

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 6th Jul 2022

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### Lockdown Exit

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#### **Shanghai Covid Testing Fuels Concern of Another China Lockdown**

Shanghai is once again mass testing for Covid, fueling concerns that China's financial hub will find itself back in lockdown in pursuit of Covid Zero. Nine districts, as well as some areas in another three districts, will conduct two rounds of Covid mass testing until Thursday in order to "identify and prevent outbreak risks as early as possible," the city government said in a statement. There are 16 districts in Shanghai. The city reported 24 local Covid cases for Tuesday, all of them inside quarantine, authorities said Wednesday.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-06/shanghai-mass-testing-fuels-concern-another-lockdown-looms>

#### **Macau locks down landmark Lisboa hotel after COVID cases found**

Macau has locked down one of the city's most famous hotels, the Grand Lisboa, after more than a dozen COVID-19 cases were found there on Tuesday, with infections spreading rapidly in the world's biggest gambling hub. At least 16 other buildings across the special Chinese administrative region are also locked down with no one allowed to exit or enter. The authorities have placed more than 13,000 people under quarantine orders as the city battles to contain its biggest outbreak since the pandemic began.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/macau-locks-down-landmark-lisboa-hotel-after-covid-cases-found-2022-07-06/>

#### **COVID and bust: China's private health system hurt by tough coronavirus controls**

On March 24, a court in the central Chinese city of Fuyang announced that a \$1.5 billion hospital built just four years earlier had filed for bankruptcy because it was unable to pay its debts. For most of the last two years, the Fuyang Minsheng Hospital had been fully involved in mass coronavirus vaccination and testing programmes in the city, training almost 100 staff to perform throat swabs and setting up mobile vaccination facilities to go to schools and workplaces, at the order of city officials.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/covid-bust-chinas-private-health-system-hurt-by-tough-coronavirus-controls-2022-07-06/>

#### **Egyptian official assures hospitals at the ready for future coronavirus outbreaks**

Hospitals are prepared at any time to receive coronavirus cases, Adviser to the President of the Republic for Health Affairs Mohamed Awad Tag Eddin assured Monday, during a telephone interview with presenter Ahmed Moussa, on Sada al-Balad channel. Tag Eddin advised citizens to adhere to wearing masks and using disinfectants at gatherings or in contact with people infected with the coronavirus. He stressed that most of the infections are mild and do not require hospitalization, explaining that 90 million doses of the vaccine have been provided in Egypt. The effectiveness of the vaccine ranges between four and six months, he added, explaining that people most vulnerable to infection with coronavirus must obtain the third dose - available free of charge to everyone.

<https://www.egyptindependent.com/egyptian-official-assures-hospitals-at-the-ready-for-future-coronavirus-outbreaks/>

#### **JCVI chief calls for mandatory masks in hospitals amid Covid surge**

It would be "sensible" for hospitals to reintroduce mandatory mask-wearing, the chair of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has said, as several trusts in England and Wales announced the move. When NHS rules on wearing masks in England were dropped on 10 June, local health bodies were given the power to draft their own policies. Their guidance, however, is no longer

legally enforceable. Figures from NHS England show there were about 10,658 patients hospitalised with coronavirus on Monday. Infections have doubled in a fortnight across England – with about 1,000 patients being admitted with the virus each day.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/05/covid-surge-jcvi-chief-andrew-pollard-mandatory-masks-hospital-call>

### **One million set to perform Hajj as COVID-19 restrictions ease**

After a two-year absence, international pilgrims will perform the yearly Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia for the first time starting Wednesday, after previously being restricted amid the kingdom's battle to curb the coronavirus pandemic. Some one million people are expected to be in attendance in the holy city of Mecca in Masjid al-Haram (Grand Mosque) for the start of the five-day ritual – a large jump from last year when only 60,000 pilgrims were permitted. In 2020, during the height of the pandemic's early waves and before vaccines were available, about 10,000 were selected.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/5/one-million-set-to-perform-hajj-despite-covid-19-pandemic>

### **US seeks 250000 mentors, tutors to address pandemic learning loss By Reuters**

The Biden administration on Tuesday will launch a new effort to recruit 250,000 mentors and tutors to help students who have fallen back in their learning during the coronavirus pandemic, the White House said. The program, which will be led by AmeriCorps and the Department of Education along with other service organizations, will seek to get adults to fill the roles over the next three years. Students on average are two to four months behind in reading and math as a result of the pandemic, a White House official said. The program is intended to help address that deficit. "Research shows that high quality tutors and mentors positively impact student achievement, well-being, and overall success," the White House said in a statement.

