

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 28th Mar 2022

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### Lockdown Exit

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#### Shanghai Imposes Staggered Lockdowns to Keep Coronavirus at Bay

Shanghai imposed stringent pandemic restrictions it has long tried to avoid on its 25 million residents that are likely to disrupt commercial activity well beyond the city limits. Local authorities said on Sunday they plan to lock down the city in two phases over the next week and a half to try to control an outbreak of the highly infectious Omicron variant of the Covid-19 virus. All over Shanghai, the government's announcement sparked frenzied scrambles to food markets and grumbling about the disruption to urban life in a city that until recently appeared relatively unaffected by Covid.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/shanghai-imposes-staggered-lockdowns-to-keep-coronavirus-at-bay-11648399828>

#### China Covid Spike Preceded by Surge in Cases From Hong Kong

Just across the border from Hong Kong, tech hub Shenzhen is emerging from a week-long lockdown called to tackle an outbreak of the omicron variant. Shanghai, meanwhile, is seeing its highest new case levels of the pandemic, with half the city locked down for testing after a handful of infections ballooned into more than 2,000 in a matter of weeks. An analysis by Bloomberg News found the uptick in cases in both cities -- key entry points into the mainland -- came around the same time or shortly after a surge in infections was recorded in quarantined travelers coming from Hong Kong, where the number of recorded new cases still hovers above 8,000.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-27/china-covid-spike-preceded-by-surge-in-cases-from-hong-kong>

#### The Vaccine-Hesitant Could Use Some Friendly Shame

If we look at the crisis as a matter of the community's health and survival, the Covid vaccine seemed like an ideal opportunity to deploy healthy shame. Getting vaccinated kept people from dying. Refusing was a form of freeloading, leaving the work of building herd immunity to others. Those who didn't take the trouble to get vaccinated, it could be argued, were lazy, selfish, and ignorant. But in this case, societal shaming turns out to be counterproductive. Pressure coming from authority figures can send people running in the opposite direction. Many African Americans, for example, are quite reasonably skeptical of vaccines, knowing all too well about the horrors visited upon their community.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-03-27/the-vaccine-hesitant-could-use-some-friendly-shame>

#### Travel, Alcohol, Masks: Singapore Lifts Major Covid Restrictions

Singapore will significantly ease Covid-19 curbs, lifting most restrictions for fully vaccinated visitors and a requirement to wear masks outdoors, said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Travel-related stocks gained. With the latest wave of the virus subsiding, Lee said that Singapore will double the group size limit to 10 people and allow up to 75% of employees who can work from home to return to their workplaces. The city-state will ease testing and quarantine requirements for travelers and lift a ban on alcohol sales in pubs and eateries after 10:30 p.m.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-24/singapore-significantly-eases-curbs-including-vaccinated-trave>

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#### Premier calls for pre-Songkran vaccine drive

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has ordered authorities to speed up inoculation of vulnerable groups ahead of the Songkran festival next month, a spokesman says. Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana, government spokesman, said Gen Prayut has ordered state agencies to

encourage people aged 60 and over, those suffering from underlying illnesses and pregnant women to receive their shots against Covid-19 before the holidays as a precautionary measure. The goal is to offer booster jabs to at least 70% of the elderly who have already been vaccinated at least twice, he said. The Songkran festival marks an important time when families return home and pay respects to the elderly.

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2285670/premier-calls-for-pre-songkran-vaccine-drive>

### **Experts worry about how US will see next COVID surge coming**

As coronavirus infections rise in some parts of the world, experts are watching for a potential new COVID-19 surge in the U.S. — and wondering how long it will take to detect. Despite disease monitoring improvements over the last two years, they say, some recent developments don't bode well: —As more people take rapid COVID-19 tests at home, fewer people are getting the gold-standard tests that the government relies on for case counts. —The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will soon use fewer labs to look for new variants. —Health officials are increasingly focusing on hospital admissions, which rise only after a surge has arrived.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-health-pandemics-wastewater-9b6589e908c8532db0922cc4ed3f3910>

