

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

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Lockdown Exit

COVID-19: Britons to have first access to vaccines and treatments when new science super-centre opens

Britons will have access to all the latest vaccines and treatments when a new research and manufacturing centre opens in the UK. American pharmaceutical giant Moderna is opening a new mRNA Innovation and Technology Centre that will develop vaccines for a wide range of respiratory diseases, including COVID vaccines that can protect against multiple variants. Construction is expected to start as early as this year, with the first mRNA vaccine due to be produced in the UK in 2025.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-britons-to-have-first-access-to-vaccines-and-treatments-when-new-science-super-centre-opens-12638186>

From Indonesia to Pacific, women have borne brunt of pandemic challenges: UN

Women have borne the brunt of hardship two years after the pandemic, facing less access to vaccines and food, and taking on more domestic work, a new UN report shows. Experts say that gender policies must be implemented to ensure that women and girls are included in the recovery taking place across Asia and the Pacific

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/people/article/3182486/indonesia-pacific-women-less-likely-have-2-covid-19-vaccine-shots>

CDC lowers the Covid-19 travel risk for 2 nations in Europe

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its travel advisory page for Covid-19. Just two new places, both in Africa, joined the crowded "high" risk category.

<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/cdc-covid-travel-risk-destinations-june-21/index.html>

US babies, toddlers get their first COVID-19 shots

Babies and toddlers began getting the COVID-19 vaccine in thighs and arms across the United States on Tuesday, in many cases in front of cameras and a masked cheering audience.

<https://www.reuters.com/video/watch/idsKNx?now=true>

Universal Beijing Resort to reopen on June 25 as COVID cases drop

The Universal Beijing Resort said on Wednesday it will reopen on June 25 after being closed for nearly two months, as the number of new COVID-19 cases in the Chinese capital falls. The resort said on its official WeChat account that after it reopens, all visitors must show a negative PCR test taken within the past 72 hours and wear masks at all times.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/universal-beijing-resort-reopen-june-25-covid-cases-drop-2022-06-22/>

As Kids Under 5 Start Getting the Covid-19 Vaccine, Parents Struggle to Find Appointments

In the US, federal health authorities on Saturday recommended Moderna's two-dose vaccine as well as a three-dose regimen by Pfizer and BioNTech for children as young as 6 months. It was a moment some parents and caregivers had been eagerly awaiting, yet some of them haven't managed to book appointments for their children, while others are holding off.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/as-kids-under-5-start-getting-the-covid-19-vaccine-parents-struggle-to-find-appointments-11655899200>

\$1 Billion Pledged to Help Countries Cope With Future Pandemics

Donors including the US and the European Union have pledged \$1.1 billion in financing to help countries cope with future pandemics. Indonesia, as this year's host of the Group of 20 meetings, pushed the world's biggest economies to create a global health fund that would aid nations struggling with the next global health crises, said Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati in a late Tuesday briefing. The Southeast Asian country is also among the donors, along with Germany, Singapore and the Wellcome Trust, Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin said after the G-20 meeting of health and finance ministers in Yogyakarta. The goal is to reach \$10 billion of financing each year, he added. The fund is set to start operating after an expected June 30 approval from the board of the World Bank, which is hosting the financing mechanism.

[bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-21/-1-1-billion-pledged-to-help-countries-cope-with-future-pandemic?srnd=premium-uk](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-21/-1-1-billion-pledged-to-help-countries-cope-with-future-pandemic?srnd=premium-uk)

Exit Strategies

Manitoba government launches survey on COVID-19 immunization plans for children under 5

Manitoba is seeking input on its plans to vaccinate children under the age of five against COVID-19. Vaccines for children aged six months to four years old could be approved by Health Canada this summer. In anticipation of this, the province has launched a survey asking for feedback on how the rollout should look, particularly from parents with children in this age group, says a news release from the province.