<https://www.investing.com/news/coronavirus/us-seeks-250000-mentors-tutors-to-address-pandemic-learning-loss-2843994>

### **Many won't rely on virtual options after COVID: AP-NORC poll**

Many Americans don't expect to rely on the digital services that became commonplace during the pandemic after COVID-19 subsidies, according to a new poll, even as many think it's a good thing if those options remain available in the future. Close to half or more of U.S. adults say they are not likely to attend virtual activities, receive virtual health care, have groceries delivered or use curbside pickup after the coronavirus pandemic is over, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Less than 3 in 10 say they're very likely to use any of those options at least some of the time. Still, close to half also say it would be a good thing if virtual options for health care, for community events and for activities like fitness classes or religious services continue after the pandemic.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-technology-health-only-on-ap-fbf24abaaa800b00f1f10ae70b67af68>

### **Lockdown Pain Fails to Break Elderly Vaccine Resistance in China**

There's been one consistent silver lining to Covid-19 outbreaks: they trigger a surge in vaccinations that provide protection against severe infections in the future. China's elderly are an exception. Take Shanghai. After the financial hub emerged from a bruising two-month lockdown and vaccination clinics reopened, the number of fully immunized people aged 60 or above increased just one percentage point to 63% in mid-June, despite hundreds of deaths.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-04/lockdown-pain-fails-to-break-elderly-vaccine-resistance-in-china?srnd=premium-uk>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **Atagi considers fourth Covid vaccine doses as Omicron subvariants drive surge in cases**

Australia's independent expert advisory group on vaccines is meeting to discuss fourth Covid-19 booster doses, as Omicron subvariants drive a rise in infections, leading some premiers to urge

people to wear masks more widely. The BA.4 and BA.5 strains of Omicron are becoming the dominant strains of Covid-19 in Australia, overtaking the BA.2 strain. A preliminary analysis estimates BA.4 and BA.5 to be about 36% more infectious than BA.2. This infectiousness is driving a new wave of disease, however, there is no indication the variants are more severe. While Covid-19 vaccines do protect well against severe disease and death from the variants, they do not appear to be as effective at stopping infection and symptoms when it comes to the BA.4 and BA.5 strains.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/05/atagi-considers-fourth-covid-vaccine-doses-as-omicron-subvariants-drive-surge-in-cases>

### **South Australia pushes federal government to reduce restrictions on COVID-19 antivirals**

COVID-19 antivirals can only be prescribed to certain groups of people. SA's Health Minister wants doctors to be more free to decide who gets them. A surge in COVID-19 cases is expected throughout Australia this winter

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-05/sa-government-push-to-reduce-restrictions-on-covid19-antivirals/101208522>

### **Covid-19: GPs are asked to opt into next vaccination phase this autumn**

General practices that wish to continue giving covid booster vaccinations from September have until 14 July to sign up, NHS England has said. In guidance setting out expectations for the autumn booster campaign it also states that general practices choosing to provide vaccinations must have sufficient workforce capacity to keep delivering other services. The updated enhanced service—now “phase 5” of the vaccination campaign—will start on 1 September and will initially run to 31 March 2023, but it could be extended by as much as six months depending on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. GPs will continue to be paid £10.06 for each vaccine administered and £10 for each housebound patient.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/378/bmj.o1657>

### **Covid-19: Further vaccinations likely in Northern Ireland in autumn**

Some groups of people are likely to be offered further Covid-19 vaccinations this autumn, Northern Ireland's chief scientific advisor has said. Prof Ian Young said it would apply to vulnerable people and those aged over 65, while health and social care workers would also be offered it. The most recent population survey estimated that one in 25 people in Northern Ireland had Covid. The current wave is being driven by the ba4 and ba5 variants of the virus. Speaking to BBC News NI's Talkback programme, Prof Young said that past vaccines continued to provide protection against severe illness. "Unfortunately, however, with the new variant, ba4 and ba5, people can become re-infected with those, even when they've been vaccinated," he said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-62042219>

