

Demo

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Baird's Five Minute Briefing

What lessons can we learn on public health messaging during the pandemic?

- Has been an emphasis on rules and restrictions not on how the virus spread so positive intuitive actions not consciously sort
- Stress has been on scolding and shaming stories not personal harm reduction
- Need to help people socialise more safely in stories, not encourage them to stop
- Too strong a focus on individual actions erased a sizable proportion of pandemic victims from the public conversation - the poor and minorities who are dying disproportionately
- Give licence to people to dream about the end of the pandemic and connect to successful vaccination campaign progress

Get vaccinated, save lives

Getting the vaccine will protect you from the coronavirus – and it may keep people around you healthier, too

Health experts say the coronavirus vaccines may do more than protect recipients from covid-19. Researchers say people who are vaccinated and still contract the virus may carry less of it and also shed less of it – meaning those whom they expose to it may not become as sick. There isn't a lot of evidence yet to support this hypothesis, but researchers say it is likely the case based largely on observations in animal studies, as well as some preliminary research in humans. This, however, doesn't mean that vaccinated people should stop taking precautions, such as wearing a mask. "Even if you're vaccinated and you're going out, keep masking up until we get more people vaccinated," said Ilhem Messaoudi, director of the Center for Virus Research at the University of California at Irvine.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2021/02/27/covid-vaccine-viral-load/>

Vaccinated people may let their guard drop

People less likely to adhere to Covid rules after vaccination, expert says

Prof Susan Michie, the director of UCL's Centre for Behaviour Change, cited evidence from previous vaccine rollouts, recent national surveys suggesting people would be less likely to abide by the rules, and evidence from Israel, which has the highest Covid vaccination rate in the world, indicating this may be the case. "The concern is that as the vaccination programme rolls out and more people are getting vaccinated themselves and seeing other people in their community getting vaccinated, that people may drop their guard," she told BBC Radio 4's Today programme. She referred to evidence from Lyme disease and influenza vaccine rollouts where those vaccinated were less likely to adhere to preventative behaviours, along with national surveys from December in which 29% of people said that after getting vaccinated they would adhere less strictly and 11% said they would not follow the rules.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/feb/27/people-less-likely-adhere-covid-rules-after-vaccination>

Public health messaging - what we can do better

5 Pandemic Mistakes We Keep Repeating

One might have expected the initial approval of the coronavirus vaccines to spark similar

jubilant—especially after a brutal pandemic year. But that didn't happen. Instead, the steady drumbeat of good news about the vaccines has been met with a chorus of relentless pessimism.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/02/how-public-health-messaging-backfired/618147/>

Could Test and Trace be an unwitting casualty of ramped up vaccination programmes?

Plunging COVID-19 test demand may leave US with supply glut

Just five weeks ago, Los Angeles County was conducting more than 350,000 weekly coronavirus tests, including at a massive drive-thru site at Dodger Stadium, as health workers raced to contain the worst COVID-19 hotspot in the U.S. Now, county officials say testing has nearly collapsed. More than 180 government-supported sites are operating at only a third of their capacity. "It's shocking how quickly we've gone from moving at 100 miles an hour to about 25," said Dr. Clemens Hong, who leads the county's testing operation. After a year of struggling to boost testing, communities across the country are seeing plummeting demand, shuttering testing sites or even trying to return supplies.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/plunging-covid19-test-demand-may-leave-us-with-supply-glut-us-ap-testing-testing-los-angeles-county-b1808458.html>

Is there a risk Covid-19 becomes a disease of the poor?

Is Covid at risk of becoming a disease of the poor?

Detailed data on uptake down to a community level is not being published by the government to the frustration of many - the figures for Birmingham were published by the council. But what information is available suggests the poorest and most ethnically diverse communities (there is a huge overlap between the two) are seeing the lowest levels of uptake.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-56162075>

Vaccines coming to the rescue

Pfizer-BioNTech Shot Could Help End Pandemic, Israel Study Shows

Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE's Covid-19 vaccine was overwhelmingly effective against the virus in a study that followed nearly 1.2 million people in Israel, results that public-health experts said show that immunizations could end the pandemic. Two doses of the vaccine prevented 94% of Covid-19 cases in 596,618 people vaccinated between Dec. 20 and Feb. 1, about one-quarter of whom were over the age of 60, teams from the Clalit Research Institute and Harvard University reported in a study published Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine.

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/health-law-and-business/pfizer-biontech-shot-could-help-end-pandemic-israel-study-shows?context=search&index=6>

Canada approves AstraZeneca's COVID-19 shot in boost to campaign

Canada's drug regulator on Friday approved AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine, including the version produced by the Serum Institute of India, paving the way for health authorities to accelerate Canada's lagging vaccination campaign. The vaccines produced by AstraZeneca Plc and the Serum Institute were approved under Canada's interim order system, which allows for accelerated approvals similar to the US Food and Drug Administration's emergency use authorisation.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/26/canada-approves-astrazenecas-covid-19-shot-in-boost-to-campaign>

J&J's One-Shot Covid Vaccine Receives FDA Advisers' Backing

Presentations show low rate of side effects, rising immunity. Clearance could come soon after panel's vote to recommend. Experts advising the U.S. Food and Drug Administration voted 22-0, with no abstentions, that the benefits of the vaccine outweigh its risks in adults 18 and older, a decision that could help bolster the vaccine supply as new variants continue to spread. The FDA usually follows the nonbinding recommendations of its advisory panels and could authorize the shot within days.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-02-26/j-j-s-one-shot-covid-19-vaccine-receives-fda-advisers-backing>

