

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 1st Jul 2022

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### Lockdown Exit

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#### **Pfizer asks for formal U.S. approval of oral COVID treatment Paxlovid**

Pfizer Inc said on Thursday it is seeking full U.S. approval for its oral COVID-19 antiviral treatment Paxlovid, which is currently available under an emergency use authorization (EUA). Pfizer said it submitted a New Drug Application for Paxlovid to the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of COVID-19 in vaccinated and unvaccinated people at high risk of progression to severe illness.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-asks-formal-us-approval-oral-covid-treatment-paxlovid-2022-06-30/>

#### **Analysis: Easing COVID-19 rules, growth focus aid China bulls' cautious return**

The latest easing of coronavirus travel rules combined with other encouraging policy signals have began luring some foreign investors back to Chinese stocks, raising the chances that the market can sustain its bounce after months of heavy selling. As the S&P 500 is about to close its worst first half of any year since 1970 and bonds have taken a thrashing, China's beaten-down equity markets start looking like a shelter from a global storm of runaway inflation, interest rate hikes, and recession fears.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/easing-covid-19-rules-growth-focus-aid-china-bulls-cautious-return-2022-06-29/>

#### **Bhutan to welcome tourists 'who can spend' for first time since COVID**

Bhutan will reopen for international tourists from September for the first time since the pandemic began more than two years ago, officials said on Thursday, as the tiny Himalayan kingdom looks to revive its economy. Wedged between China and India, the country with scenic natural beauty and ancient Buddhist culture, took drastic early steps and banned tourism, a major source of income, in March 2020 when the first COVID-19 case was detected there.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/bhutan-welcome-tourists-who-can-spend-first-time-since-covid-2022-06-30/>

#### **China summer railway travel expected to rebound as COVID curbs ease**

As China loosens its months-long COVID-19 curbs, railway travel is expected to see an uptick in passengers just in time for the summer transport season, which starts on July 1. By Aug. 31, the number of passenger trips on China's railway network is expected to reach 520 million, and 10 million on peak days. The national railway is also opening new stations such as the Xiangwan section of the Zhengzhou-Chongqing high-speed railway, the Puzheng section of the Jizheng high-speed railway, the Heruo Railway, and the Beijing Fengtai Station.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-summer-railway-travel-expected-rebound-covid-curbs-ease-2022-06-30/>

#### **Shanghai Disneyland theme park re-opens after three-month closure**

More than a thousand visitors streamed in on Thursday as Walt Disney Co's Shanghai Disney Resort theme park opened after a closure of three months, with face masks and social distancing the order of the day. The park shut on March 21 as cases rose in the Chinese business hub, leading to a two-month-long citywide lockdown that eased on June 1. Just over a week later, the resort began opening some areas, with the theme park the last to re-open.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/shanghai-disneyland-theme-park-re-opens-after-three-month-closure-2022-06-30/>

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### **China's factory, service sectors shake off 3 months of lockdown pain**

China's factory and service sectors snapped three months of activity decline in June, business surveys showed on Thursday, as authorities lifted a strict COVID lockdown in Shanghai, reviving output and consumer spending. The official manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) rose to 50.2 in June from 49.6 in May, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. That slightly missed the forecast for 50.5 in a Reuters poll but rose above the 50-point mark that separates contraction from growth for the first time since February.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/chinas-june-factory-services-activity-expands-first-time-four-months-2022-06-30/>

### **COVID restrictions ease in Shanghai as case numbers drop**

Shanghai is moving to allow in-person dining and reopening its Disney Resort theme park as domestically transmitted cases of COVID-19 in China's largest city remain at zero following a more than two-month lockdown. Chinese officials hail their hardline "zero-COVID" policy for stemming the growth of cases and deaths from the virus, despite the enormous cost to the Chinese economy and international supply chains reliant on China's manufacturing and shipping abilities that have been thrown askew. China has repeatedly defended the policy and indications are it will maintain "zero-COVID" at least through the spring of 2023, when President Xi Jinping is expected to be installed for a third five-year term as head of the world's second-largest economy and a rising competitor to the United States in the Indo-Pacific region. In remarks carried by the official Xinhua News Agency, Xi on Wednesday said China's policies against the virus have "protected people's lives and health to the greatest extent."