### **Hong Kong considers shorter COVID quarantine for travellers -Lee**

Hong Kong will look into shortening COVID-19 quarantine requirements for travellers, while still aiming to curb the spread of the virus and prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed, the city's new leader John Lee said on Tuesday. Lee spoke at his first weekly news conference as the city's chief executive after being sworn in on Friday by China's President Xi Jinping following celebrations marking 25 years since the former British colony's return to Chinese rule.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/hong-kong-considers-shorter-covid-quarantine-travellers-lee-2022-07-05/>

### **China's Shanghai announces two new rounds of mass COVID testing**

The city of Shanghai on Tuesday announced two new rounds of mass COVID-19 testing of most of its 25 million residents over a three-day period, citing the need to trace infections linked to an outbreak at a karaoke lounge. The city government said on its official WeChat account that all residents in nine of the city's 16 districts would be tested twice from Tuesday to Thursday. People in parts of three other districts would also have to undergo tests.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinas-shanghai-carry-out-some-covid-testing-residents-say-2022-07-05/>

### **Ireland sees 'extensive' autumn COVID-19 vaccine campaign -deputy PM**

Ireland expects to run an extensive vaccine drive against COVID-19 and flu ahead of a potentially worrying winter surge that could lead to the reimposition of mask wearing in certain settings, Deputy Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said on Tuesday. Ireland dropped all COVID-19 curbs earlier this year after having one of Europe's toughest lockdown regimes. While infections are on the rise again, Varadkar said the current wave seemed to be peaking and the number of hospitalised patients was expected to start falling in the next two to three weeks.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ireland-sees-extensive-autumn-covid-19-vaccine-campaign-deputy-pm-2022-07-05/>

### **Omicron sub-variants BA.4, BA.5 make up 70% of COVID variants in U.S. - CDC**

The fast-spreading BA.4 and BA.5 sub-lineages of Omicron are estimated to make up a combined 70.1% of the coronavirus variants in the United States as of July 2, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Tuesday. BA.4 and BA.5 made up 52% of U.S. variants for the week of June 25. They were added to the World Health Organization's monitoring list in March and designated as variants of concern by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/omicron-sub-variants-ba4-ba5-make-up-70-covid-variants-us-cdc-2022-07-05/>

### **CureVac files patent lawsuit in Germany against BioNTech over mRNA technology**

CureVac has filed a patent lawsuit in Germany against BioNTech over its use of mRNA technology, marking one of the first known cases of a company going to court amid the fierce competition to develop a vaccine against the coronavirus. The German-based biotech company is seeking "fair compensation" from BioNTech and two subsidiaries for infringement of its intellectual property rights, it said on Tuesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/curevac-files-patent-lawsuit-germany-against-biontech-2022-07-05/>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **Moshe Feiglin: Those under 30 need to avoid COVID-19 vaccine like fire**

Former MK Moshe Feiglin, who is currently running for the Likud primaries, told KAN Radio on Tuesday morning that anyone under 30 years old should avoid the coronavirus vaccine "like fire." "We are horrified by the shtuyot (nonsense) that were said by someone with no understanding or knowledge on the topic," the Health Ministry tweeted in response. "It's unfortunate that a man without any professional backing is handing out suggestions based on knee-jerk instincts or delusions while going directly against existing medical knowledge and international studies on the subject, not to mention the instructions of every international organization."

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-711231>

## **Scientific Viewpoint**

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### **The Health Risks of Getting Covid-19 a Second (or Third) Time**

Covid-19 reinfections can bring some new risks of serious medical problems, hospitalization and death, a new study has found. Protection provided by vaccines and prior infection has greatly improved Covid outcomes since the pandemic's early days, and reinfections are typically less severe than initial ones. Yet each new infection carries a risk of medical problems, including hospitalization, death and long Covid, according to preliminary data from a study of patients in the Veterans Affairs health system. This is a timely finding, doctors say, as more-infectious Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 proliferate and are expected to make reinfections more common.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/health-risks-of-covid-19-reinfections-for-patients-detailed-in-new-research-11656691792>

### **Health Ministry approves COVID-19 vaccine for infants**

Health Ministry Director General Professor Nachman Ash has approved the administration of Moderna's Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccines for infants and children ages six months to five years. Though the approval applies to all children in the above age group, the Health Ministry has not issued a general recommendation for the vaccine. The vaccines were approved last month by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and later the same month by the Israeli Health Ministry's Staff for the Management of Pandemics.