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/manitoba-government-launches-survey-on-covid-19-immunization-plans-for-children-under-5/ar-AAYKkay>

Moderna will make Covid-19 vaccines in UK for the first time as it plans mRNA factory

Covid jabs firm Moderna is opening the first ever factory making mRNA vaccines in the UK, the Government has announced. The company will make the next generation of coronavirus jabs, protecting against multiple variants, as well as new vaccines against illnesses such as flu.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/moderna-will-make-covid-19-vaccines-in-uk-for-the-first-time-as-it-plans-mrna-factory-to-create-future-jabs-1699304>

Moderna to build new vaccine facility in Britain

U.S. biotech firm Moderna will build a new research and manufacturing centre in Britain to develop vaccines against new COVID-19 variants, other respiratory illnesses and help improve readiness for any future pandemics. The agreement will see Moderna make a minimum R&D investment of 1.1 billion pounds (\$1.35 billion), Prime Minister Boris Johnson's spokesman said, adding it would have the capacity for 250 million vaccines a year if needed.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moderna-build-new-vaccine-facility-britain-2022-06-21/>

Denmark to offer fourth COVID vaccine dose to people over 50 years

Denmark plans to offer a fourth COVID-19 vaccine dose in the autumn to those who are over 50 years old, Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said on Wednesday as she announced a strategy to curb the spread of the disease over the coming months. Although COVID infections are still at low levels, Denmark has seen an increase in the number of cases after the new BA.5 subvariant of Omicron, which seems to spread more quickly than other variants, became dominant in the Nordic country.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/denmark-offer-fourth-covid-vaccine-dose-people-over-50-years-2022-06-22/>

Government's Moderna partnership to bring over £1 billion investment

A new Government partnership with vaccine manufacturer Moderna will bring over a billion pounds in investment in mRNA research to the UK, the Health Secretary has said. The US pharmaceutical

giant announced on Wednesday plans to open a new research and manufacturing centre in the UK. The new mRNA Innovation and Technology Centre will develop vaccines for a wide range of respiratory diseases, including Covid vaccines that can protect against multiple variants

<https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/government-moderna-partnership-bring-over-105731545.html>

Parents Struggle to Secure Covid-19 Vaccine Appointments for Young Kids

Anna Carvill had one thing on top of her to-do list this week: get a Covid-19 vaccine appointment for her 2-year-old son. She managed to get an appointment for Thursday at a mobile clinic in downtown Boulder, Colo. Vaccines became available Monday. She is one of millions of parents and caregivers who are seeking to get their children under 5 vaccinated against Covid-19. "We want him to be as protected as he can as soon as possible," Ms. Carvill said. Federal health authorities on Saturday recommended Moderna Inc.'s two-dose vaccine as well as a three-dose regimen by Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE for children as young as 6 months. It was a moment some parents and caregivers had been eagerly awaiting, yet some of them haven't managed to book appointments for their children, while others are holding off.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/as-kids-under-5-start-getting-the-covid-19-vaccine-parents-struggle-to-find-appointments-11655899200>

COVID-19: Infections rise by nearly half a million in a week

COVID-19 cases have surged by nearly half in a week, official figures show. Last week, an estimated 1,415,600 people had coronavirus in the UK, up 425,800 or 43%. This is the highest estimate for infections since the start of May, but is still well below the record high of 4.9 million at the end of March. Cases rose in all four nations of the UK - and increased across all age groups. In England, around one in 50 people had the virus, according to the coronavirus infection survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

<https://uk.sports.yahoo.com/news/covid-19-infections-rise-nearly-121000330.html>

Scientific Viewpoint

Are the Russian covid-vaccine results accurate?

Dr Sheldrick's team published their analysis on June 20th in the American Journal of Therapeutics. It was motivated by concerns that other researchers had raised earlier about one particular pattern in the Sputnik V paper: the vaccine's efficacy was almost identical in each of the five age groups shown. The Russian scientists' answer was that these results reflected a true efficacy that did not differ by age. But clinical trials are usually affected by all sorts of random circumstances, known as "noise" in the jargon. The implication is that, in this particular trial, the various sources of noise cancelled one another out in a way that generated a pattern of equivalent efficacy in all age groups.

<https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2022/06/22/are-the-russian-covid-vaccine-results-accurate>

Covid-19: Risk of mutated variants among immunocompromised patients, new study shows

Immunocompromised patients tend to develop chronic coronavirus infections, leading to highly mutated variants that bear multiple antibody-resistant mutations, according to a new study carried out by a research team at Tel Aviv University, Israel. The study involved an examination of chronic COVID-19 patients at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center ("Ichilov Hospital") and was published this week in Nature Medicine. The researchers found that a weakened antibody response, particular in the lower airways of these chronic patients, may prevent full recovery from the virus and drive the virus to mutate many times during a lengthy infection. They explained that the virus' ability to survive and reproduce in the immunosuppressed patient's body without restriction leads to the evolution of many variants.