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-travel-xi-jinping-shanghai-4907a125ae306a70b0110d5d41ad06f3>

### **US FDA wants COVID boosters targeting Omicron BA.4, BA.5 subvariants**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Thursday recommended COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers change the design of their booster shots beginning this fall to include components tailored to combat the currently dominant Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants of the coronavirus. If authorized, the changes would mark the first major retooling of COVID vaccines, but also could slow their rollout as the FDA has recommended a design somewhat different from what the companies had already tested and started producing.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/fda-recommends-inclusion-ba4-ba5-subvariants-covid-boosters-2022-06-30/>

### **Covid Shots Worked Better for Obese Than Underweight in UK Study**

People who are underweight or obese are most at risk of severe Covid, but a UK study found that two doses of vaccine still protect both groups well. The researchers, who focused on patients at the two extremes of the body mass index scale, found that the shots worked slightly better for those at the high end of the measure in a study published in medical journal The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology on Friday. The scientists used health records of more than 9 million patients from generalist practices in England taking part in the database QResearch. "Our findings provide further evidence that Covid-19 vaccines save lives for people of all sizes," said Carmen Piernas, the study's lead author and a lecturer at the University of Oxford's Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-30/covid-shots-worked-better-for-obese-than-underweight-in-uk-study>

## **Exit Strategies**

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**China summer railway travel expected to rebound as COVID curbs ease**

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<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-summer-railway-travel-expected-rebound-covid-curbs-ease-2022-06-30/>

### **Parents of young kids feel 'left behind' as they await COVID-19 vaccine**

Some Canadian parents say they've been left behind as they wait on Health Canada to authorize vaccines for children under five years old. "It's upsetting to see the whole world moving on and forgetting about all of the littles, basically," said Jaimie-Lyn Oldfield from Kingston, Ont. She said her family has made sacrifices to protect her nearly three-year-old daughter Rosslyn from contracting COVID-19. "We hardly see her grandparents," she said. "Everyone else got vaccinated and it's really disheartening and upsetting when they're like 'OK, we're going to remove all of these masking mandates.'"

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/covid-19-vaccine-under-5-waiting-1.6504267>

### **At the current rate, SA will hit its Covid-19 vaccination target in about September 2028**

Covid-19 vaccination levels are dropping fast, putting South Africa's herd immunity target well out of reach. People are reading the end of pandemic restrictions as a signal that vaccination is no longer required, say government monitors. On Wednesday, less than 6,000 people received a first jab. At that rate, it will take until just about September 2028 to reach the 67% coverage target. That is not counting getting people to show up for booster shots - or the continuing slowdown in the vaccination rate.

<https://www.businessinsider.co.za/covid-19-vaccination-in-south-africa-is-now-pretty-slow-2022-6>

### **Israeli health officials green light COVID vaccinations for young children**

All members of the health ministry's expert advisory board agreed that the vaccine is safe for children under the age of five, though some experts cautioned that only those with underlying health conditions should be vaccinated

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-06-30/ty-article/.premium/israeli-health-officials-greenlight-covid-vaccines-for-young-children/00000181-b432-da42-abdd-b7379f780000>

### **Covid-19 traffic light setting remains at orange, reinfection rules changed**

Minister for Covid-19 Response Ayesha Verrall has confirmed that the country will stay at the orange traffic light setting. The Government also announced on Thursday that the advice for Covid reinfection has changed, with people experiencing symptoms more than 29 days after previous infection advised to isolate and test. The previous window was 90 days. People with symptoms after 29 days who test positive will be required to isolate for seven days Verrall also announced that there would be 50 child-size masks made available for every year 4 to year 7 student from now until the end of the year. This is in addition to a previously announced policy of free flu-jabs for children aged 3-12

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/129131217/covid19-traffic-light-setting-remains-at-orange-reinfection-rules-changed>

