

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 6th Apr 2021

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### Overnight News Roundup

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#### **Infectious disease expert warns of new Covid-19 wave infecting younger people**

Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, told the Huffington Post, ['I believe, in some ways, we're almost in a new pandemic. The only good news is that the current vaccines are effective against this particular variant, B117.'](#) Osterholm went on 'this variant is known to be more contagious and deadly and it is more likely to affect children, [an age group that throughout the pandemic has been largely unaffected by COVID-19.'](#)

Osterholm said he initially was in favour of students physically returning to classrooms, but the virus is changing, so he's changing too. 'There isn't a country in the world right now that has seen a big increase of this B117 that is not locking down. The USA is the exception. And so the bottom line message from all of these countries is, we could not control this virus until we did lockdown. We have to do a better job of helping the public understand that this is short term. All we're trying to do is get through this surge of cases that is going to occur over the next six to eight to 10 weeks because of the B117 variant.'

Former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr Scott Gottlieb attributed new COVID-19 outbreaks in some states to a rise in infections in younger people but said he does not think there will be a fourth wave of cases thanks to the rising number of vaccinations. 'What we're seeing is pockets of infection around the country, particularly in younger people who haven't been vaccinated and also in school-aged children.'

#### **Infectious disease expert warns of new Covid-19 wave infecting younger people**

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##### **Infectious Disease Expert Warns Of New COVID-19 Wave Infecting Younger People**

Infectious disease expert Michael Osterholm warned Sunday of a coming "fourth wave" of coronavirus infections in the U.S. due in part to a more contagious variant that is spreading and affecting younger people. "I believe that, in some ways, we're almost in a new pandemic," Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, told Fox News Sunday's Chris Wallace. "The only good news is that the current vaccines are effective against this particular variant, B117." In addition to this variant being known to be more contagious and deadly, Osterholm said it is more likely to affect children, an age group that throughout the pandemic had been largely unaffected by COVID-19.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/michael-osterholm-fourth-covid-wave-younger-people\\_n\\_6069c9b2c5b6c55118b49245?ri18n=true&ncid=engmodushpimg00000004](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/michael-osterholm-fourth-covid-wave-younger-people_n_6069c9b2c5b6c55118b49245?ri18n=true&ncid=engmodushpimg00000004)

#### **Ontario hastily reverses reopening as new variants usher in a third wave of Covid cases**

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Lisa Salamon-Switzman, an emergency room doctor in Toronto, had already worked through two deadly surges of the coronavirus pandemic when a new batch of patients recently began arriving that left her unsettled because of their low oxygen levels – and their age. "They're younger than what we saw earlier and they don't really understand how sick they are," she said of patients who

are in their 40s and 50s. “And now it’s become this huge, huge wave.” Doctors and epidemiologists in Canada’s most populous province have been warning for weeks that the loosening of restrictions, a lack of sick pay for essential workers –and the arrival of infectious new coronavirus variants would usher in a devastating third wave.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/04/canada-coronavirus-third-wave-variants-ontario>

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### **Ontario 'pulling the emergency brake' with third COVID-19 lockdown as cases rise, ICU beds fill**

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The Canadian province of Ontario will enter a limited lockdown for 28 days on Saturday, as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations rise and more dangerous virus variants take hold, the premier said on Thursday. The lockdown for Canada’s most populous province will fall short of enacting a stay-at-home order, which new government modeling released earlier on Thursday suggested would be necessary to avoid a doubling to some 6,000 new COVID-19 cases per day by late April. Ontario’s third lockdown since the pandemic began will shutter all indoor and outdoor dining, although retailers will remain open with capacity limits, Premier Doug Ford said, calling the measures “pulling the emergency brake” on the entire province.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-canada-idUSKBN2B05RM>

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-canada-idUSKBN2B05RM>

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### **After a year of waves and surges, the pandemic is entering a “tornado” phase in America.**

#### **The Threat That COVID-19 Poses Now**

After more than a year of pandemic, after months of an aggressive vaccination campaign, the United States should finally be better positioned to protect itself against the coronavirus. Nearly all of our long-term-care residents are vaccinated. Tens of millions of other people have been vaccinated, and tens of millions more have some level of immunity from previous infection. With more people protected, a new surge could behave differently, but early signals from the states with rising case numbers suggest that this will not universally be the case. Just look at Michigan, the leading edge of this new surge. Cases are going up quickly, and hospitalizations are moving in lockstep—just as they have in past surges. This is a bit of a surprise. Given that so many older, more vulnerable people have been vaccinated, one might expect a divergence in the number of cases and hospitalizations. For the immunized, this disease is essentially harmless. Washington State, for example, has reported just 100 cases and as few as eight hospitalizations among its 1.2 million fully vaccinated people. But for the vulnerable and unvaccinated, COVID-19 is as devastating as it has always been.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2021/04/fourth-surge-covid-19-unequal/618493/>

