated. Pharmaceutical companies are rushing to develop transportable cold storage containers and logistics companies are building freezer farms. Mass vaccination clinics, such as the UK’s repurposed Nightingale hospitals, could help distribution in cities.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a984870c-b372-46ba-bb1a-cbd3fd3ccec9>

Asylum seekers in the EU must be given access to new Covid-19 vaccines, UN says

Asylum-seekers in the EU should have equal access to promising Covid-19 vaccines, the head of the UN's migration agency told the European Parliament on Thursday. 'It is for the sake of their safety and well-being of the entire host communities' in the countries taking them in, said Antonio Vitorino, director general of the International Organisation for Migration. He was one of several high-profile speakers dialling in for a virtual conference organised by the European Parliament and Germany on migration and asylum in Europe

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/eu-asylum-seekers-must-be-given-access-to-covid-19-vaccines-un-says/ar-B1baKhd>

Robin Swann aims to push for an 'ambitious' mass Covid-19 testing programme

The Health Minister has said Northern Ireland should push for a mass testing system as seen in Liverpool, but warned such an ambitious plan would take time. Speaking at a Stormont health briefing on Wednesday, Robin Swann said he had already raised the issue with Health Secretary Matt Hancock. Mr Swann added that rapid progress on a Covid-19 vaccine could bring hope by the spring, but further restrictions before Christmas would still be inevitable. It comes as the Department of Health confirmed a further 11 Covid-19 related deaths in Northern Ireland, bringing the total to 889.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus/robin-swann-aims-to-push-for-an-ambitious-mass-covid-19-testing-programme-39764086.html>

Normal Christmas would 'throw fuel on the fire' and trigger spike in Covid-19 cases, says scientist

Professor Andrew Hayward, from UCL, said there was a 'substantial' risk in relaxing rules over Christmas. He said it would risk sacrificing the gains made through lockdown just ahead of a vaccine being administered. Comes after Oxford vaccine was found to deliver a 'robust' immune response in phase two trials of the jab Prime Minister said Wednesday it was his 'desire to try and allow loved ones to have Christmas together.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8965139/Normal-Christmas-throw-fuel-fire-trigger-spike-Covid-19-cases-says-scientist.html>

Covid-19: St Andrews University to roll out free tests for students before Christmas

St Andrews University students will be offered free Covid-19 tests before they head home to visit family at Christmas. People without symptoms, will be able to get a test whether or not they plan to leave St Andrews over the festive break. They will be voluntary but students have been strongly advised to take them as young people are more likely to have no symptoms, even if they have the virus. The university plans to open a testing centre in its own sports centre by November 30. Students will be offered a lateral-flow test, which involves taking a swab from the mouth and nose in a process that takes just a few minutes. Results will be received within 24 hours.

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/fife/1744441/covid-19-st-andrews-university-to-roll-out-free-tests-for-students-before-christmas/>

Bill Gates worries about dysfunctional Covid-19 vaccine distribution

Bill Gates fears a "dysfunctional" approach to distributing Covid-19 vaccines, he said Tuesday, despite an inspiring effort by biopharmaceutical companies to produce promising candidates with high measures of protection. Developing apparently effective vaccines so quickly — especially exploiting a novel approach that uses mRNA to instruct cells to make viral proteins and trigger an immune response — has been "fantastic," Gates said in conversation with Rick Berke, STAT's co-founder and executive editor, during the 2020 STAT Summit. Despite worries about the speed with which companies moved to get there under perceived political pressure, he said "no corners were cut" by companies backed by Operation Warp Speed or by Pfizer, which developed a vaccine with a German partner without U.S. government funding.

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/11/17/bill-gates-worries-about-a-dysfunctional-approach-to-covid-19-vaccine-distribution/>

Finland and Norway Avoid Covid-19 Lockdowns but Keep the Virus At Bay

While the U.S. and Europe struggle to contain an autumn surge in coronavirus infections, two small nations are bucking the trend, keeping cases under control without stringent restrictions. In the north of Europe, Finland and Norway boast the West's lowest rates of mortality linked to Covid-19 and a low incidence of coronavirus infections even though they have kept their economies and societies largely open while lockdowns returned to the continent. While Sweden has captured global

attention with its refusal to adopt mandatory restrictions—a policy now being reversed in the face of spiraling infections and deaths—its two northern neighbors now stand out as the closest Western equivalents to Asian nations that have managed to avoid the worst of the pandemic.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/finland-and-norway-avoid-covid-19-lockdowns-but-keep-the-virus-at-bay-11605704407>

Christmas Covid relaxation to be the same UK-wide

The Scottish Government is working with other UK administrations on a "four nations approach" to easing restrictions to allow families to meet up over the festive period, the First Minister told MSPs.

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/politics/christmas-covid-relaxation-be-same-uk-wide-3041269>

UK could face new 'month-long lockdown' if rules are eased over Christmas

A new 25-day lockdown may be needed if the UK enjoys a five-day break from coronavirus rules over Christmas, according to a leading coronavirus expert. Reports suggest households might be allowed to mix indoors for a five-day period from Christmas Eve, but SAGE experts have said each day's freedom might require five days of tougher measures to make up for it, Birmingham Mail reports. A five-day easing could mean a potential 25-day period of tighter measures into January if the Government follows advice from Sage. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has maintained the current lockdown will end on December 2, with his promise re-iterated by ministers like Alok Sharma.