### **Health Minister launches review of former government's COVID-19 vaccine deals, existing supplies**

The review will look at current vaccine supply deals. Mr Butler says it will also look forward to what Australia will need over the next few years. The government wants the review done in weeks, not "many months"

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-30/federal-government-launches-covid-vaccine-deal-review/101196650>

### **COVID-19 boosters recommended for the fall, Canada's vaccine advisory body says**

People at high risk of severe disease from COVID-19 infection should be offered a booster shot this fall, regardless of how many boosters they've previously received, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) said on Wednesday. That group includes everyone age 65 and older, NACI's updated guidance said. Everyone else — age 12 to 64 — "may be offered" the additional doses in the fall, NACI said. NACI said it will provide recommendations on the type of booster to be given when evidence about multivalent vaccines — which prime the body's defences against multiple variants, including Omicron and its subvariants — becomes available. "Manufacturers are working on new COVID-19 vaccines, including multivalent vaccines and vaccines specifically targeting VOCs [variants of concern], although their exact characteristics and timing of availability in Canada are not yet known," NACI said

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/covid-19-vaccines-boosters-fall-2022-naci-1.6506360>

### **Pfizer signs new \$3.2 billion COVID vaccine deal with U.S. government**

Pfizer Inc and partner BioNTech SE said on Wednesday they signed a \$3.2 billion deal with the U.S. government for 105 million doses of their COVID-19 vaccine, which could be delivered as soon as later this summer. The deal includes supplies of a retooled Omicron-adapted vaccine, pending regulatory clearance, according to Pfizer. Drugmakers have been developing vaccines to target the Omicron variant that became dominant last winter.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-signs-32-bln-deal-with-us-government-covid-vaccine-doses-2022-06-29/>

### **US buys 105 million COVID vaccine doses for fall campaign**

U.S. health officials said Wednesday they have agreed to purchase another 105 million doses of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine in anticipation of a fall booster campaign. The \$3.2 billion deal announced by the Biden administration comes as federal scientists consider how to update the vaccines to better protect Americans from the rapidly evolving virus. Federal officials said the purchase agreement includes the option to purchase a total of 300 million doses, including a mix of doses for both adults and children. The first shots would be delivered by early fall, pending a decision by the Food and Drug Administration to authorize new versions of the shots. A decision is expected from the FDA in the coming days following a Tuesday meeting in which outside advisers recommended modifying the vaccines to better target the omicron variant.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-health-government-and-politics-d5690c06fd614a15274eaff5d6262688>

### **US secures more Lilly COVID-19 antibodies for \$275M, but with pandemic funding uncertain this may be a swan song**

Developing an antibody treatment that is effective against the omicron variant of COVID-19 has paying off for Eli Lilly. But the company may soon lose its primary customer—the U.S. government. Wednesday, Lilly revealed a purchase agreement with the U.S. to provide 150,000 doses of bebtelovimab for \$275 million. Based on current demand, the supply should carry the U.S. through to the end of August, the company said. But Lilly also warned that this could be the last shipment of COVID antibodies to the U.S. as the government is close to exhausting its pandemic relief funds.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/us-secures-more-lilly-covid-19-antibodies-275m-pandemic-funding-uncertain-may-be-swan-song>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **COVID-19: Piers Corbyn fined for illegal gatherings held during lockdowns**

Jeremy Corbyn's brother has been fined for holding illegal gatherings during coronavirus lockdowns. Piers Corbyn has campaigned against vaccines, face masks and COVID restrictions throughout the pandemic. The 75-year-old was found guilty of holding, or helping organise, a gathering of more than 30 people in Trafalgar Square in August 2020. Another illegal gathering that flouted COVID

rules happened in the same place in September 2020, and in Westminster a month later.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-piers-corbyn-fined-for-illegal-gatherings-held-during-lockdowns-12642933>