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### **The pandemic has accelerated the join-up of services and shown the practical benefits of doing so.**

### **Simon Stevens: Covid vaccine success shows our blueprint for the future**

Vaccinating 30 million people while dealing with a huge winter wave of coronavirus has, under the worst of circumstances, shown the NHS at its best. It is not just that the NHS was first in the world to begin delivering the Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca jabs, but it is the speed and precision of the rollout. With four million people at highest risk already having had their second jab, hospitals are now seeing a much quicker fall in coronavirus patients than after the first wave last spring. Vaccination is demonstrably working. We are determined to apply those lessons to the way the NHS supports targeted prevention and tackles other big killers such as cancer, heart attacks and strokes, as well as mental health.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/simon-stevens-nhs-coronavirus-vaccine-success-shows-our-blueprint-for-the-future-3kf6l20c0>

### **Israel's dilemma: Can the unvaccinated return to workplaces?**

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After spending much of the past year in lockdown, Tel Aviv makeup artist Artyom Kavnatsky was ready to get back to work. But when he showed up for a recent photo shoot, his employer turned him away. The reason? He had not been vaccinated against the coronavirus. "He didn't take me because I didn't get vaccinated," Kavnatsky said. "It's discrimination, and it's not all right." The breakneck pace of Israel's vaccination drive has made it one of the few countries able to return to much of its pre-pandemic routine. Bars and businesses, hotels and health clubs have all sprung back to life in Israel, where some 80% of the adult population is fully vaccinated and new infections and COVID-19 deaths have plummeted.

<https://apnews.com/article/israel-can-unvaccinated-return-to-work-dilemma-coronavirus-7e18cdee3a66018c36a6c61d5bc8a4c1>

### **UK to pilot use of coronavirus passports at upcoming large gatherings**

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The United Kingdom is reportedly planning to test "coronavirus status certifications" in the next few weeks to determine whether or not people can return to mass gatherings such as concerts, sporting events and nightclubs. The Associated Press reports that the trials will collect evidence on how different factors affecting events such as ventilation and social distancing could allow large events to resume, citing British authorities. People who attend such events in April and May will need to be tested for the coronavirus before and after attending. British officials are also looking into COVID-19 passports that will show whether or not a person has been vaccinated, has recently received a COVID-19 test or has some form of immunity to the virus either from illness or immunization, the AP reports

<https://thehill.com/policy/international/europe/546405-uk-to-pilot-use-of-coronavirus-passports-at-upcoming-large>

### **UK ministers plan traffic light system to unlock foreign travel**

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Ministers will on Thursday hammer out a framework for reopening Britain's overseas travel sector, as chancellor Rishi Sunak insisted the country was "in a good position to recover strongly" from the Covid-19 crisis. Travel industry and Whitehall officials expect Boris Johnson, UK prime minister, will back a "traffic light" approach to restarting foreign travel, depending on infection rates and the prevalence of Covid-19 variants in overseas destinations. May 17 has been named as the "earliest date" for foreign travel; aviation sector executives hope Israel and Iceland will be among early holiday destinations on a "green list", with the US not far behind.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a5f1d561-08c3-4a88-8630-022f1f36c7a0>

### **Fully vaccinated people can travel safely again, CDC says**

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Add travel to the activities vaccinated Americans can safely enjoy again, according to new U.S. guidance issued Friday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its guidance to say fully vaccinated people can travel within the U.S. without getting tested for the coronavirus or going into quarantine afterward. Still, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky urged caution and said she would "advocate against general travel overall" given the rising number of infections. "If you are vaccinated, it is lower risk," she said.

<https://apnews.com/article/cdc-fully-vaccinated-travel-no-quarantine-domestic-us-a657a7e7d12fff68531c5ff0e08ad717>

## **California to allow indoor gatherings as virus cases plummet**

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California on Friday cleared the way for people to attend indoor concerts, theater performances and NBA games for the first time in more than a year as the rate of people testing positive for the coronavirus in the state nears a record low. State officials won't require testing or proof of vaccination for some of those events, but they do limit the number of people allowed to attend. Events that do require testing and vaccinations will be allowed to have more paying customers than those that don't. Only people who live in California can attend these live performances.

<https://apnews.com/article/public-health-california-coronavirus-pandemic-b482a7b3ab13539de1d3e10f9c081553>

## **COVAX chief 'disappointed' with slow vaccine exports to world's poorest**

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### **COVAX chief 'disappointed' with slow vaccine exports to world's poorest**

A leader of the U.N.-backed program to ship COVID-19 vaccines to needy people in low- and middle-income countries has expressed disappointment about supply delays from a key Indian manufacturer but says he hopes the United States can begin sharing shots soon. Seth Berkley, the CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, said doses for health care workers and other high-risk groups in such countries to be delivered through the COVAX program will be set back weeks. He was elaborating on an announcement a day earlier from Gavi and partners that as many as 90 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine made by the Serum Institute of India will be delayed through the end of April as India's government grapples with a spike in cases.