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/uk-could-face-new-month-4716149>

Coronavirus: Christmas socialising poses 'substantial risks' - scientist

Mixing between households at Christmas could pose "substantial risks", particularly for older people more vulnerable to coronavirus, a scientist advising the government has warned. Prof Andrew Hayward said there would be a "cost" to families getting together. It comes as No 10 said proposals to ease restrictions over Christmas will be set out next week. Scientists have suggested that for every day measures are eased, five days of tighter rules would be needed. Prof Hayward, a professor of infectious disease epidemiology at University College London, said mixing at Christmas does pose "substantial risks" particularly where generations "with high incidence of infection" socialise with older people "who currently have much lower levels of infection and are at most risk of dying" if they catch Covid-19.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54998436>

Which parts of UK could be under highest restriction after lockdown

England's lockdown is set to end on December 2 and will be replaced by a tiered system of restrictions, according to the Government. And the entire UK is working on a joint approach to rules for Christmas - with speculation bans on indoor gathering and limits on the number of people who meet could be lifted. SAGE experts say for every day the rules are eased the country would need five days of 'lockdown' to bring the virus back under control. The latest data shows which parts of the country are set to be experiencing high rates of infection on and after December 2.

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/parts-uk-could-under-highest-19306086>

Optimism in Germany over Covid-19 trends

US president-elect Joe Biden has said he will not order a nationwide shutdown to fight the Covid-19 pandemic despite a surge in cases. States and cities across the United States have been imposing their own restrictions, including home confinement, the closure of indoor dining and a limit on gatherings as infections soar across the country. "There's no circumstance which I can see that would require total national shutdown. I think that would be counterproductive," Mr Biden, who takes office on 20 January, told reporters.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2020/1119/1179101-coronavirus-global/>

'A massive headache': European leaders put off Covid Christmas decisions

Europe's governments are putting off painful decisions about Christmas and new year celebrations,

with few yet keen to say exactly what will be allowed and many already warning there could be much that will not. "It's a massive headache," a French government minister told Le Monde, noting the "impossible choice" between a "socially untenable" ban on family get-togethers and the medical imperative of not further fuelling the spread of coronavirus. In a speech in late October announcing France's second lockdown, President Emmanuel Macron said that if the pandemic was brought under control, the government would "see nearer the time whether we can hope to celebrate the festive season en famille". As with most countries, that time has plainly not yet come.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/19/european-leaders-put-off-covid-christmas-decisions>

French PM says lockdown to be eased gradually, after 'mistakes' of first wave

France's second lockdown is to be eased progressively, according to Prime Minister Jean Castex, who says the first Covid-19 confinement measures were lifted too quickly in May. In order to avoid more "stop and go" measures, the next phase in getting France back in business will involve continued restrictions and closures in some sectors. President Emmanuel Macron is due to address the nation next week about easing the lockdown. The format and date of the presidential address have yet to be decided. While several statistical indicators suggest grounds for optimism, with even Health Minister Olivier Véran saying the peak of the second wave of infections has passed, many government members have stressed that the second lockdown will have to be brought to an end gradually.

<https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20201119-french-pm-says-lockdown-to-be-eased-gradually-after-mistakes-of-first-wave-christmas-curfew-bars-restaurants-remain-closed>

Promise of season's greetings as France lifts lockdown on Christmas trees

Florists in France have been given the green light to sell Christmas trees from Friday, in what many hope is a sign that the government is set to ease the Covid-19 lockdown and allow family celebrations to go ahead. Agriculture Minister Julien Denormandie said the sale of sapins de Noël was to be limited to outdoors, to allow social distancing. "Many places where Christmas trees can be sold are already open, such as supermarkets and DIY stores," he said. "But for florists, outside sales can also be organised." With the holiday season just around the corner, shop owners are keen on returning to business as usual.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/promise-season-greetings-france-lifts-150222747.html>

How China crushed coronavirus

Hong Wei returned to his hometown of Luoyang in Henan province for the Spring Festival in early February. It took a few days for the gateway of his residential compound to be cordoned off, signalling that only residents should enter. For Hong, this was just the first sign of the mass mobilisation of people that has characterised China's remarkably successful response to the coronavirus pandemic. Hong's uncle had already stocked up on all the ingredients to serve roast meat, braised fish and soup at his restaurant ready for what is usually his most lucrative period, but once state media began telling people to stay at home, he voluntarily closed his restaurant

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/china-crushed-coronavirus-pandemic>

Will lockdown end on 2nd December? Latest news on if England's Covid restrictions could be extended

England is now entering the third week of what Boris Johnson has said will be a four-week lockdown. Pubs, restaurants and non-essential shops have been closed since Thursday 5 November. If everything goes as planned, the country will open back up again on Wednesday 2 December. But Government ministers have indicated it is too early to say whether lockdown might be extended.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/will-lockdown-end-2nd-december-england-covid-restrictions-rules-when-extended-764874>

