

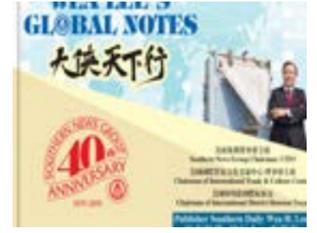


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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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U.S. hit by spike in coronavirus cases; rising infections strain Europe's hospitals



FILE PHOTO: Medics bring a patient suspected of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) case, to a hospital in Bialystok, Poland, April 1, 2020. Agnieszka Sadowska/Agencja Gazeta via REUTERS

AMSTERDAM/NEW YORK (Reuters) - Europe's hospital systems are at risk of buckling under the strain of soaring COVID-19 infections that put the continent again at the center of the global pandemic on Wednesday while nearly two-thirds of U.S. states were in a danger zone of coronavirus spread.

With European case numbers that were brought largely under control by the unprecedented lockdowns in March and April now resurging relentlessly, authorities in countries from Poland to Portugal have expressed mounting alarm at the renewed crisis confronting their health infrastructure.

Belgium, struggling with what its health minister called a "tsunami" of infections, is postponing all non-essential hospital procedures, and similar measures are looming in other countries.

"If the rhythm of the past week continues, rescheduling and suspending some non-priority activities will become unavoidable," said Julio Pascual, medical director at Barcelona's Hospital del Mar.

In the United States, 32 of 50 states have entered a danger zone with more than 100 new cases per 100,000 residents over the past week, and nationally the country averaged 120 cases per 100,000 people, its highest since a peak in July, according to a Reuters analysis.

A block of states in the Midwest and Mountain regions

from Idaho to Illinois were a red zone along with Alaska, denoting rapidly rising infection. The Midwest hit a record on Monday with over 27,000 new infections and hospitalizations also climbed to a record high of 10,830 for a fifth day in a row on Tuesday, Reuters figures showed.

"We are not far from the period of exponential, explosive growth of #covid19 in the U.S.," said Dr. Leana Wen, former Baltimore health commissioner, on Twitter. "We've seen two surges like this before. The difference now is that there are virus hotspots all over the country & the winter is still ahead."

Similar to Europe, this raised fears hospitals could become overwhelmed like in the early months of the pandemic in the U.S. Northeast.

Boston's public school system announced that students will shift to remote learning beginning Thursday due to the rising COVID-19 infection rate in the city, and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy said he will quarantine himself after coming in contact with a person who tested positive for the coronavirus.

In Berlin, German Health Minister Jens Spahn also tested positive after taking part in a cabinet meeting earlier in the day, but the cabinet will not have to quarantine because of its compliance with hygiene and distance rules.

To complicate Europe's situation, widespread coronavirus fatigue and the frightening economic impact of the crisis have

eroded broad public support for the lockdowns ordered earlier in the year to stop health services from being overwhelmed.

Unwilling to shut down their countries again, governments have sought less drastic measures to limit public gatherings and balance the need to keep their economies turning with holding back the pandemic.

According to data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Europe has registered more than 5 million cases and 200,000 deaths, with new cases beginning to spike sharply from the end of September.

While well below levels at the peak of the crisis six months ago, COVID-19 hospital admissions and occupancy are again high - defined as at least 25% of the peak of the pandemic - or rising in 20 countries, its latest weekly summary said last week.

The capacity of hospitals to handle a wave of coronavirus patients, as well as people suffering from cancer, heart disease and other serious conditions, is still vulnerable.

Dutch health authorities said that if the number of COVID-19 patients in hospital wards continues to grow, three-quarters of regular care may have to be scrapped by the end of November, and there were similar warnings from Czech authorities.

"We have hit a wall on clinical beds," said Wouter van der Horst, spokesman for the Dutch hospital association NVZ.



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

10/21/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

International Community Supports Joe Biden

The Asian American and Pacific Islander and AAPIs Group have organized with local Houston community leaders a rally of support for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris on Saturday, October 24th from 3-5pm at the Southern News Group compound.

The rally will be featured on Joe Biden's Instagram page. We are also partnering with members of the Korean, South Asian, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and other local groups to attend the event.

We are urging all people to show their support for this very important election on November 3rd.

The United States of America with the ability to draw hard-working people from all corners of the world has always made us stronger.