<https://www.euronews.com/2021/03/26/covax-chief-disappointed-with-slow-vaccine-exports-to-world-s-poorest>

## **Hydroxychloroquine and other 'miracle cures' continue to fuel Brazil's outbreak**

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Before the variants were identified, misinformation about preventing and treating COVID-19 was being spread from person to person, including at the highest levels of government. "People in Brazil are still denying science," Biolchini said. "We're talking about hydroxychloroquine and drugs that supposedly help you avoid COVID. This is clearly not what the science says."

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/hydroxychloroquine-miracle-cures-continue-fuel-brazils-outbreak/story?id=76682504>

## **COVID shows infectious disease is our greatest threat to global security**

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Early last year, the greatest challenges to world peace and international security were widely seen to be threats like nuclear proliferation, terrorism and climate change. Outbreaks of infectious disease were simply not on the global security agenda. Today, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated what a massive oversight that was; the speed and ferocity with which it has destabilized the world caught us all off guard and triggered the biggest global crisis of our time. And now global access to COVID-19 vaccines is in danger of becoming a new social divider that will only further exacerbate this. The United Nations Secretary General and the United Kingdom's call for

"vaccine ceasefires", to give people living in conflict zones a chance to be protected against COVID-19, is one much-needed solution to this and an example of how vaccines can be a powerful force for peace. But while there is a long established relationship between conflict and infectious disease — Yemen and Syria as just two current examples — the link between infectious disease and global security goes much deeper.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/covid-shows-infectious-disease-our-greatest-threat-global-berkeley/?trackingId=lvj4AawMoiGVgWYIQKQCMw%3D%3D>

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### **India coronavirus: Daily cases surpass 100,000 for first time as country faces surging second wave**

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India added more than 103,000 coronavirus cases on Monday, the first time its daily increase in infections has entered six figures, as a key state entered a new lockdown amid a surging second wave. Of the new cases reported on Monday morning, 57,700 were in the worst-hit state of Maharashtra, which ordered non-essential shops to shut from today and began enforcing an evening and weekend curfew, as well as a ban on large gatherings.

[https://www.independent.co.uk/asia/india/india-coronavirus-cases-today-latest-b1826713.html?utm\\_term=Autofeed&utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_content=Echobox&utm\\_source=Twitter#Echobox=1617601369](https://www.independent.co.uk/asia/india/india-coronavirus-cases-today-latest-b1826713.html?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_content=Echobox&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1617601369)

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### **France Enacting National Lockdown After Covid Spike**

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France will go under another nationwide lockdown starting on Saturday, President Emmanuel Macron said, closing down schools for in-person learning nationwide and restricting travel to within 10 kilometers (about six miles) of residents' homes right as many in the country were planning to celebrate the Easter holiday.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nicholasreimann/2021/03/31/france-enacting-national-lockdown-after-covid-spike/>

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### **France sees biggest jump in COVID-19 intensive care patients in months**

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France reported on Friday that 5,254 people were in intensive care units with COVID-19, an increase of 145 people in one day and the highest daily increase in five months. The risk of emergency wards being unable to cope was one of the main reasons for President Emmanuel Macron to order a third nationwide lockdown this week, after unsuccessfully trying for months to contain the epidemic with a curfew and regional lockdowns. From next week, France starts a third lockdown, with schools and non-essential businesses closed nationwide for four weeks. Announcing the lockdown on Wednesday, Macron said the number of ICU beds will be raised from 7,000 to over 10,000.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france/france-sees-biggest-jump-in-covid-19-intensive-care-patients-in-months-idUSKBN2BP1EN?il=0>

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### **German intensive care association demands hard lockdown**

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Germany urgently needs a two-week lockdown, faster vaccinations and compulsory tests at schools to break a third wave of the coronavirus pandemic, the DIVI association for intensive and emergency medicine was quoted as saying on Thursday. Christian Karagiannidis, the DIVI's scientific head, said about 1,000 additional patients had ended up in intensive care since the middle of March. On Wednesday, 3,680 people were in intensive care in Germany, DIVI data show. "If this rate continues, we will reach the regular capacity limit in less than four weeks," he told the Rheinische Post daily. "We are not overexaggerating. Our warnings are driven by the figures."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-germany-idUSL8N2LU1M9>

## **Teesside firm that will produce Novavax coronavirus vaccine in new £7.9 million partnership**

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The company making the new Novavax coronavirus vaccine on Teesside has signed a partnership worth nearly £8 million to improve the development of medicines for a range of diseases. Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies, which is producing doses of the Covid jab at its facilities in Billingham, will partner with the universities of Edinburgh, Manchester and York to boost the development of biological drugs used to treat conditions such as cancer, haemophilia and arthritis. The £7.9 million collaboration, announced today by business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng, will involve 'state of the art tools and synthetic biology' to refine the production of biological drugs from cells and increase their cost-effectiveness.