Will Scotland be in lockdown for Christmas? What Nicola Sturgeon has said after tier 4

Covid rules introduced

The Scottish Government is in discussions with the rest of the UK administrations in the hope of creating a four-nations consensus on the issue. Nicola Sturgeon has moved large parts of west central Scotland, including Glasgow, into its toughest tier of coronavirus restrictions. Under level four restrictions, pubs, restaurants and non-essential shops are forced to close.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/scotland/scotland-lockdown-christmas-covid-restrictions-tier-4-rules-nicola-sturgeon-latest-news-765161>

England will need five days of lockdown for each day relaxed at Christmas - adviser

England will need five extra days of lockdown measures to stop COVID-19 infections spreading for each day they are relaxed over the Christmas period to allow people to see their families, a senior government health adviser has warned. Susan Hopkins, deputy director of the national infections service at Public Health England, told reporters on Wednesday that the advice from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies would mean two days of tighter restrictions. However, Public Health England, the government agency responsible for responding to public health emergencies, later clarified that Hopkins had misspoken, and that “for every one day of relaxation, five days of tighter restrictions would potentially be needed.” Prime Minister Boris Johnson has vowed to ease lockdown restrictions on Dec 2 after a month-long lockdown imposed to stop a second wave of infections threatening the health service. He said two weeks ago that he hoped that Christmas could be as normal as possible.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-christmas-idUKKBN27Y2NT>

Partisan Exits

COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories Still Rampant In Some US Hot Spots

Signs posted at the entrance to the grocery store in northwest Montana told customers to wear a mask. Public health officials in Flathead County urged the same. Coronavirus infection rates here are among the highest in the state. Infection rates in the state are among the highest in the United States. And still, Craig Mann walked out of the grocery store, past the signs and toward his truck, maskless and resolute. The pandemic that everyone's talking about?

<https://www.npr.org/2020/11/19/936248527/covid-19-denial-still-rampant-in-some-virus-hotspots>

Northern authorities will 'not hesitate' to block anti-vax Covid-19 conspiracy theorists who could 'cost lives'

Councils across the north-east and Highlands have promised to police their public-facing online channels to avoid myths being spread and “threatening public safety”. The Grampian and Highland health boards have also urged responsible social media use during the pandemic, warning their comments sections will be monitored. Glasgow City Council hit out at the so-called ‘anti-vaxxers’ on Tuesday, promising to block those making “false and dangerous claims” which could “cost lives”. The P&J has sought assurances from northern authorities that similarly robust action would be taken to ensure key public health information can be distilled from the sea of coronavirus fearmongering online.

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/scotland/2657239/northern-authorities-will-not-hesitate-to-block-anti-vax-covid-19-conspiracy-theorists-who-could-cost-lives/>

COVID-19: Anti-lockdown militias on streets of Michigan as virus surges across US

On the first day of a new lockdown in Michigan hundreds of people ventured out to one of the only places still open for business - a COVID-19 testing site. People waited for up to four hours to be swabbed. Not all had symptoms, but all shared a weariness at spiralling infections and new lockdown measures in their state. There's a sense that America has been distracted. People, politicians and media alike all focused on a gripping national election. But while the world looked away the virus has surged.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-anti-lockdown-militias-on-the-streets-of-michigan-as-us-coronavirus-deaths-pass-250-000-12136008>

Was the scientific advice for lockdown flawed?

As coronavirus began spreading around the world at the start of 2020, in the UK there were weaknesses in the expert analysis of its likely impact, according to a BBC documentary. "There is going to be a lot of criticism of the scientists - because it's easy to have hindsight. "It's easy to say if only we'd done this a week earlier we'd have saved 5,000, 10,000, 15,000, 20,000 lives. But if you look at where we were in February, would you really have made these decisions any differently? I don't think you would have." Those are the words of Prof Calum Semple of the University of Liverpool, one of the key scientists advising the government on Covid-19.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54976192>

Brussels warns Hungary on Russian Covid jab

Brussels has warned that Hungary would risk undermining public confidence in coronavirus vaccinations should it bypass the EU medicines regulator and roll out the Russian jab Budapest plans to trial. The European Commission said on Thursday mass Covid-19 inoculation would become "much harder" if citizens began to question a vaccine because it had not been approved as safe and effective. The comments highlight tensions over Budapest's decision to run clinical trials next month of the Russian Sputnik V drug, which has not yet been assessed by the European Medicines Agency. While the Brussels statement did not mention Hungary or Sputnik V by name, no other EU member state has announced plans for such a radical move outside the bloc-wide vaccination programme overseen by the commission.

<https://www.ft.com/content/ba88cf25-b104-44fe-887d-7714748dc712>

Continued Lockdown

France far from exiting partial lockdown, says government

France is unlikely to lift a partial coronavirus lockdown any time soon, a government spokesman said on Wednesday, even if some restrictions may be relaxed before Christmas. President Emmanuel Macron and top ministers discussed the crisis, including whether to ease some restrictions from December 1 "if conditions allow it", spokesman Gabriel Attal said. But Attal insisted: "We're not at all near ending the lockdown, we're still far from it even."