As president, candidate Joe Biden will make his commitment to ensure that all the people will be treated with dignity, no matter their race or ethnicity.

Today, our country needs moral leadership and a unifying force to fight for our future.

We are very proud to host this event and invite you to join us at the October 24th rally. Time is running out and this is the time we all need to be united.



Southern News Group 40th Anniversary 1979-2019

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Stay Home!

BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

40 Million Coronavirus Cases Now Reported Worldwide



More than 40 million coronavirus infections have now been reported worldwide. Here, a staff member at a school in Moscow uses an infrared thermometer on Monday to screen students. (Photo/S. Fadeichev/TASS via Getty Images)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The world hit a new benchmark in the COVID-19 pandemic on Monday, surpassing 40 million coronavirus infections, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. With the flu season looming, the rate of new cases in the U.S. and other countries is rising at rates not seen in months.

The disease has killed more than 1.1 million people, including nearly 220,000 in the U.S., which remains the world's worst-hit country despite having less than 5% of the global population.

A worrying rise in new cases has triggered new shutdowns across Europe, where France, Belgium and the Czech Republic are among the countries seeing a surge in cases. Many of the measures announced this month are local or partial closures, as officials try to avoid the national lockdowns that have wreaked economic havoc in 2020.

India has seen its rate of new cases fall in recent weeks, after a meteoric rise in August and September. More than 114,000 people there have died from COVID-19.

The U.S. once again has the highest new case rate in the world. The seven-day daily average in the U.S. is nearing the 60,000 mark — the level the country maintained for weeks this past summer during an alarming surge.

"New cases have gone up by nearly 30% from two weeks ago" in the U.S., as NPR's Will Stone reports.

The 10 countries with the most infections as of Monday morning are:



United States: 8,156,970; India: 7,550,273; Brazil: 5,235,344; Russia: 1,406,504; Argentina: 989,680; Colombia: 959,572; France: 938,606; Spain: 936,560; Peru: 868,675; Mex-

ico: 851,227.

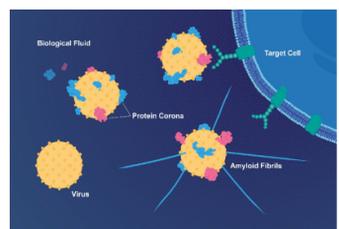
By February of next year, the global death toll could rise to 2.4 million people, according to a widely cited fatality projection by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, or IHME, a research center at the University of Washington. The institute warns that an additional 1 million people could die if health mandates are eased.

Health experts are urging people to wear face masks and to get vaccinated against the seasonal flu, hoping to minimize an illness that normally kills between 12,000 and 61,000 people in the U.S. each year. Cooler temperatures will mean people spend more time indoors — where both influenza and the coronavirus are more easily spread.

Related

Coronavirus Breakthrough: Researchers Discover Protein Neuropilin-1 Linked To COVID-19 Spread

BRISTOL, United Kingdom — Despite millions of cases and months of research, scientists have had tremendous difficulty pinning down what makes COVID-19 so infectious. Now, a team in the United Kingdom says they've made a breakthrough in understanding the virus. Their study has uncovered the interaction between human cells and virus particles which makes the pandemic spread. Researchers from the University of Bristol reveal SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19, recognizes and seeks out a protein called neuropilin-1. This protein is on the surface of human cells and facilitates the infection process. Scientists have known that SARS-CoV-2 first attacks cells in the lungs or intestinal tract.



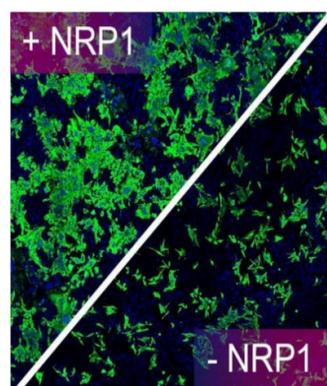
Viruses wearing "protein coats."

The virus then uses its "spike" protein to latch on, hijack cells, and force them to replicate more virus particles. Knowing how COVID-19 attacks cells and spreads throughout the body may give researchers the clue they need to block these interactions between COVID-19 and neuropilin-1.

"In looking at the sequence of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein we were struck by the presence of a small sequence of amino acids that appeared to mimic a protein sequence found in human proteins which interact with neuropilin-1," study authors say in a media release.