### **Plan now to deal with effects of 'long Covid'**

Scientists and epidemiologists are still writing, revising and updating the medical literature on the Covid-19 pandemic. It will keep medical authorities and professionals engaged for some time. Meanwhile, reference texts on "long Covid", or "post Covid-19 syndrome", are barely works in progress. That is because so little is known about it. But it could remain a public health and disability issue after the pandemic file is closed. Most people who catch the virus do not become severely ill and get better relatively quickly. But some have long-term problems after recovering from the original infection even if they weren't very ill.

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3172050/plan-now-deal-effects-long-covid?module=opinion&pgtype=homepage>

### **Shanghai to lock down in two stages for testing as COVID cases spike**

China's financial hub of Shanghai said on Sunday it would lock down the city in two stages to carry out COVID-19 testing over a nine-day period, after it reported a new daily record for asymptomatic infections. Authorities said they would divide Shanghai into two for the exercise, using the Huangpu River that passes through the city as a guide. Districts to the east of the river, and some to its west, will be locked down and tested between March 28 and April 1. The remaining areas will be locked down and tested between April 1 and 5.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-reports-1254-new-covid-cases-march-26-vs-1335-day-earlier-2022-03-27/>

### **Costs of going unvaccinated in America are mounting for workers and companies**

Nearly a year after COVID vaccines became freely available in the U.S., one fourth of American adults remain unvaccinated, and a picture of the economic cost of vaccine hesitancy is emerging. It points to financial risk for individuals, companies and publicly funded programs. Vaccine hesitancy likely already accounts for tens of billions of dollars in preventable U.S. hospitalization costs and up to hundreds of thousands of preventable deaths, say public health experts. For individuals forgoing vaccination, the risks can include layoffs and ineligibility to collect unemployment, higher insurance premiums, growing out-of-pocket medical costs or loss of academic scholarships.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/costs-going-unvaccinated-america-are-mounting-workers-companies-2022-03-25/>

### **German health minister urges people at risk to get second COVID booster**

Germany's health minister on Friday urged people over age 60 with risk factors such as high blood pressure or a weak heart to get a second booster shot against COVID-19 to reduce their risk of getting seriously ill. Karl Lauterbach said he had asked the STIKO vaccine authority to adjust its current recommendation for a second booster to include a bigger group of people. STIKO currently

recommends second boosters for people aged 70 and above, and for people belonging to particularly high risk groups. Only 10% of those have received it so far, Lauterbach told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/german-health-minister-urges-people-risk-get-second-covid-booster-2022-03-25/>

### **Harvard Economist Says Covid Hit Worse by Education Than Gender**

While the pandemic disproportionately hurt women in the workforce more than men, the bigger divide was among education levels, according to a new paper by Harvard University economist Claudia Goldin. When restaurants, retailers and other service providers closed, those without college degrees were more likely to lose their jobs. Meantime, many college-educated Americans could continue to work from home. "The pandemic produced both a he- and a she-cession," Goldin wrote in a report discussed at the Brookings Papers on Economic Activity conference Thursday. "Relative to previous recessions, women have been harder hit. But the largest differences in pandemic effects on employment are found between education groups rather than between genders within educational groups."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-25/covid-hit-workers-without-degrees-more-so-than-women-paper-says>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **Shanghai orders mass Pudong lockdown in push to contain Covid-19 surge**

In a major U-turn late on Sunday night, authorities in the Chinese financial hub of Shanghai ordered a vast swathe of the city into a lockdown from Monday to try to contain the spread of a coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/shanghai-orders-mass-pudong-lockdown-in-push-to-contain-covid-19-surge/ar-AAVymKV>