EU medicines regulator approves Regeneron Covid-19 therapy

Regeneron's synthetic antibody treatment was used to treat former US President Donald Trump after he contracted coronavirus last year.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/eu-medicines-regulator-approves-regeneron-covid-19-therapy-101614361313426.html>

South Korea launches review of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine

South Korea has begun a review of Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine after the U.S. pharmaceutical firm submitted an application for approval, the government said on Saturday. The food and drug safety ministry said it would study the one-shot vaccine with private advisory panels before it authorises the vaccine.

https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-southkorea-idUKKBN2AR03Q?taid=6039cbfb7459310001cdea0e&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

More lockdown restrictions

Czech government tightens lockdown, limits movement to fight COVID surge

The Czech government announced on Friday strict new restrictions limiting people's movement over the next three weeks and tightening shop and school closures in a bid to slow a fast spread of COVID-19 infections. The country is facing a renewed surge in infections, accelerated by the British variant. The number of patients in serious condition is a record. Some hospitals have been forced to transfer patients hundreds of miles away due to capacity.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-czech/czech-government-tightens-lockdown-limits-movement-to-fight-covid-surge-idUSKBN2AQ23G?il=0>

Greece extends lockdown to more areas to stem spread of pandemic

Greece extended lockdown restrictions on Friday to more areas of the country as the COVID-19 pandemic showed no signs of waning exactly one year after its first coronavirus infection was detected, health authorities said. From Saturday, the islands of Lefkada, Syros and Samos, the towns of Arta and Amphiloikia in western Greece, the wider area around Corinth in the Peloponnese and Heraklion on the island of Crete will all be in lockdown.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-greece-lockdown/greece-extends-lockdown-to-more-areas-to-stem-spread-of-pandemic-idUSL1N2KW2AC>

Brazil's capital goes into lockdown to quell COVID-19 surge

The governor of Brazil's capital city, Brasilia, decreed a 24-hour lockdown for all but essential services on Friday to curb a worsening COVID-19 outbreak that has filled its intensive care wards to the brim.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-brazil-lockdown-su/brazils-capital-goes-into-lockdown-to-quell-covid-19-surge-idUSKBN2AR04B>

New Zealand's largest city back in lockdown as Covid lingers

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern ordered New Zealand's largest city back into lockdown on Saturday as Covid-19 cases continued to be detected in the community. Ardern said a new coronavirus case confirmed on Saturday could not be directly connected to other positive tests over the last two weeks, although a school in South Auckland was a common link. From Sunday morning the city's 1.7 million residents must stay at home except for essential shopping and work. The latest restrictions in Auckland will last at least seven days and come less than two weeks after a three-day shutdown in the city.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/new-zealands-largest-city-back-in-lockdown-as-covid-lingers/ar-BB1e4jOm>

Paris eyes three-week Covid-19 lockdown in bid to then 'reopen everything'

The city of Paris is considering proposing a three-week lockdown in a bid to "reopen everything" in the City of Lights afterwards, the deputy mayor said Thursday, calling the current nighttime curfew a "half-measure" and a "semi-prison" that never ends. In an interview with French broadcaster Franceinfo, Deputy Mayor Emmanuel Grégoire said that the left-wing run city hall was considering proposing an independent local lockdown for the French capital to stem the "worrying" rise of new coronavirus infections there, with "the prospect of reopening everything" after, including its theatres, cinemas and restaurants.

<https://www.france24.com/en/france/20210226-paris-eyes-three-week-covid-19-lockdown-in-bid-to-then-reopen-everything>

Brazilian 'variant of concern' found in UK

Covid-19: Brazil 'variant of concern' detected in UK

The Brazil variant is something officials are worried about because it shares similar mutations to the South Africa variant of concern. Both have undergone genetic changes that could make them more contagious and perhaps less easy to stop with our current vaccines. The coronavirus jabs being given to people now were designed around earlier versions of the pandemic virus, not these new variants. Scientists believe they should still protect, although perhaps not quite as well. Work is already under way to redesign or tweak the vaccines to make them a better match for some of these new "variants of concern". These updated vaccines could be ready within months, meaning the UK would have millions of doses ready to give people a booster shot before next winter to make sure the population is protected.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56233038>

A new form of vaccine hesitancy, vaccine preference?

India's health workers balk at taking homegrown COVID vaccine

India is struggling to convince its healthcare and front-line workers to take a homegrown COVID-19 vaccine controversially approved without late-stage efficacy data, government data showed on Thursday, days ahead of a wider roll-out. The country has the world's second-highest number of COVID-19 infections after the United States, with cases recently surging as mask-wearing declines and states have eased social distancing measures.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/25/indias-health-workers-balk-at-taking-homegrown-covid-vaccine>

Germans say 'Nein Danke' to Oxford/AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine

The head of STIKO, Thomas Mertens, conceded on BBC's Radio 4 Today program Thursday morning that in terms of slow take-up, his panel's assessment "may be part of the problem." "[Even though] we always stated that [our assessment] had nothing to do with the safety of the vaccine ... we never criticized the vaccine to be unsafe," he added. Mertens noted that there are now 1.4 million doses of the vaccine in Germany, while only about 240,000 have been administered. "We are working quite hard ... to try and convince people to accept the vaccine and really to build ... trust in the vaccine among the population," he said. The government is also rushing to regain this trust, assuring citizens that the vaccine provides reliable protection from severe and lethal cases of COVID-19. "The vaccine ... is safe and highly effective," tweeted government spokesman Steffen Seibert on Monday. "It prevents many infections and protects against serious illnesses. Vaccination can save lives."

<https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-coronavirus-vaccine-conundrum-oxford-astrazeneca/>