<https://www.brusselstimes.com/243167/covid-19-risk-of-mutated-variants-among-immunocompromised-patients-new-study-shows>

Biological E has place in India's COVID-19 vaccine market following Corbevax' approval

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) recently approved Biological E's Corbevax vaccine as the first heterogeneous COVID-19 booster vaccine in India for adults above 18 years who have received two shots of Covaxin or Covishield. Corbevax has the added advantage of scalability and thermostability, making it suitable for deployment in low-resource settings, says GlobalData.

<https://www.thepharmaletter.com/article/biological-e-has-place-in-india-s-covid-19-vaccine-market-following-corbevax-approval>

Afrigen, Univercells partner to develop African-owned Covid-19 vaccine

Afrigen Biologics has signed an agreement with the Univercells Group to develop the first African-owned Covid-19 vaccine. The partnership will focus on developing a new messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) vaccine leveraging intellectual property (IP) from both parties, as well as a new IP and boosting access to the shot. mRNA specialist eTheRNA will extend support to Afrigen and Univercells in the partnership. The firms will jointly work to address two key challenges, the lack of domestic cost-efficient manufacturing and the requirement for cold- or super-cold chains.

<https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/news/afrigen-univercells-covid-vaccine/>

Moderna calls for approval of two-strain Covid vaccine booster

Although the vaccine did not elicit as many antibodies to the new subvariants as it did to the original Omicron, suggesting its efficacy may already be declining, Moderna still feels there would be more of a benefit than not

<https://www.ft.com/content/b9109f23-896a-48eb-8de5-1694ac7b57ba>

COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna 'provides good clinical protection' against Omicron subvariants

Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 are becoming the dominant forms of COVID-19 in Australia and abroad. New data from Moderna shows an updated booster tailored to Omicron generates high levels of antibodies against BA.4 and BA.5. Moderna's chief medical officer says, pending approval, the new booster could be supplied to Australia in August

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2022-06-22/covid-vaccine-omicron-ba4-ba5-subvariants-antibodies-moderna/101170614>

Scientists evaluate JNK inhibitors in treating moderate to severe COVID-19 patients

Janus kinase (JNK) inhibitors with antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties have shown promising outcomes in treating symptomatic coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) patients. In a systematic review article published in the journal Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, scientists have described the clinical outcomes in hospitalized COVID-19 patients who have been treated with JNK inhibitors together with standard of care.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220622/Scientists-evaluate-JNK-inhibitors-in-treating-moderate-to-severe-COVID-19-patients.aspx>

Covid-19: How has the pandemic differed across the four UK nations?

Although the overall course of the pandemic has been similar across the UK, there have been instances when the countries' trajectory has diverged. In the first wave Northern Ireland had far fewer deaths and hospital admissions. Lockdown restrictions were similar across the UK at this time. One possible explanation for the divergence is that lockdown began at a slightly earlier stage in the pandemic in Northern Ireland, reducing the size of the peak there. In the second wave Scotland had relatively fewer cases, hospital admissions, and deaths than England and Wales. Scotland also had the most consistent set of restrictions in place between September and December 2020, which may have helped to delay the spread of the alpha variant (which was dominant in England by the beginning of December but not in Scotland until January 2021).³⁴ Northern Ireland had a slightly later peak in cases in this wave, which may have contributed to lower mortality, as a result of the

vaccination programme reducing severe disease. Northern Ireland's younger population may also have been a factor in its lower cumulative mortality. From the middle of 2021 to February 2022 Northern Ireland had consistently higher rates of hospital admission for covid-19 than elsewhere in the UK, although case rates and mortality have been broadly similar. This suggests that hospital care for patients with covid-19 may have been organised differently in Northern Ireland, resulting in a higher admission rate. Another possibility is that hospital acquired covid-19, which has been a significant concern,⁵ may be a particular problem in hospitals in Northern Ireland. In February and March 2022 Scotland had the highest case rates and a rapid increase in hospital admissions, despite retaining restrictions longest in response to omicron.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/377/bmj.o1482>

Moderna booster candidate shows strong response against Omicron subvariants

Moderna Inc said on Wednesday that an updated version of its COVID-19 vaccine designed to target the Omicron variant also generated a strong immune response against the fast-spreading Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5, which have gained a foothold in the U.S. in recent weeks. The updated vaccine, which Moderna is hoping will be approved for use as a booster shot for the fall, is a bivalent vaccine, meaning it contains vaccine designed to target two different coronavirus variants - the original variant from 2020 and the Omicron variant that was circulating widely last winter.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moderna-booster-candidate-produces-strong-antibodies-against-omicron-subvariants-2022-06-22/>