"This led us to propose a simple hypothesis: could the Spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 associate with neuropilin-1 to aid viral infection of human cells? Excitingly, in applying a range of structural and biochemical approaches we have been able to establish that the Spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 does indeed bind to neuropilin-1."

Blocking the spread of coronavirus with +NRP1



Using the breakthrough findings, the team adds monoclonal antibodies may help reduce the SARS-CoV-2's ability to hijack human cells. These antibodies are lab-synthesized proteins which resemble natural antibodies in the body. A number of specific drugs may also help break up COVID-19's cellular takeover.

The study notes that teams at the Technical University of Munich in Germany and the University of Helsinki in Finland have also discovered this link to neuro-

pilin-1.

"This serves to highlight the potential therapeutic value of our discovery in the fight against COVID-19," adds Dr. Yohei Yamauchi, Dr. Boris Simonetti, and Professor Peter Cullen.

"To defeat COVID-19 we will be relying on an effective vaccine and an arsenal of anti-viral therapeutics. Our discovery of the binding of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike to neuropilin-1 and its importance for viral infectivity provides a previously unrecognized avenue for anti-viral therapies to curb the current COVID-19 pandemic." This study appeared in the journal Science. (Courtesy www.studyfinds.org)

APPLY NOW!

COVID-19 Small Business Relief & Recovery Loan Program

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on businesses across the 13-County Gulf Coast region of Texas. The Economic Development Administration awarded H-GAC funds to help businesses not only survive the pandemic but recover after it ends. H-GAC will leverage these funds to provide substantive assistance to as many businesses as possible.

LOAN TERMS

- Must be located in the 13-County Gulf Coast region of Texas
- Up to \$50,000
- Three-month grace period before payments begin
- 0% interest the first year after receipt of the loan
- 4% interest after first year
- Five-year term

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the loan program during our COVID-19 Regional Small Business Relief & Recovery webinar: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 11 a.m. [Click here to register.](#)

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Online application
- Two years of financial documents
- Most recent financial documents for 2020
- Debt schedule
- Personal financial statements for all owners with at least 20% ownership
- Copy of current rent/mortgage statement
- Copy of lease agreement
- Copy of liability insurance

HOW TO APPLY

Visit h-gac.com to apply, starting October 14th at 11 p.m. after the webinar.

CONTACT US

Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation
Website: h-gac.com
Email: loan@h-gac.com
Phone: 855-304-5516

Editor's Choice



A person holds a flag while watching a drive-in viewing of Los Angeles Dodgers against the Tampa Bay Rays during game 1 of the 2020 World Series in the parking lot of Dodgers Stadium in Los Angeles, California. REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni



Staff member marks seats for social distancing at a movie theatre in Jakarta, Indonesia. REUTERS/Ajeng Dinar Ulfiana



An Ethnic Armenian soldier smokes a cigarette in a trench at fighting positions on the front line during a military conflict against Azerbaijan's armed forces in the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh. REUTERS/Stringer



A healthcare worker performs a COVID-19 test at a drive-thru testing site at Bellin Health, one of the hospitals attending to a surge of cases in Green Bay, Wisconsin. REUTERS/Gabriela Bhaskar



A boy in the audience holds up four fingers during U.S. President Donald Trump's campaign rally at Erie International Airport in Erie, Pennsylvania. REUTERS/Tom Brenner



A man carries geese on top of his car as he drives on a highway that leads to the city of Ganja, Azerbaijan. REUTERS/Umit Bektas



Britain's Prince Edward and Sophie, Countess of Wessex smile with schoolchildren during a visit to see Vauxhall City Farm's community engagement and education programs in action, as the farm marks the start of Black History Month in London



Police officers wearing protective gear stand in formation near the parliament during a protest against a proposed constitution amendment in Colombo, Sri Lanka. REUTERS/Dinuka Liyanawatte

CDC Flooded With Large Number Of Calls About Coronavirus Conspiracy Theory



Photo Illustration by The Daily Beast/Getty

KEY POINTS
CRANK CALLERS

Promoted by the Trump campaign and the increasingly off-centered QAnon conspiracy cult, a bogus COVID-19 statistic briefly took root—and tied up largely CDC officials.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have been deluged with a flood of media requests about a conspiracy theory promulgated by QAnon—an increasingly violent far-right group praised by President Donald Trump that is widely known for spreading disinformation.