<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/356014>

### **Oxford University Takes Aim at Future Pandemics After Covid Vaccine**

The University of Oxford, one of the first to cross the finish line with a Covid-19 vaccine, is shifting its focus to health threats that could trigger the next pandemic. Oxford's Pandemic Sciences Institute, launched Tuesday, aims to reduce the risks posed by infectious diseases by improving data collection, strengthening surveillance and helping to create vaccines and other countermeasures. Oxford said the organization will seek to learn from the response to Covid and take advantage of the university's research and global partnerships. But it will have to bring in additional funds to carry out its mission.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-04/oxford-university-takes-aim-at-future-pandemic-threats>

### **Spectacular success of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines just a glimpse of their full potential**

The "spectacular" success of mRNA (messenger ribonucleic acid) vaccine technology against SARS-CoV-2 provides "just a glimpse of their full potential", according to the authors of a Perspective published by the Medical Journal of Australia today. Asymptomatic individuals constitute 16-38% of the SARS-CoV-2 infected population which increases the difficulty of identifying infected individuals. The lack of convenient and sensitive tests to detect the virus in all individuals is continuing to limit global response to the pandemic. Predominantly, SARS-CoV-2 is detected through RT-PCR (real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) on swab samples collected from the nose and throat. However, these tests require long detection times, high costs, specialized equipment and medical personnel, and are not feasible in areas where resources are limited.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-07-spectacular-success-mrna-covid-vaccines.html>

### **Skin Patch Test Detects COVID-19 in Under Three Minutes**

A rapid and reliable skin-patch test can now detect the COVID-19 virus, and potentially other infectious agents in under three minutes, without the need to draw blood. This convenience overcomes a current challenge in identifying infected individuals who are averse to blood tests and could help restrict the spread of the pandemic. The details of the new test were published on July 1, 2022, in an article in the journal Scientific Reports titled, "Anti-SARS-CoV-2 IgM/IgG antibodies detection using a patch sensor containing porous microneedles and a paper-based immunoassay."

<https://www.genengnews.com/topics/translational-medicine/infectious-diseases/skin-patch-test-detects-covid-19-in-under-three-minutes/>

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/curevac-files-patent-lawsuit-germany-against-biontech-2022-07-05/>

### **New Covid subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 are the most contagious yet - and driving Australia's third Omicron wave**

Australia is heading for its third Omicron wave in the coming weeks, as BA.4 and BA.5 become the dominant Covid strains. BA.4 and BA.5 are more infectious than previous Covid variants and subvariants, and are better able to evade immunity from vaccines and previous infections. So we're likely to see a rise in case numbers. So what are BA.4 and BA.5? And what can we expect in this next phase of the pandemic?

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/05/new-covid-variants-ba4-ba5-most-contagious-australia-third-omicron-wave-coronavirus-subvariants-ba-4-5>

### **BA.5 Subvariant Drives Majority of Recent Covid-19 Cases**

The highly contagious Omicron BA.5 subvariant has taken over as the dominant version of the virus causing new Covid-19 cases in the U.S., the latest federal data show. BA.5 represented nearly 54% of U.S. cases in the week ended July 2, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated Tuesday. It surpassed BA.2.12.1, the version of Omicron partly responsible for a persistent springtime surge in cases, which is now estimated to represent closer to one in four cases. Another version known as BA.4, which is closely related to BA.5, and also ramped up recently, represents nearly 17% of cases, the CDC estimates.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/ba-5-subvariant-drives-majority-of-recent-covid-19-cases-11657043207>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **Covid-19 NZ: Understanding the Omicron variant BA.5 and why it's fuelling a second wave**

The second Omicron wave appears to have started. Case numbers - along with hospitalisations - are trending upwards. Underlying this is the rise of a new Covid subvariant called BA.5 which experts have suggested is starting to snowball. This is a snapshot of what's going on and what you need to know. Um, what is BA.5? Alpha, Beta, Delta, Omicron - all are distinct Covid-19 variants. Just like BA.1 (which was dominant here) and BA.2 (which is now dominant), BA.5 is another member of the growing Omicron family.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/explained/129177758/covid19-nz-understanding-the-omicron-variant-ba5-and-why-it-s-fuelling-a-second-wave>