Pfizer sued for patent infringement over COVID-19 drug Paxlovid

Pfizer Inc's blockbuster COVID-19 treatment Paxlovid violates an Enanta Pharmaceuticals Inc patent for its COVID drug still in development, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday in Boston federal court. Watertown, Massachusetts-based Enanta told the court it received the patent for its antiviral medication last week based on applications dating from July 2020. The company said it began human testing for its once-daily, oral COVID treatment in February, and that the Food and Drug Administration fast-tracked its review in March. Enanta requested an unspecified amount of money damages from Pfizer, including royalties. It also said in a statement that it was not asking the court to block Pfizer from selling Paxlovid. Paxlovid is an oral antiviral pill for high-risk patients that is intended to stave off serious complications from COVID-19. Pfizer said last month it expects to make \$22 billion from Paxlovid sales this year. The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit.

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/pfizer-sued-patent-infringement-over-covid-19-drug-paxlovid-2022-06-21/>

Moderna CEO: COVID variant vaccine to be ready for shipping in August

Moderna's COVID-19 variant vaccine will be ready to ship in August as the company has been making shots ahead of approval, Chief Executive Stephane Bancel told Reuters on Wednesday, adding that the only bottleneck to supply was a regulatory one. "Our goal is as early as August given we're going to file all the data in June, by the end of June... hopefully in the August timeframe, the vaccine is authorised," Bancel said in an interview.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moderna-ceo-covid-variant-vaccine-be-ready-shipping-august-2022-06-22/>

Moderna's New Covid-19 Shot Shows Promise Against Omicron Subvariants

The shot targeting both Omicron and the original virus strain produced a strong immune response against subvariants BA.4 and BA.5, the company said

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/modernas-new-covid-19-shot-shows-promise-against-omicron-subvariants-11655907057>

Women more likely to have long COVID, different symptom profile

Women are significantly more likely than men to experience long COVID, with symptoms that follow a distinct clinical pattern, researchers reported today. They said more efforts are needed to explore

sex differences in outcomes, including greater risks of exposure for some jobs. The researchers from the Johnson & Johnson Office of the Chief Medical Officer reported their findings yesterday in Current Medical Research and Opinion, a peer-reviewed journal.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/06/women-more-likely-have-long-covid-different-symptom-profile>

Nearly 1 in 5 adults who had COVID have lingering symptoms - U.S. study

Nearly 1 in 5 American adults who reported having COVID-19 in the past are still having symptoms of long COVID, according to survey data collected in the first two weeks of June, U.S. health officials said on Wednesday. Overall, 1 in 13 adults in the United States have long COVID symptoms lasting for three months or more after first contracting the disease, and which they did not have before the infection, the data showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/nearly-1-5-adults-who-had-covid-have-lingering-symptoms-us-study-2022-06-22/>

UK Polio Spread Detected With Vaccine-Derived Virus Found in London Sewage

Britain's polio-free status could be at risk for the first time in almost two decades after several samples of vaccine-derived poliovirus were found during routine London sewage testing. Several closely related viruses were found in samples taken in north and east London between February and May. The findings suggest some spread between closely linked individuals and the virus has continued to evolve and is now classified as a vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2, the UK Health Security Agency said Wednesday. Polio can on rare occasions cause serious illness, such as paralysis, in people are not fully vaccinated. No cases of polio or associated paralysis have been reported, according to the agency.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-22/uk-s-polio-status-at-risk-as-close-virus-found-in-london-sewage>

More vulnerable people receiving fewer COVID pills - U.S. study

People in socially and economically disadvantaged regions are about half as likely to receive an oral antiviral COVID-19 pill than residents of wealthier zip codes, according to a U.S. government study published on Tuesday. The findings by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed this disparity even as there were more dispensing sites located in high-vulnerability U.S. zip codes than in the more advantaged areas.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/more-vulnerable-people-receiving-fewer-covid-pills-us-study-2022-06-21/>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Singapore's Covid-19 infections rise amid new subvariants but no change to rules - although health ministry urges boosters

The health ministry said on Tuesday night that the proportion of BA.4 and BA.5 infections is rising, contributing to about a third of Singapore's Covid-19 cases. This compared to 17 per cent, 8 per cent and 3 per cent in the previous three weeks. Singapore was hit by the Omicron wave earlier this year and saw close to 20,000 daily infections, the bulk of them being the BA.2 subvariant. On Tuesday, it reported 7,109 cases.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/singapore-s-covid-19-infections-rise-amid-new-subvariants-but-no-change-to-rules-although-health-ministry-urges-boosters/ar-AAJYJLe>

Covid reinfections in the UK: how likely are you to catch coronavirus again?