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-11-france-partial-virus-lockdown.html>

In Autumn in Paris, struggling shops get creative to survive

Toy store owner Marie Boudier is grateful November has been unusually mild in Paris this year - she's trying to survive France's second coronavirus lockdown by selling Lego sets and colouring books through her open front door. From behind a trestle table, Boudier has taken to handing over her orders without letting customers in, a makeshift measure replicated up and down her street and across France amid a minefield of dos and don'ts for stores deemed non-essential. "It's not exactly clear to what extent we're doing it right," Boudier said, breaking away to show one shopper little bags of marbles.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-paris-street/in-autumn-in-paris-struggling-shops-get-creative-to-survive-idUKKBN27Z1W0>

French finance minister calls for postponement of Black Friday amid lockdown

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire on Wednesday called on supermarkets and on-line retailers to postpone the "Black Friday" sales shopping day due to take place on Nov. 27 as shops selling non-essential goods remained closed during lockdown.

<https://www.france24.com/en/france/20201119-french-finance-minister-calls-for-postponement-of-black-friday-amid-lockdown>

German health official expects number of COVID-19 infections to fall

The number of new COVID-19 infections in Germany remains far too high but there are signs that the country's "lockdown lite" is working and could reduce numbers soon, health officials said on Thursday. "It is a fact that the measures are working," Lothar Wieler, head of the Robert Koch Institute for infectious diseases (RKI), told a news conference, referring to Germany's partial lockdown in place since Nov. 2. Bars and restaurants are closed, while schools and shops remain open. Private gatherings are limited to a maximum of 10 people from two households. After an exponential increase in the number of infections over the past weeks, Wieler said a plateau had now been reached.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany-trend/german-health-official-expects-number-of-covid-19-infections-to-fall-idUKKBN27Z13F>

Greece tightens lockdown in northern Greece as cases climb

Greece will shut one border crossing with Albania and conduct rapid COVID-19 tests on all visitors at its land borders, its government spokesman said on Thursday, as cases in northern Greece continue to rise unabated. Greece has seen a rapid rise in coronavirus cases in recent weeks which forced it to impose a nationwide lockdown, its second this year. Its northern regions, including the city of Thessaloniki, have been hit the most. Visitors entering from land borders are already required to present a negative PCR COVID-19 test conducted at least 72 hours prior travel. Upon arrival, they will be re-tested by Greek authorities. The latest measures will come into effect on Friday morning at 0400 GMT, government spokesman Stelios Petsas said, urging residents to also implement restrictions on movement.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-greece-measures/greece-tightens-lockdown-in-northern-greece-as-cases-climb-idUKKBN27Z1Q9>

Scientific Viewpoint

Oxford COVID-19 trial will look at interim Phase III data after 53 infections: investigator

Oxford University will start an initial analysis of data from its late-stage trial of the experimental COVID-19 vaccine it is developing with AstraZeneca after 53 infections among its volunteers, the study's chief investigator said on Thursday. The Oxford Vaccine Group's director, Andrew Pollard, said in a media briefing there were "lots of cases" of infections in its Phase III trial in Britain, Brazil and South Africa. The first two sets of interim data from vaccine trials from Pfizer and BioNTech last week and Moderna on Monday were released after more than 90 infections among volunteers. Pfizer had planned to publish initial data after about 60 infections, but it exceeded its target after the big jump in infections recently in the United States.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-oxford-vaccine-idUSKBN27Z1EC>

A gym trainer exposed 50 athletes to Covid-19, but no one else got sick because of a ventilation redesign

A Virginia gym owner thought she had a nightmare scenario on her hands when she learned that 50 athletes were potentially exposed to Covid-19 particles by one of the gym's coaches. But not a single member ended up contracting the virus, thanks to the extra safety precautions and ventilation measures she put in place. Velvet Minnick, 44, is the owner and head coach at 460 Fitness in Blacksburg, Virginia. Like many gym owners across the nation, she was forced to shut down the facility in March due to coronavirus. They rented out equipment and held Zoom classes, but it wasn't long before members were burned out. As the state entered Phase 2 of reopening in June, Minnick was allowed to have athletes back inside her facility. She knew one member, however, who could help her get people back while keeping them safe.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/19/us/gym-ventilation-covid-trnd/index.html>

The known unknowns of T cell immunity to COVID-19

The broad clinical spectrum of COVID-19 indicates widespread intraindividual differences in the host immune defense against severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The underlying cause of disease heterogeneity is probably multifactorial. However, a rapid early host response is likely critical to generate control of SARS-CoV-2 viremia before spread to the lower respiratory tract and onset of damaging hyperinflammation. In this regard, the literature is full of examples where functional T cell responses can provide early control of acute viral infections, including SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV (1, 2). Although multiple studies have indicated that T cells play a role in the early immune response to SARS-CoV-2 and can generate a functional memory pool, there are still multiple unanswered questions in the field (Box 1). Here, we summarize and speculate on a specific set of questions related to T cell immunity against respiratory viral infections, with a focus on COVID-19 severity, immunity, long-term consequences, and vaccination