### **Covid-19: New cases soar by more than 3000 in a single day, reaching 9629**

New cases of Covid-19 have soared by more than 3000 in a single day, rising from 6498 on Monday to 9629 on Tuesday, the Ministry of Health says. There are also 493 people in hospital, and 24 people with the virus have died in the period since April 14, the ministry said. The seven-day rolling average of community case numbers on Tuesday is 7246 - a rise of about 32 per cent on the same time last year. University of Canterbury professor and Covid-19 modeller Michael Plank said the increasing trend in cases over the past week made a second wave of Omicron "likely".

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/129179434/covid19-new-cases-soar-by-more-than-3000-in-a-single-day-reaching-9629>

### **Iran records over 1,000 daily Covid-19 cases**

Iran's daily recorded coronavirus cases on Monday exceeded 1,000 for the first time since late April, according to the country's health ministry. Authorities recorded 1,007 new cases within 24 hours on Monday, with 122 of the new patients needing to be hospitalised. This was the first time over 1,000 cases had been recorded since 27 April. In recent weeks, daily cases in Iran have rarely exceeded 200, with some days seeing less than 100 infections. The total number of identified coronavirus cases in Iran since the start of the pandemic in February 2020 is 7,240,564, and a total of 141,404 people have died from Covid-19.

<https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/iran-records-over-1000-daily-covid-19-cases>

### **Covid-19: Sharp rise in infections seen across the UK**

Covid-19 infections in the UK are up 32% on the previous week with an estimated 2.3 million people infected, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).<sup>1</sup> Rates have continued to increase across all four UK countries, likely driven by the growth of the BA.4 and BA.5 omicron subvariants, the ONS said. In the week ending 25 June an estimated 1 829 100 people would have tested positive for covid in England—around one in 30 people—according to the ONS coronavirus infection survey. A week earlier that rate was one in 40.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/378/bmj.o1638>

### **Covid-19 deaths at low level despite growing wave of infections**

Covid-19 deaths in England and Wales remain at a low level, despite the latest wave of infections, new figures show. There were 285 deaths registered in the week to June 24 where coronavirus was mentioned on the death certificate, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This is broadly unchanged on the previous two weeks, and is well below the 1,125 deaths registered in the peak week of the Omicron BA.2 wave of infections earlier in the year.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/office-for-national-statistics-england-infections-wales-b2115960.html>

### **Romania COVID cases nearly double in a week**

The number of new COVID-19 infections in Romania nearly doubled over the last week, with a peak of 10,000 daily cases expected in mid-August, Health Minister Alexandru Rafila said on Monday. Romania is the European Union's second-least vaccinated state, with just over 42% of the population fully inoculated amid distrust of state institutions and poor vaccine education. The number of new infections approached 8,000 over the last week, compared with 3,974 new cases in the previous week, data showed, but the number of hospitalisations and deaths remained low.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/romania-covid-cases-nearly-double-week-2022-07-04/>

### **Macau COVID outbreak hits more than 900 as infections spread**

Macau reported 89 new coronavirus cases on Tuesday, taking the total to more than 900 infections since mid-June, as authorities in the world's biggest gambling hub race to contain its largest outbreak since the pandemic began. More than 13,000 people are under quarantine in the Chinese special administrative region, which has effectively shut down to limit the spread of coronavirus. The city's more than 600,000 residents are subject to three citywide COVID-19 tests this week, with people also required to take rapid antigen tests in between.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/macau-covid-outbreak-hits-more-than-900-infections-spread-2022-07-05/>

### **Macau steps up COVID testing as infections surge**

Macau kicked off a new round of COVID-19 testing for its more than 600,000 residents on Monday, as officials in the world's biggest gambling hub raced to limit spiralling infections in the city's worst outbreak since the pandemic began. All residents face three rounds of tests this week, in addition to rapid antigen tests, as Monday's 68 new infections took the tally in the former Portuguese colony to 852 since the middle of June. About 12,000 people are in quarantine.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/macau-launches-more-covid-testing-infections-soar-2022-07-04/>