Though rare at the start of the pandemic, reinfections have become increasingly common as the months and years wear on – particularly since the arrival of Omicron, which prompted a 15-fold increase in the rate of reinfections, data from the Office for National Statistics suggests. In part, this is because of a decline in protective antibodies triggered by infection and/or vaccination over time,

but the virus has also evolved to evade some of these immune defences, making reinfection more likely.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/22/uk-worried-rising-covid-infections>

4-year-old dies from COVID-19 complications, new MIS-C case reported

The 4-year-old girl was taken to the hospital on June 14 after developing a fever and muscle spasms. She tested positive for COVID-19 and was diagnosed with encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain. Her condition continued to deteriorate after she was admitted to an intensive care unit (ICU) the next day. She later developed liver, kidney, and brainstem dysfunction, and passed away due to sudden bleeding in her lungs on June 17, the CECC said. The new MIS-C case is a 9-year-old boy who tested positive for COVID-19 on May 19. He initially had a three-day fever, stuffy nose, and a headache but soon recovered.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202206220012>

New Zealand reports 5,499 new Covid-19 community cases, 18 deaths

New Zealand recorded 5,499 new community cases of Covid-19 with 18 more deaths, the Ministry of Health said on Wednesday. Among the new community infections, 1,637 were reported in the largest city Auckland, the ministry was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency. In addition, 78 new cases of Covid-19 were detected at the New Zealand border. Currently, 334 Covid-19 patients are being treated in hospitals, including four in intensive care units or high dependency units.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/new-zealand-reports-5-499-new-covid-19-community-cases-18-deaths-122062200286_1.html

Singapore reports 7,109 new Covid-19 cases and one monkeypox infection

Singapore reported 7,109 new COVID-19 cases as of noon on Tuesday, comprising 6,393 local infections and 716 imported ones. A monkeypox infection has also been confirmed, according to media reports. There have been 13,78,090 coronavirus cases and 1,405 deaths in Singapore since the start of the pandemic. Singapore has seen a 23 per cent week-on-week increase in COVID-19 community infections, largely driven by increased spread of newer Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5, said the Ministry of Health (MOH). Although the BA.2 subvariant still accounts for the bulk of Singapore's COVID-19 infections, the Health Ministry said the proportion of BA.4 and BA.5 infections is rising.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/singapore-reports-7-109-new-covid-19-cases-and-one-monkeypox-infection-122062200129_1.html

Beijing city reports three local COVID cases on Wednesday as of 3 p.m.

Chinese capital Beijing reported three new local COVID-19 cases on Wednesday as of 3 p.m., all found during community screening, a local health official said. Uncertainty over Beijing city's COVID prevention and control situation has increased with new community cases emerging continuously, Liu Xiaofeng, deputy director at Beijing Center for Disease Prevention and Control, told a news briefing. The three infections were found in the city's economic-technological development zone, Liu said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beijing-city-reports-three-local-covid-cases-wednesday-3-pm-2022-06-22/>

France is facing a new COVID-19 wave - French vaccination chief

France is facing a new wave of COVID-19 infections fuelled by new variants of the disease, French vaccination chief Alain Fischer said on Wednesday, as daily new cases reached an almost two-month peak the day before at more than 95,000. Speaking on France 2 television, he said there was no doubt there was once again an upsurge of the pandemic in the country, adding he was personally in favour of reinstating mandatory face mask wearing on public transport.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-is-facing-new-covid-19-wave-french-vaccination-chief-2022-06-22/>

New York City Lowers Covid-19 Risk Level to Medium as Cases Drop

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and health officials lowered the city's Covid-19 alert level to medium from high Tuesday, citing declining case counts and hospitalization rates. The shift comes a little more than a month after the city moved the Covid-19 alert level to high as a wave of new cases spread throughout the city. "Day after day, New Yorkers are stepping up and doing their part, and because of our collective efforts we are winning the fight against Covid-19," Adams and City Health Commissioner Ashwin Vasan said in a joint statement.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-21/new-york-city-lowers-covid-19-risk-level-to-medium-as-cases-drop>