<https://immunology.sciencemag.org/content/5/53/eabe8063>

Covid-19 mink variants discovered in humans in seven countries

Seven countries are now reporting mink-related Sars-CoV-2 mutations in humans, according to new scientific analysis. The mutations are identified as Covid-19 mink variants as they have repeatedly been found in mink and now in humans as well. Uncertainty around the implications of the discovery of a Covid-19 mink variant in humans led Denmark, the world's largest mink fur producer, to launch a nationwide cull earlier this month. The cull was sparked by research from Denmark's public health body, the Statens Serum Institut (SSI), which showed that a mink variant called C5 was harder for antibodies to neutralise and posed a potential threat to vaccine efficacy.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/nov/18/covid-19-mink-variants-discovered-in-humans-in-seven-countries>

Covid: Oxford vaccine shows 'encouraging' immune response in older adults

The Oxford coronavirus vaccine shows a strong immune response in adults in their 60s and 70s, raising hopes that it can protect age groups most at risk from the virus. Researchers say the Lancet phase two findings, based on 560 healthy adult volunteers, are "encouraging". They are also testing whether the vaccine stops people developing Covid-19 in larger, phase three trials. Early results from this crucial stage are expected in the coming weeks. Three vaccines - Pfizer-BioNTech, Sputnik and Moderna - have already reported good preliminary data from phase three trials, with one suggesting 94% of over-65s could be protected from Covid-19.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54993652>

Anti-COVID-19 nasal spray 'ready for use in humans'

A nasal spray that can provide effective protection against the COVID-19 virus has been developed by researchers at the University of Birmingham, using materials already cleared for use in humans. A team in the University's Healthcare Technologies Institute formulated the spray using compounds already widely approved by regulatory bodies in the UK, Europe and the US. The materials are already widely used in medical devices, medicines and even food products.

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2020/11/anti-covid-19-nasal-spray-'ready-for-use-in-humans'.aspx>

Arthritis drug effective in treating sickest COVID-19 patients | Imperial News

Critically ill COVID-19 patients treated with an arthritis drug are significantly more likely to have improved outcomes, a study has found. The early findings, which are yet to be published, come from the REMAP-CAP trial, led by Imperial College London and the Intensive Care National Audit & Research Centre (ICNARC) in the UK and Utrecht University in Europe. The trial evaluates the effect of treatments on a combination of survival and length of time patients need support in an intensive care unit (ICU).

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/209033/arthritis-drug-effective-treating-sickest-covid-19>

Lockdowns could be avoided if 95% of people wore masks, says WHO

Lockdowns could be avoided if everyone followed health measures such as wearing masks, the World Health Organization's top Europe official said at a Thursday news briefing. WHO Europe's Regional Director Hans Kluge stressed that lockdowns should be a "last resort," and urged the public to follow guidance to help to prevent deaths. He said that if 95% of people wore masks, instead of the current 60%, "lockdowns would not be needed" -- although he added that mask use was not a "panacea" and needed to be combined with other measures. "If we all do our share, lockdowns are avoidable," Kluge said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/19/europe/coronavirus-europe-lockdown-tiers-intl/index.html>

Coronavirus vaccines: China's Sinopharm claims it has given vaccine to nearly one million people

Sinopharm's chairman said there were no reports of 'serious adverse reactions' He said doses had been given out through China's emergency-use programme He boasted his firm 'is leading the world in all aspects' of coronavirus vaccines Comes after jabs from Pfizer and Moderna were revealed to be 95% effective Oxford University's jab is also found to be 'safe' in people of all ages by a study

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8965793/amp/Coronavirus-vaccines-Chinas-Sinopharm-claims-given-vaccine-nearly-one-million-people.html>

Social connections with COVID-19-affected areas increase compliance with mobility restrictions

We study the role of social connections in compliance of U.S. households with mobility restrictions imposed in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, using aggregated and anonymized Facebook data on social connections and mobile phone data for measuring social distancing at the county level. Relative to the average restriction efficacy, a county with one-SD more social connections with China and Italy—the first countries with major COVID-19 outbreaks—has a nearly 50% higher compliance with mobility restrictions. By contrast, social connections of counties with less-educated populations, a higher Trump vote share, and a higher fraction of climate change deniers show decreased compliance with mobility restrictions. Our analysis suggests that social connections are conduits of information about the pandemic and an economically important factor affecting compliance with, and impact of, mobility restrictions.