<https://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/teesside-firm-produce-novavax-coronavirus-20308027>

## **COVID-19: Chris Whitty warns virus measures needed for another two years to combat threat of variants**

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### **COVID-19: Chris Whitty warns virus measures needed for another two years to combat threat of variants**

Coronavirus safety measures are likely to still be necessary for another two years, England's chief medical officer has said. Professor Chris Whitty said it could take up to two years for the world to build up a bank of vaccines and technologies capable of rapidly dealing with COVID-19 variants and outbreaks. While he said these tools will eventually "find a way through", there still remains a level of risk that needs to be managed before then

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-chris-whitty-warns-virus-measures-needed-for-another-two-years-to-combat-threat-of-variants-12263319>

## **Troubling**

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### **Troubling "Eek" variant found in most Tokyo hospital COVID cases - NHK**

Around 70% of coronavirus patients tested at a Tokyo hospital last month carried a mutation known for reducing vaccine protection, Japanese public broadcaster NHK said on Sunday. The E484K mutation, nicknamed "Eek" by some scientists, was found in 10 of 14 people who tested positive for the virus at Tokyo Medical and Dental University Medical Hospital in March, the report said. For the two months through March, 12 of 36 COVID patients carried the mutation, with none of them having recently travelled abroad or reporting contact with people who had, it said.

[https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan-idUKKBN2BR03W?taid=606955e7a0a3570001acc770&utm\\_campaign=trueanthem&utm\\_medium=trueanthem&utm\\_source=twitter](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan-idUKKBN2BR03W?taid=606955e7a0a3570001acc770&utm_campaign=trueanthem&utm_medium=trueanthem&utm_source=twitter)

## **Emergent plant that ruined Johnson & Johnson vaccine doses had prior FDA violations**

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In April last year, an investigator from the Food and Drug Administration reported problems he had discovered at a Baltimore plant operated by Emergent BioSolutions, a major supplier of vaccines to the federal government. Some employees had not been properly trained. Records were not adequately secured. Established testing procedures were not being followed. And a measure intended to "prevent contamination or mix-ups" was found to be deficient. Soon after the inspection, Emergent's Baltimore plant was given an important role in Operation Warp Speed, the government's program to rapidly produce vaccines to fight the coronavirus pandemic. Emergent was awarded \$628 million by the government and also secured deals totaling more than \$740 million with Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca to produce coronavirus vaccines for both companies at the Baltimore site.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/04/01/emergent-jj-vaccine-plant-inspection/>

## **Dutch temporarily halt AstraZeneca shots for under-60s**

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### **Dutch temporarily halt AstraZeneca shots for under-60s**

The Dutch government said Friday it is temporarily halting AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccinations for people under 60 following reports of very small number of people suffering unusual blood clots after receiving the shot. The Dutch decision comes three days after authorities in Germany also stopped using the AstraZeneca's vaccine in the under-60s, citing fresh concerns over unusual blood clots reported in a tiny number of those who received the shots. Earlier Friday, a Dutch organization that monitors vaccine side effects said it had received five reports of blood clots with low blood plate counts following vaccinations. All the cases occurred between seven and 10 days after the vaccinations and all the people affected were women aged between 25 and 65 years.

<https://apnews.com/article/netherlands-halt-astrazeneca-vaccine-for-under-60-2d2f99fc0c522661012b70d2e390f429>

## **Epidemiologic Evidence for Airborne Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 during Church Singing, Australia, 2020**

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### **Epidemiologic Evidence for Airborne Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 during Church Singing, Australia, 2020**

An outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 infection occurred among church attendees after an infectious chorister sang at multiple services. We detected 12 secondary case-patients. Video recordings of the services showed that case-patients were seated in the same section, >15 m from the primary case-patient, without close physical contact, suggesting airborne transmission.

[https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/27/6/21-0465\\_article?ACSTrackingID=USCDC\\_333-DM54062&ACSTrackingLabel=La%20test%20Expedited%20Articles%20-%20Emerging%20Infectious%20Diseases%20Journal%20-%20April%205%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC\\_333-DM54062](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/27/6/21-0465_article?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_333-DM54062&ACSTrackingLabel=La%20test%20Expedited%20Articles%20-%20Emerging%20Infectious%20Diseases%20Journal%20-%20April%205%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_333-DM54062)