### **Pfizer, Moderna and J&J Face Shareholder Pressure to Broaden Covid-19 Vaccine Access**

Socially conscious investors and global-health activists are turning to shareholders to press Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers Pfizer Inc, Moderna Inc and Johnson & Johnson to make more of their shots available to people in poorer countries. Groups including the antipoverty organization Oxfam have succeeded in placing proposals on shareholder proxy ballots that ask drugmakers to do more to widen access to the Covid-19 vaccines, such as exploring the transfer of their technology to other manufacturers. The proxy battles are the latest effort seeking to push Covid-19 vaccine makers to share their technology in order to boost supplies at lower-income countries, after some of the countries asked the World Trade Organization to lift patent restrictions and activists urged the U.S. government to share companies' vaccine technology with other countries.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-moderna-and-j-j-face-shareholder-pressure-to-broaden-covid-19-vaccine-access-11648373402>

### **Tesla to halt Shanghai factory production amid COVID curbs, Bloomberg News reports**

Tesla Inc is planning to suspend production at its Shanghai factory for at least one day, Bloomberg News reported on Sunday, as China's financial hub said it would go into a lockdown in two stages to conduct COVID-19 testing. Tesla's production in the plant will be halted on Monday, the report said, citing people familiar with the matter, adding that the electric car maker hasn't yet informed workers if it would extend the suspension beyond Monday. Tesla did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/tesla-halt-shanghai-factory-production-amid-covid-curbs-bloomberg-news-reports-2022-03-27/>

### **Hong Kong to halve COVID flight-ban penalty to 7 days**

Hong Kong said on Sunday it is shortening the ban on airlines that are found to have carried three or more passengers who test positive for COVID-19 upon arrival, as the number of local cases continues to ease from its peak. Starting on Friday, the ban on individual airline routes will be halved to seven days as part of an ongoing "flight suspension mechanism", the government said in a statement. The change comes after the government said last week a ban on flights from nine countries - Canada, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Britain, the United States, France, Australia and the Philippines - would be lifted on April 1.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/hong-kong-says-halve-flight-suspension-rule-seven-days-2022-03-27/>

### **Nearly half of foreign businesses in Hong Kong are planning to relocate**

Foreign businesses have for decades reaped the benefits of setting up shop in Hong Kong, a historically stable, expat-friendly finance hub at the doorstep of mainland China. But lately, as Beijing has tightened its grip on the former British colony, those firms are increasingly eyeing the exits. Nearly half of all European businesses in Hong Kong are considering relocating in the next year, according to a new report. Companies cite the local government's extremely strict Covid-19 protocols that mirror those on the mainland. Among the firms planning to leave, 25% said they would fully relocate out of Hong Kong in the next 12 months, while 24% plan to relocate at least partially. Only 17% of the companies said they don't have any relocation plans for the next 12 months.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/24/business/hong-kong-expats-covid-restrictions/index.html>

### **S'pore to simplify Covid-19 rules for gatherings, travel; up to 5 household visitors allowed at any one time per day**

Singapore is changing its Covid-19 rules to make them easier to understand, in a move to better adapt to future changes in the pandemic situation. These changes will impact healthcare protocols for infected people, workplace testing requirements, border measures and safe management measures. "These rules have accumulated over the past two years and become quite unwieldy," said Health Minister Ong Ye Kung. "By streamlining them, we can adopt a posture that will better enable us to open up when the time is right."

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/health/singapore-to-simplify-covid-19-rules-for-gatherings-travel-and-workplaces-paving-way-for-future-easing>

### **Exclusive: China's Sinopec pauses Russia projects, Beijing wary of sanctions**

Article reports that China's state-run Sinopec Group has suspended talks for a major petrochemical investment and a gas marketing venture in Russia, sources told Reuters, heeding a government call for caution as sanctions mount over the invasion of Ukraine. The move by Asia's biggest oil refiner to hit the brakes on a potentially half-billion-dollar investment in a gas chemical plant and a venture to market Russian gas in China highlights the risks, even to Russia's most important diplomatic partner, of unexpectedly heavy Western-led sanctions.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/exclusive-chinas-sinopec-pauses-russia-projects-beijing-wary-sanctions-sources-2022-03-25/>