<https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/6/47/eabc3054>

SA Covid lockdown: experts doubt state suffering 'particularly sneaky strain'

South Australian premier Steven Marshall has said part of the reason for the state's sudden and strict six-day lockdown is that the state is facing "particularly sneaky strain" of Covid-19 [SARS-CoV-2]. "[It's a] highly contagious strain ... and if we don't get on top of that very, very quickly it will get away from us and that will be disastrous for us in South Australia," he said on Thursday. "We have a particularly difficult strain of the disease, which is showing no symptoms for people who become infected. The other thing that we know is that the incubation period for this particular strain is very short, and it can be down to 24 hours."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/19/sa-covid-lockdown-experts-doubt-state-suffering-particularly-sneaky-strain>

Larry Brilliant Says We'll Beat Covid—After We Go Through Hell

DICKENSIAN. That's a term that rolled off epidemiologist Larry Brilliant's tongue when I spoke to him in one more marathon interview this past weekend. He was not referring to the horrific descriptions of human suffering in the celebrated 19th century novelist's works—though as we speak, the near-term picture he paints of our pandemic crisis does have images, of bodies stacked in refrigeration vans, that are, well, Dickensian. Instead, he is referencing the opening line of *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ..."

<https://www.wired.com/story/larry-brilliant-says-we-will-beat-covid-after-we-go-through-hell/>

Arthritis drug offers hope for severely ill Covid patients

Scientists have found that a drug used to fight rheumatoid arthritis leads to significantly improved outcomes for severely ill Covid-19 patients, the latest breakthrough in the search for a potential treatment. Tocilizumab, an immunosuppressant drug, was found to be so effective in randomised controlled clinical trials involving 303 patients, that the researchers have been told to stop recruiting people to the “no treatment group”. It is the first immune-modulating drug found to have an effect on outcomes of hospitalised Covid-19 patients, adding to positive results from the cheap and plentiful steroid dexamethasone, and the antiviral drug remdesivir.

<https://www.ft.com/content/4cd142d2-2922-42ac-bcd7-593a1d730a66>

Oxford Covid vaccine trial confirms encouraging results for the elderly

The coronavirus vaccine under development by Oxford university and AstraZeneca has elicited a strong immune response and been shown to be safe in older adults, a group at disproportionate risk of developing severe Covid-19. In phase 2 trial results published in The Lancet, researchers said the vaccine had fewer adverse effects in older people than in younger adults, and that it produced a similar immune response in both groups. The Financial Times first reported on the promising data last month. Testing of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is at an earlier stage than work on vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech, which trials suggest could protect about 95 per cent of people from infection.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7ce02375-b66e-4e4d-a5d5-3084f1e83831>

WHO advises against Gilead's remdesivir for all hospitalised COVID-19 patients

Gilead’s drug remdesivir is not recommended for patients hospitalised with COVID-19, regardless of how ill they are, as there is no evidence it improves survival or reduces the need for ventilation, a World Health Organization panel said on Friday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-remdesivir-who-idUSKBN28000Q>

Eli Lilly drug gets FDA nod for emergency use with remdesivir to treat COVID-19

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Thursday approved the emergency use of Eli Lilly and Co’s arthritis drug, baricitinib, in combination with Gilead Sciences Inc’s remdesivir, to treat COVID-19 patients. Baricitinib, sold under the brand name of Olumiant, is an FDA-approved oral medication to treat moderately-to-severely active rheumatoid arthritis. The approval was based on a review of the data from a clinical trial of hospitalized COVID-19 patients sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-eli-lilly-idUKKBN27Z35H>

More people are getting COVID-19 twice, suggesting immunity wanes quickly in some

In late June, Sanne de Jong developed nausea, shortness of breath, sore muscles, and a runny nose. At first, she thought it might be lingering effects from her COVID-19 infection in the spring. De Jong, 22, had tested positive on 17 April and suffered mild symptoms for about 2 weeks. She tested negative on 2 May—just in time to say farewell to her dying grandmother—and returned to work as a nursing intern in a hospital in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. But when her symptoms re-emerged, her doctor suggested she get tested again. “A reinfection this soon would be peculiar, but not impossible,” she told De Jong, who by then had again lost her sense of smell and had abdominal pains and diarrhea.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/11/more-people-are-getting-covid-19-twice-suggesting-immunity-wanes-quickly-some>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Why Congress should be much more worried about Covid-19 than they are

Over the last 48 hours, at least four House members and a US senator have tested positive for the

coronavirus, seemingly part of the broader surge in cases across the country. The overall reaction within the halls of Congress has been relatively ho-hum -- particularly among Republican lawmakers. This is a major mistake, especially when you consider what we know about the virus' transmissibility and who it threatens the most. The situation, is ripe -- VERY ripe -- for an outbreak. (And I didn't even mention that lots of members are flying to and from their home states or home districts, further raising the Covid-19 risk.) And yet, the level of concern among members doesn't seem to match the threat.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/19/politics/grassley-covid-19-congress/index.html>

US sees highest Covid-19 death toll in months as deaths top a quarter of a million

The United States saw the highest Covid-19 daily death toll in more than six months Tuesday, with at least 1,707 fatalities, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. The coronavirus is now killing at least one American every minute of the day, bringing the country to another horrific milestone on Wednesday: At least 250,029 people in the country have died of Covid-19 since the first death on February 29 in Washington state. And it's only going to get worse, said Dr. Jonathan Reiner, a professor at George Washington University School of Medicine. "The horrible death count that we saw yesterday in the United States ... reflects the number of people who were being infected three weeks ago -- two to three weeks ago, because that's the lag," Reiner said