### **S.Korea says leaflets sent by defectors unlikely to be cause of COVID in N.Korea**

South Korea's unification ministry said on Friday there is "no possibility" of COVID-19 entering North Korea via contaminated balloons sent by activists in the South. North Korea said earlier in the day the country's first outbreak began with patients touching "alien things" near the border with South Korea, apparently shifting blame to its neighbour for the wave of infections that hit the isolated country.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/skorea-says-leaflets-sent-by-defectors-unlikely-be-cause-covid-nkorea-2022-07-01/>

### **N.Korea blames 'alien things' near border with S.Korea for COVID outbreak**

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/nkorea-says-covid-outbreak-began-with-patients-touching-alien-things-near-border-2022-06-30/>

## **Scientific Viewpoint**

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### **Fair Pharma Scorecard shows industry has a long way to go for COVID-19 products**

How has the pharma industry weighed human rights during its marketing of COVID-19 drugs and vaccines? That's what the Pharmaceutical Accountability Foundation (PAF) sought to answer, and the results might not be what the industry wants to hear. For its Fair Pharma Scorecard project, PAF ranked 26 companies involved in selling COVID-19 drugs, vaccine and diagnostics based on their compliance with 19 human rights principles. Not one company complied with all the criteria, and most "still need to take big steps" to make their products accessible and affordable, PAF said. In general, PAF noticed a weariness toward knowledge sharing, iffy transparency levels and differences between various products at the same companies. For example, Pfizer's compliance with the criteria scored at 65% for its oral antiviral Paxlovid and 50% for its vaccine.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/pharmaceutical-accountability-foundations-fair-pharma-scorecard-calls-out-pfizer-moderna>

### **Fauci says he believes Paxlovid kept him out of the hospital, even though he tested positive again.**

"Paxlovid did what it was supposed to do," Dr. Fauci, 81, said in an interview, saying that he believed that the treatment, made by Pfizer, kept him out of the hospital when he first tested positive for the virus on June 15. He added that he thought the drug also reduced the severity of his initial symptoms. One thing Paxlovid could not do was keep Dr. Fauci from missing his daughter's wedding. It went on without him in New Orleans two Saturdays ago, when he was sidelined with his initial infection. He participated remotely. Dr. Fauci has been vaccinated against Covid and has received two booster doses. His experience with Paxlovid adds to a growing body of anecdotal evidence about patients whose Covid symptoms improved after they took Paxlovid, and who even tested negative, only to have symptoms occur again a few days later. That is exactly what happened to him, Dr. Fauci said; he recently tested positive again after three days of negative tests.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/29/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases>

### **Pfizer Seeks FDA's Full Approval for Paxlovid Covid-19 Pill**

Pfizer Inc. has asked the Food and Drug Administration to grant full approval of its Covid-19 antiviral

pill, a step toward allowing the drugmaker to sell the drug commercially. Pfizer said Thursday that it had filed the submission. The FDA typically has 60 days to accept the application and up to 10 months to conduct a review before issuing a decision. To date, Pfizer has been selling the drug, called Paxlovid, to the federal government under an authorization for emergency use. The federal government has then been directing the pills' distribution.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-seeks-fdas-full-approval-for-paxlovid-covid-19-pill-11656585900>

### **A 14-year-old tiger died after contracting Covid-19 in an Ohio zoo, officials say**

A tiger at an Ohio zoo died of health complications caused by Covid-19, officials said Wednesday. The 14-year-old Amur tiger, Jupiter, died Sunday after developing pneumonia caused by the virus, the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium said in a statement. Jupiter was undergoing long-term treatment for chronic underlying illnesses, which made him more susceptible to the virus, the zoo said. Jupiter's care team reported last week that he had been "acting ill." He wasn't interested in eating or interacting with his keepers and was reluctant to move or stand, according to the statement. After Jupiter was anesthetized for examination, results suggested he may have been suffering from an infection, and treatment began.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/29/us/ohio-tiger-dead-covid-19/index.html>