### **Many in Malaysia to lose fully-vaccinated status if they don't get Covid-19 booster**

Some two million recipients of the Covid-19 vaccine by Sinovac are set to lose their fully vaccinated status if they do not receive their boosters by April 1, said Malaysia's Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin. "Based on the latest data, about 2.09 million recipients of the Sinovac vaccine for their primary series have yet to get their booster shots," he told a press conference in Parliament on Thursday (March 24). "They will stand to lose their fully vaccinated status when the deadline ends." The deadline for adult primary recipients of CoronaVac - the vaccine produced by China's Sinovac Biotech - is March 31, after it was extended from Feb 28. Mr Khairy also said that those who had yet to get their Sinovac booster would be deemed "not fully vaccinated" by Singapore.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/many-in-malaysia-to-lose-fully-vaccinated-status-if-they-dont-get-covid-19-booster>

### **Hospital staff attacked with acid on French island of Martinique**

Security staff at a hospital on the French Caribbean island of Martinique have been attacked with acid, French government ministers said on Friday, highlighting unrest on the island due to anger over government policies and COVID-19 protocols. Unrest in areas such as the French West Indies and Corsica could increasingly become an issue for voters, ahead of next month's French presidential election. "Yesterday morning, during a meeting between the new hospital chief Jerome Le Briere and hospital trade unions, around thirty demonstrators tried to disrupt the meeting, with six security staff getting acid thrown onto their faces," said a joint statement on Friday by French Health Minister Olivier Veran

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hospital-staff-attacked-with-acid-french-island-martinique-2022-03-25/>

### **Miranda to Miss Oscars After Wife Tests Positive for COVID**

Lin-Manuel Miranda, one of this year's most prominent Oscar nominees, will sit out the ceremony after his wife tested positive for COVID-19. Miranda shared the unfortunate news on Twitter Saturday afternoon. He said that even though he has tested negative himself, he will stay away from Sunday's ceremony out of caution. "Made it to Hollywood," Miranda wrote. "This weekend, my wife tested + (positive) for COVID. She's doing fine. Kids & I have tested - (negative) but out of caution, I won't be going to the Oscars tomorrow night." The Oscar-nominated composer added he was "cheering for my TickTickBoom & Encanto families w my own family, alongside all of you, ALL of you."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-26/miranda-to-miss-oscars-after-wife-tests-positive-for-covid>

### **US small-business owners face tax headaches on top of COVID woes**

Small businesses that have been buffeted by the pandemic, inflation and shipping woes have another challenge to add to their plate: taxes. Tax season can be complicated for everyone, but as the April 18 filing deadline looms, small-business owners, contractors, entrepreneurs and others face a raft of ever-changing rules and regulations. Plus, many are dealing with delayed returns and refunds from prior tax periods. The Internal Revenue Service has warned of a backlog and says more delays are to be expected. "It's worse this year than last year," said Gene Marks, owner of The Marks Group, a small business consulting firm in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania. "It seems to get worse every year, and this year definitely worse than it's been in prior years."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/3/25/us-small-business-owners-face-tax-headaches-on-top-of-covid-woes>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **Uninsured Americans now to be charged up to \$195 per COVID test by some providers: report | TheHill**

Several testing providers will no longer provide COVID-19 tests for free to uninsured Americans, even if they are symptomatic, saying they will begin to charge between \$100 and \$195 dollars for PCR tests, ABC News reported. Quest Diagnostics, which is one of the country's largest COVID-19 testing providers, told ABC News that patients will now be billed \$125 per PCR test if they are not on Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance. Quest has started telling partners and clients that it will no longer be able to reimburse for uninsured claims due to a lack of congressional funding, ABC noted.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/medicaid/599898-uninsured-americans-now-to-be-charged-up-to-195-per-covid-test>