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/18/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

Mayo Clinic: 900 employees at top US hospital catch Covid-19 in two weeks

More than 900 employees at Mayo Clinic, a top research hospital that is based in Rochester, Minnesota, have contracted Covid-19 in the last two weeks. Dr Amy Williams, dean of clinical practice at the hospital, said that the vast majority of staff who were infected -- 93% -- were not infected at work. Most of those who were infected at work contracted the virus while eating without a mask during their breaks, Williams said. The hundreds of employees who have contracted the virus over the last two weeks make up over a third of all employees who were infected since the start of the pandemic. The hospital is experiencing a shortage of 1,000 employees at its headquarters in Rochester. "It shows you how easy it is to get Covid-19 in the midwest," Williams said

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/18/covid-19-mayo-clinic-hospital-employees-infected>

Covid-19 was third biggest killer in England in October, ONS

Coronavirus was the third biggest killer in England in October, official figures show -- but the total number of deaths from all causes for the month was no different to last year. An Office for National Statistics report found there were 43,265 fatalities recorded last month -- just eight more than in October 2019 -- of which 3,367 involved Covid-19 (7.8 per cent). The number-crunching body has previously said deaths were 'front-loaded' this year because so many elderly and vulnerable people fell victim to the disease in the spring. The 3,367 Covid deaths meant the disease was third leading cause of death in England last month, having climbed from 19th in September, when there were 690.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8965435/Covid-19-biggest-killer-England-October-ONS.html>

The Coronavirus Has Now Killed 250,000 People in the U.S.

The United States passed a grim milestone on Wednesday, hitting 250,000 coronavirus-related deaths, with the number expected to keep climbing steeply as infections surge nationwide. Experts predict that the country could soon be reporting 2,000 deaths a day or more, matching or exceeding the spring peak, and that 100,000 to 200,000 more Americans could die in the coming months. Just how bad it gets will depend on a variety of factors, including how well preventive measures are followed and when a vaccine is introduced. "It all depends on what we do and how we address this outbreak," said Jeffrey Shaman, a Columbia University professor of environmental health sciences

who has modeled the spread of the disease.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/18/world/covid-19-coronavirus>

The U.S. COVID-19 Outbreak Is Worse Than It's Ever Been. Why Aren't We Acting Like It?

Nothing about the current COVID-19 explosion should come as a surprise. As the virus spread throughout summer and fall, experts repeatedly warned winter would be worse. They cautioned that a cold-weather return to indoor socializing, particularly around the holidays, could turn a steady burn into a wildfire. So it has. The U.S. is now locked in a deadly cycle of setting, then shattering, records for new cases and hospitalizations. On Nov. 13, a staggering 177,224 people in the U.S. were diagnosed with COVID-19. As of Nov. 17, more than 70,000 coronavirus patients were hospitalized nationwide. And unlike in earlier waves, which were fairly regionalized, the virus was as of Nov. 17 spreading—and fast—in virtually every part of the U.S., according to Johns Hopkins University data.

<https://time.com/5913620/covid-third-wave/>

Stop talking about a 'national lockdown.' It won't happen, and it is a distraction.

A national lockdown is not going to happen in the United States. Every time it's brought up, it distracts attention from practical public health measures that can work to control covid-19. I understand that a "shutdown" or "lockdown" is a convenient shorthand to describe restrictions that states have recently put into place. This week, Washington state closed bars and restaurants for indoor dining and prohibited indoor social gatherings for people in different households. Michigan closed casinos and movie theaters and ended in-person classes for colleges and high schools. And as of Thursday, New York City's public schools are returning to all-remote instruction. But let's get our terminology right: These restrictions are not lockdowns. A lockdown is what the Chinese government imposed in February, forcing people to remain in their homes and preventing 780 million people from traveling city to city. A broader definition of lockdown could also include the stay-at-home orders most states instituted in March.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/11/18/national-covid-lockdown-us-wont-happen/>

Samoa leader appeals for calm after COVID case

The leader of the small Pacific nation of Samoa appealed for calm Thursday after the country reported its first positive test for the coronavirus, although a second test on the same patient returned a negative result. Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi addressed the nation live on television and radio, urging people to remain vigilant with their virus precautions. Samoa was among a dwindling handful of nations to have not reported a single case of the virus.