### **Covid-19: Canada outperformed comparable nations in pandemic response, study reports**

Canada performed better than the majority of G10 countries in its response to the first two years of the covid-19 pandemic, a study has concluded. A paper published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal concluded that Canadians were better vaccinated than comparable western countries, with fewer infections, fewer covid deaths, and lower mortality from all causes. Researchers from the University of Toronto, some of whom are members of Ontario's covid-19 science advisory board, linked the country's lower death rate to the persistence of its social restrictions and the relative lack of antivaccine sentiment. The study compared responses from the 11 countries in the G10, comprising Canada, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and the US. Japan was an extreme outlier, with by far the fewest deaths and infections despite having the oldest population and imposing the mildest restrictions.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/377/bmj.o1615>

### **S.Korea authorises AstraZeneca COVID therapy Evusheld for vulnerable people**

South Korea on Thursday authorised AstraZeneca PLC's antibody-based therapy for preventing COVID-19 infection in people with a poor immune response, increasing its options as it works to ease the pandemic burden on the healthcare system. The Ministry of Food and Drug Safety granted emergency use authorisation for 20,000 doses of Evusheld for individuals aged 12 years and older who have not been exposed to the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/skorea-authorises-astrazeneca-covid-therapy-evusheld-vulnerable-people-2022-06-30/>

### **Pfizer asks for formal U.S. approval of oral COVID treatment Paxlovid**

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-asks-formal-us-approval-oral-covid-treatment-paxlovid-2022-06-30/>

### **NYC to Offer Pfizer's Covid Drug at Mobile Test-to-Treat Sites**

New York City will start offering Pfizer Inc.'s Covid antiviral Paxlovid at "first of its kind" mobile test-

to-treat sites across the city, providing immediate treatment for those who test positive for the virus. Initially, mobile sites will be stationed outside of pharmacies in Inwood, South Ozone Park and the East Bronx, and will expand to 30 locations by the end of July, Manhattan's Borough President Mark Levine said on Twitter Thursday. People who test positive for Covid and qualify for Paxlovid will be able to get a prescription on-the-spot, which they can take to a nearby pharmacy to pick up the drug. By the end of the summer, officials plan to bypass pharmacies entirely, offering Paxlovid directly through the mobile sites.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-30/nyc-to-offer-pfizer-s-covid-drug-at-mobile-test-to-treat-sites>

### **Maternal deaths climbed 33% during COVID-19**

Maternal deaths in the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic increased 33%—and even higher in Black and Hispanic women—according to data from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) published yesterday in a study in JAMA Network Open. That rate compares with an overall 22% COVID-related excess death rate during the study period, according to two researchers from the University of Maryland (UMD) and Boston University (BU), who conducted the study. They defined maternal mortality as deaths during pregnancy or just after birth.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/06/maternal-deaths-climbed-33-during-covid-19>

### **COVID-19 tracker: Pfizer seeks full approval for Paxlovid**

After running six months on an emergency use authorization for Paxlovid, Pfizer is now seeking a full FDA approval for the COVID antiviral in patients who are at high risk for progression to severe illness regardless of their vaccination status. When taken within five days of symptom onset, Paxlovid cut the risk of hospitalization or death from any cause by 86% in non-hospitalized, high-risk patients, according to final results from the phase 2/3 EPIC-HR study. Pfizer's application package also includes data from the EPIC-SR study, which didn't hit its goal in vaccinated patients with, and unvaccinated patients without, risk factors for severe COVID.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/covid-19-tracker-pfizer-targets-variant-specific-vaccines-fall>

### **FDA: Don't rush a move to change the Covid-19 vaccine composition**

On Tuesday, the FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) voted 19-2 to approve the use later this year of Covid-19 vaccines based on an Omicron variant sequence. One of us (P.A.O.) was among those voting "no." It is possible these vaccines will be two-component designs that also include the current version. Will Americans soon be better protected against Covid-19? The Covid-19 vaccines currently authorized for use in the U.S. are all based on the sequence of the original SARS-CoV-2 virus, which was obtained early in 2020. The virus has evolved over the past 30 months, creating variants that are either more infectious, or harder to counter by vaccination, or both

<https://www.statnews.com/2022/06/29/fda-dont-rush-to-change-covid-19-vaccine-composition/>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **Yes, the number of Covid cases in the UK is rising - but that is no cause for alarm**