### **Adelaide social worker banned from spreading misinformation about and vaccines**

An Adelaide social worker has been permanently banned from providing health education or information about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccinations. South Australia's Health and Community

Services Complaints Commissioner has issued a prohibition order against Matilda Bawden, of Parafield Gardens, following two emails she sent in her capacity as a social worker last year. In one of them, the unregistered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider said she was suspending services to "service providers, clients, friends and family" who received an inoculation because of the risk of them shedding the virus.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-25/social-worker-banned-from-spreading-covid19-misinformation/100938326>

### **Two years ago I said I was taking Covid 'with a pinch of salt' - perhaps I was wrong**

Scientists must long to travel back two years and revisit their Covid predictions. So too must commentators who relied on them. That March of 2020 was a nightmare month for the great game of prediction. Boris Johnson's press conference on 3 March was a cautious occasion. He had just received wild reports from Whitehall's scaremongers declaring that 80% of the nation "could be" about to suffer from a killer disease from which half a million "could die". His response was to take comfort from his in-house scientists, guided down the path to "herd immunity" by his senior advisers, including Patrick Vallance. Daily briefings and hysteria mounted until 23 March, when Johnson performed the agony of volte-face. His capitulation to extreme lockdown was so abject as to make it hard for anyone who had followed his argument so far to agree with him. Most commentators cynically switched sides and said he should have capitulated sooner.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/mar/25/covid-march-2020-prediction-uk-pandemic>

### **Persistent cough 'may be TB rather than Covid' - and cases are on the rise**

UK health leaders fear cases of tuberculosis (TB) are slipping under the radar. The potentially dangerous bacterial infection begins as a persistent cough, similar to many people's experience of Covid-19. Incidents of TB have been falling since 2019 but appear to be on the rise once again, fuelling fears people may be dismissing the symptom as the coronavirus. Now anyone with a cough is being warned not to assume their illness is definitely caused by Covid-19.

<https://metro.co.uk/2022/03/25/persistent-cough-may-be-tb-rather-than-covid-and-cases-are-on-the-rise-16343311/>

### **Pandemic strikes new, authoritarian Hong Kong**

After evading major COVID-19 spikes for nearly two years, Hong Kong - one of the world's most densely populated cities - is experiencing a frightening wave, with one of the world's worst COVID death rates. It is apparent that the city's pandemic response went terribly wrong, and yet nobody is there anymore to ask the government tough questions. At the beginning of the pandemic, the unelected Hong Kong government was slow to respond. It was Hong Kong people who swung into collective action - a muscle memory of widespread solidarity forged through the 2019 protests as well as the previous experience with SARS. They mounted a dynamic citizen-led pandemic response including widespread masking, even though the authorities discouraged it.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/3/26/pandemic-strikes-new-authoritarian-hong-kong>

### **Hong Kong eateries despair over checking recovered Covid patients' jabs status**

Hong Kong restaurants are tired of the confusion over checking the vaccination status of customers trying to enter their premises, especially those who have recovered from Covid-19. With numerous types of electronic and paper documents available to show individuals' vaccination status or proof of recovery, misunderstandings between restaurant workers and customers have become a regular occurrence. "It is very messy now. Frontline workers are confused over the different kinds of information and documents they can accept, and sometimes the checking process can get complicated or descend into arguments," said Simon Wong Ka-wo, president of the Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and Related Trades.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3171995/too-confusing-too-much-trouble-hong-kong?module=live&pgtype=homepage>

## **Scientific Viewpoint**

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### **The BA.2 Omicron subvariant is now dominant in northeastern US states**

The Omicron BA.2 subvariant has become dominant over other Covid-19 coronavirus variants in the northeastern US, per the latest CDC data. The news comes as a surge of new cases in Europe, driven by the more-contagious BA.2 and by countries lifting Covid-19 restrictions. That surge is prompting some experts to worry that another wave could soon be coming to the US. Experts told previously Insider they expect a wave of BA.2 in the US could be milder than in Europe, in part because of previous exposure to its cousin, the subvariant BA.1. More vulnerable groups could still be at risk, the experts said. As of last week, BA.2 made up 55.4% of samples collected in Health & Human Services (HHS) Region 1, the CDC said Tuesday. This region covers Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, as well as ten federally recognised Tribal Nations.