<https://apnews.com/article/samoa-coronavirus-pandemic-asia-new-zealand-cea464ea42e812b631e8f5d682a4ecff>

Ukraine faces 'severe' coronavirus winter but no new lockdown measures, minister says

Ukraine faces a "very severe" period of COVID-19 cases but will not tighten lockdown restrictions because measures taken last week should stabilise the situation, Health Minister Maksym Stepanov told Reuters. The government on Saturday introduced a lockdown at weekends, closing or restricting most businesses except essential services such as grocery shops, pharmacies, hospitals and transport. A member of President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's administration resigned over the decision, some mayors refused to comply with the government's order and some business owners held protests.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ukraine-minister/ukraine-faces-severe-coronavirus-winter-but-no-new-lockdown-measures-minister-says-idUSKBN27Y29D>

Coronavirus: London appears to be faring better during second wave

London was the worst-hit part of the UK during the first wave of coronavirus but the second time around it appears to be faring rather better. Data released this week by the Office for National Statistics showed 952 deaths registered in London in the week ending November 6, the same number as would be predicted based on the average for the past five years. It was the only one of

the nine regions of England used for official statistics not to register any excess deaths. By contrast, the 1,900 deaths registered in the northwest were 496 higher than average, a difference of 35 per cent. Wales's 832 deaths were 207 above normal, a 33 per cent difference. Experts told The Times it was too early to tell exactly why London was doing better, but one theory is that it now has some level of herd immunity.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/coronavirus-capital-gains-for-london-3blsnlkj>

New Lockdown

Lockdown 2.0 Shows Europe's Businesses Are Learning From the Pandemic

European small businesses that survived the first coronavirus lockdowns are getting creative to weather the second wave and the long-term fallout from the pandemic. Faced with the prospects of another recession and uncertainty over how long the crisis may last, firms are fighting to retain existing customers and hunting for new ones to stay afloat. Many have learned from the painful experience of the first lockdown to navigate some of the drastic long-term changes to work and consumer behavior brought about by the virus.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/global-economics/europe-s-small-businesses-have-a-plan-to-get-by>

Strict, six-day coronavirus lockdown begins in Australian state

One of Australia's strictest lockdowns began on Thursday with outdoor gatherings, weddings, funerals, takeaway food all coming to a standstill as authorities try to stifle the latest flare-up of the novel coronavirus. Images on social media showed empty streets in Adelaide, the capital of South Australia state, on day one of the state-wide lockdown. Residents flocked to supermarkets to load up with supplies until late on Wednesday. The state, home to about 1.8 million people, has recorded 23 cases from the latest cluster. There were no new infections to report on Thursday while 3,200 close contacts of the infected were in quarantine, the state's chief public health officer, Nicola Spurrier, said

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-australia/south-australia-virus-lockdown-begins-amid-hopes-to-curb-outbreak-idUKKBN27Z01A>

South Australia reports no new Covid cases and urges people to avoid lockdown loopholes

South Australia didn't report any additional cases of coronavirus as the state entered a strict six-day lockdown in an attempt to halt an Adelaide cluster that authorities worry could become a second wave. The so-called Parafield cluster remained at 22 on Thursday with three people in hospital in a stable condition. There are 17 additional suspected cases. The state's chief health officer, Prof Nicola Spurrier, revealed the news at a testy press conference where the police commissioner clashed with reporters who questioned whether security guards at quarantine hotels should be allowed to work multiple jobs.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/19/south-australia-reports-no-new-covid-cases-and-urges-people-to-avoid-lockdown-loopholes>

Health experts fear South Australia's extreme 'circuit breaker' lockdown may not work

A new 'dangerous' strain of coronavirus that sparked a sudden six-day hard lockdown in South Australia is so infectious it spread from a pizza box into the community. South Australians are in their first day of one of the world's harshest lockdowns, which aims to provide a 'circuit-breaker' to prevent the new strain spreading rapidly across the state. At the centre of the outbreak is a pizza shop in Adelaide's northern suburbs where an infected medi-hotel security guard had a second job making pizzas. Health experts are divided over whether the harsh lockdown enforced on South Australians will be enough to stop the new wave from spiralling out of control.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8963591/Health-experts-fear-South-Australias-extreme-circuit-breaker-lockdown-not-work.html>

SA police out on empty streets as state goes into first day of lockdown

The busy streets of Adelaide looked like a ghost town as South Australians woke up to their first day in lockdown. On Thursday morning, many chose to sleep in and remained indoors to keep cool as the mercury rose to 36C. Regular peak hour traffic heading into the CBD was nowhere to be seen. While the city was near-empty — with the exception of essential workers — SA Police officers hit the streets to hand out face masks to homeless people and essential workers that passed by. Police Commissioner Grant Stevens told ABC Radio additional patrols would be out over the next six days to ensure South Aussies were complying with the tough restrictions.

<https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/sa-police-out-on-empty-streets-as-state-goes-into-first-day-of-lockdown/news-story/f850612c6aafe663a79b93f5247485ad>

Top doc warns Western Australia is 'rolling dice' with lockdown

A top Western Australian doctor has warned that the state is "rolling the dice" as South Australia heads into lockdown. The state head of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Andrew Miller said Western Australians should be told to buy a mask in preparation for a coronavirus outbreak. "Just go and get one now, while you can, while there's time, while it's easy," he said. "If you never have to use it, that's a big bonus." Dr Miller said there was a gaping hole in the security of Western Australia's quarantine system, with many people such as security guards both working on the front line of the outbreak and having a second job. "It's just rolling the dice — we may as well be down as the casino putting it all on red," he said.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-ama-warns-western-australia-hotel-security-risk-buy-a-mask/d3c9407d-d7a8-46f8-84dc-a3f4afd09205>