Although infections are rising, we are not being swamped by yet another Covid wave. Just as we come forward each year for our flu inoculation, we must do the same for our yearly Covid vaccine. The solution to rising cases is not lockdowns or restrictions on our liberties, but vaccines. This is not just the case in Britain, but around the world. Covid is a global virus, so needs global solutions. Because while Covid is endemic here, it is still having a major impact on much of the developing world.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/30/covid-uk-cases-vaccines-matt-hancock>

### **North Korea's woes overflow as Kim Jong-un battles flooding, Covid-19 outbreak**

Major rivers in the country are in spate following torrential rains since last week, prompting officials

to step up disaster response efforts amid a wave of infections Experts say the North's problems are only going to worsen as it can't receive aid from Seoul due to frosty inter-Korean ties and stringent Western sanctions

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/health-environment/article/3183590/north-koreas-woes-overflow-kim-jong-un-battles>

### **Coronavirus outbreak in Hong Kong shifting from pandemic to endemic says government health adviser**

Professor Ivan Hung, a top infectious disease expert, says Hong Kong has fulfilled necessary criteria for city to transition from pandemic to endemic. Health officials on Thursday log 2,358 coronavirus infections, of which 162 were imported, and two Covid-related deaths

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3183664/coronavirus-outbreak-hong-kong-shifting-pandemic>

### **WHO: COVID-19 cases rising nearly everywhere in the world**

The number of new coronavirus cases rose by 18% in the last week, with more than 4.1 million cases reported globally, according to the World Health Organization. The U.N. health agency said in its latest weekly report on the pandemic that the worldwide number of deaths remained relatively similar to the week before, at about 8,500. COVID-related deaths increased in three regions: the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Americas. The biggest weekly rise in new COVID-19 cases was seen in the Middle East, where they increased by 47%, according to the report released late Wednesday. Infections rose by about 32% in Europe and Southeast Asia, and by about 14% in the Americas, WHO said. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said cases were on the rise in 110 countries, mostly driven by the omicron variants BA.4 and BA.5.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-pandemics-united-nations-southeast-asia-44339128047444544c2ef2a467bb6e7>

### **Macau COVID infections rise as spread extends to medics, police**

Authorities in the world's biggest gambling hub Macau are scrambling to contain the city's biggest coronavirus outbreak since the pandemic began, requiring all residents test daily and stay home as much as possible. Health, police and fire services staff are among the more than 570 infected cases, the government said on Thursday. Residents must test daily for the virus using Rapid Antigen kits. The Chinese special administrative region carried out three city-wide mass coronavirus tests for its more than 600,000 residents in the space of a week. More than 7,000 people are in mandatory quarantine.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/macau-covid-infections-rise-spread-extends-medics-police-2022-06-30/>

### **France's new wave of COVID infections expected to peak end-July -scientist**

A new wave in France of COVID-19 infections fuelled by emerging variants of the disease should peak towards end-July, the French government's top scientific adviser Jean-Francois Delfraissy said on Thursday. "The peak is not yet here, this peak of infections will probably be for end-July," Delfraissy told RTL radio. "Then the BA.5 variant will reappear, if it is not overtaken by another variant ...in autumn," he added.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/frances-new-wave-covid-infections-expected-peak-end-july-scientist-2022-06-30/>

### **Global COVID cases rise as BA.4 and BA.5 expand**

Four of the six WHO regions saw rises last week: the Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Americas. Globally, deaths stayed level, but were up in the Eastern Mediterranean, Southeast Asian, and Americas regions. About 4.1 million cases were reported to the WHO last week, likely an undercount given reduced testing in many countries. The United States, Germany, Brazil, Italy, and China reported the most cases. At a briefing today of the WHO's Pan American Health

Organization (PAHO), officials said cases rose in all four subregions in the Americas, with a jump of 24.6% in South America. Cases in North America rose 7.7% last week, mainly due to rises in the United States and Mexico.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/06/global-covid-cases-rise-ba4-and-ba5-expand>