<https://www.businessinsider.co.za/cdc-ba2-omicron-dominant-in-northeastern-us-new-wave-possible-2022-3>

### **Edinburgh scientists find patients with both Covid and flu at greater risk of severe illness and death**

Adults in hospital with Covid-19 and the flu at the same time are at much greater risk of severe disease and death compared with patients who have Covid-19 alone or with other viruses, according to new research. Scientists found that patients who had both SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, and influenza viruses were more than four times more likely to require ventilation support and 2.4 times more likely to die than if they just had Covid-19. The study looked at more than 305,000 hospitalised patients with Covid-19 and involved researchers from the University of Edinburgh, University of Liverpool, Imperial College London and Leiden University in the Netherlands. Researchers say the findings show the need for more flu testing of Covid-19 patients in hospital and highlight the importance of full vaccination against both Covid-19 and the flu. Professor Kenneth Baillie, professor of experimental medicine at the University of Edinburgh, said: "We found that the combination of Covid-19 and flu viruses is particularly dangerous.

<https://news.stv.tv/scotland/edinburgh-scientists-find-patients-with-both-covid-and-flu-at-greater-risk-of-severe-illness-and-death>

### **U.S. to Clear Additional Booster Shot Against Covid-19**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is poised to clear a fourth dose of the mRNA coronavirus vaccine for adults age 50 and older, looking to shore up protections for more vulnerable groups, a person familiar with the matter said. The authorization could come as early as next week and, for most Americans, it would mean a second booster shot of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines. Currently, only immunocompromised people are eligible in the U.S. for the additional dose. Unlike with previous authorizations, the FDA is expected to stop short of a full recommendation, meaning the option would be open for people who want the shot. The development was reported earlier by the New York Times.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-03-26/u-s-to-recommend-additional-booster-shot-against-covid-19>

### **Covid cases predicted to hit new peak within fortnight**

Covid cases will peak in the next two weeks, government modelling has suggested. Health chiefs are braced for infections to reach record levels next week but are confident they will "top out" shortly after without threatening to overwhelm hospitals, The Times has been told. It explains why government scientific advisers are not more concerned about a recent surge in the virus — more over-50s are now infected than at any time during the pandemic. Figures next week are expected to show record infections across the board after the latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed that cases had risen in all age groups and regions this month.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/30a79adc-ac3e-11ec-8da7-c2b9b8c9eee5?shareToken=fa8c2353fdca9975f0fe4cada85f3b16>

### **How to get a Cuban COVID jab in 1,000 easy steps**

On Valentine's Day 2022 in Havana, Cuba, I received the Soberana Plus booster shot, one of the island nation's five homegrown COVID-19 vaccines. The jab had been a long time coming. For the past year, I had been fixated on the idea of being injected with a made-in-Cuba coronavirus vaccine. While obviously not offering protection against the imperial machinations of my homeland and Cuba's chief antagonist, the United States, the Cuban serums were at least being developed in the interest of global public health rather than pharmaceutical profit or "vaccine apartheid", as World Health Organization (WHO) Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has described it.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/3/26/how-to-get-a-cuban-covid-jab-in-1000-easy-steps>

### **South Australia records seven deaths from COVID-19, a day after close contact rules are eased**

Seven people have died in South Australia after testing positive to COVID-19 - one day after close contact rules were relaxed across the state. SA Health said five women and two men aged between 70 and over 100 died from the disease. The state now has 151 people in hospital with the virus, including five in the Intensive Care Unit and one on a ventilator - slightly less than on Friday. There were 3,897 new cases reported, down from 4,459 on the previous day.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-26/sa-records-seven-deaths-after-close-contact-rules-are-eased/100942052>

### **Covid-19 patients infected with flu twice as likely to die, study shows**

People who are simultaneously infected with Covid-19 and influenza face double the risk of death, according to a new study, highlighting the challenge being posed to health systems as flu re-emerges. The research, led by scientists and medics at academic institutions across Europe as part of the disease response network Isaric, found that unvaccinated patients infected with the two viruses were 2.3 times more likely to die and 4.1 times more likely to require a ventilator, compared with people only infected with coronavirus. Geert Groeneveld, one of the study authors and an infectious disease physician at the Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands, said the harm from a co-infection of Covid and flu probably stemmed from how they both "destroy the respiratory tract" in severely ill patients.

<https://www.ft.com/content/6a326d31-e44c-46df-ba34-a03c573ab1c4>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **Australian Medical Association reveals full strain on the nation's hospital system**

Australia's hospital system is "showing cracks" under the weight of increased demand and underfunding, according to the country's peak professional body. The Australian Medical Association's annual public health system report card has revealed just how dire the situation is nationwide, as emergency departments have buckled under the pressure of the Covid-19 pandemic. More than one in three people have waited longer than the clinically-recommended 30 minutes to receive urgent care. AMA president Omar Khorshid said only 63 per cent of patients had been seen within the recommended period in the past year. "One in three people who present to an ED will wait longer than four hours to be either discharged or admitted," Dr Khorshid said.

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/news/australian-medical-association-reveals-full-strain-on-the-nations-hospital-system-c-6213356>

### **25,821 new Covid cases, 84 more deaths**

The country registered 25,821 daily Covid-19 cases, 413 fewer than the prior 24 hours, the Public Health Ministry announced on Sunday morning. The daily Covid death toll jumped by 17 to 84. Just 56 of the new caseload were imported, with the remaining 25,765 transmitted inside the country. The Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) said in the afternoon that the 84 new fatalities were between the ages of six and 104, all of them Thai nationals.

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2285858/25-821-new-covid-cases-84-more-deaths>

### **Hong Kong logs 8,841 Covid-19 cases; flight suspension rules could be eased**

Hong Kong's leader has said thresholds for suspending incoming flights found to be carrying coronavirus-infected passengers could be scaled back, but refused to call it a "major concession", as the city reported a month-low 8,841 Covid-19 cases on Saturday. Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor also pledged to provide more quarantine hotels for travellers, as she faced fresh calls for a gradual reopening of the city for international travel and business activities including from her top adviser, a global aviation body and local industry. Bernard Chan, convenor of the Executive Council, Lam's de facto cabinet, conceded that many multinational companies which had used Hong Kong as their Asian base had already moved to rival cities such as Singapore and Dubai, and the chances of them returning were dropping by the day.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/transport/article/3171952/hong-kong-leader-carrie-lam-promises-relax-flight>

### **Hong Kong reports 8841 new daily coronavirus infections**

Hong Kong reported 8,841 new cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, down from 10,405 on Friday, as its latest wave of infections continues to ease. There were 139 deaths reported, authorities said. The global financial hub hit a record high of over 58,000 infections on March 9.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/hong-kong-reports-8841-new-daily-coronavirus-infections-2022-03-26/>

### **India records 4,100 Covid deaths in 24 hours with backlog numbers added**

With backlog numbers added, India recorded 4,100 coronavirus-linked deaths in the last 24 hours, the health ministry data showed, as 1,660 new patients were reported (marginally lower than the previous day). The latest jump in the number of deaths takes the overall figure to 5,20,855. The country has been recording less than 100 deaths in a day since Monday. Maharashtra and Kerala revised the Covid death data, and a majority of deaths were recorded from Maharashtra. India has been registering less than 2,000 cases in a day since March 20 even as some countries in the world see fresh Covid spike. Germany, for instance, saw over 300,000 cases for the first time on Thursday

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-records-4-100-covid-deaths-in-24-hours-with-backlog-numbers-added-101648267019668.html>