As the agency attempted to manage the fallout of a controversial Health and Human Services announcement that it had revised testing guidelines to exclude individuals who do not exhibit symptoms, officials were sidetracked by a barrage of inquiries about whether the CDC had lied about the number of Americans who died as a result of the coronavirus.

Over the weekend QAnon, a movement whose believers often push out falsities on a myriad of subjects, promoted a bogus theory that only 6 percent of people listed as having died from the coronavirus had “actually died” from COVID-19.

Officials at the CDC said they spent the

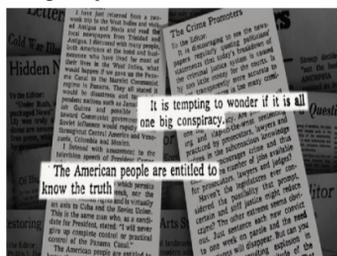
last several days fielding questions or requests for comment from dozens of local and national outlets asking to clarify whether the agency had falsified its data. The wave of emails and calls about the conspiracy theory caught officials off-guard.



Fauci: “I Was Under Anesthesia When COVID Guidelines Changed.”

“The amount of requests we had to deal with on this issue was insane,” one senior official said. “And these were from legitimate outlets. This is all easily debunked by just searching our website for the

actual statistics.” The CDC effort to combat accusations from QAnon, a relatively new, increasingly unhinged movement that’s making inroads into online health communities, shows the power that conspiracy theorists can have during the pandemic—especially when boosted by the president. It also shows just how permeable the barrier between conspiracy cranks and established media outlets can be. “In all my time working in the government I’ve never had to deal with something this crazy. The level of disinformation spread by this group has grown in recent months and now we’re having to actively debunk it through the press.”



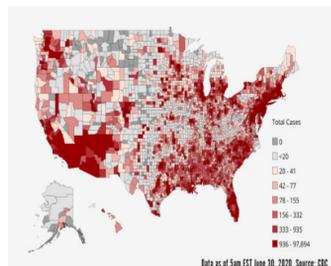
The “six percent” claim was embraced by conservatives, who have been eager for ways to downplay the virus’ American death toll and have claimed for months that the CDC and hospitals were overcounting COVID-19 deaths. To QAnon supporters, the claim purports to show that COVID-19 has killed only 9,000 people, with the vast majority of the roughly 183,000 COVID-19 casualties actually killed by another ailment. But they were wrong. In one section of an older data set, which relied on information collected from death certificates—one of the two main ways the CDC analyzes mortality in the U.S.—6 percent of people were listed as dying from COVID-19 alone. The death certificate algorithm scans for words such as “COVID-19” and “novel coronavirus” when analyzing mortality. In 94 percent of deaths with COVID-19, other conditions were listed in addition to COVID-19, such as diabetes or hypertension. Those conditions are often listed in the part of the death certificate that includes events that lead to an individual’s death.

“Despite the QAnon calculation errors, the claim has been boosted

by President Trump and his campaign.”

Despite the QAnon calculation errors, the claim has been boosted by President Trump and his campaign. Trump himself retweeted a post promoting the false statistic before Twitter deleted it for violating company rules, while Trump campaign senior legal adviser Jenna Ellis posted a link to an article on fringe website The Gateway Pundit trumpeting the 6 percent figure.

United States COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by County



The claim has also been promoted by high-profile QAnon conspiracy theorists, who believe that Trump is secretly engaged in a shadowy war against a global cabal of cannibal-pedophiles. The tweet Trump reposted, for example, came from a Twitter user and QAnon believer named “Mel Q,” a reference to QAnon.

This isn’t the first time during the pandemic that QAnon believers have played a key role in promoting coronavirus disinformation. Social media networks of QAnon supporters have become powerful ways to disseminate bogus stories about COVID-19, with QAnon believers promoting the viral disinformation video “Plandemic,” among others. The debacle over QAnon’s inaccurate read of the mortality statistics is just the latest example of how the CDC has in recent months tried to combat efforts by Trump and his supporters to downplay the death count.

Earlier this summer, Trump and members of his coronavirus task force pushed for the CDC to change the way it counted COVID-19 deaths. As The Daily Beast previously reported, The White House pressed the agency to work with states to change how they count coronavirus deaths and report them back to the federal government.



Dr. Deborah Birx, the coordinator of the U.S. coronavirus task force.

Deborah Birx, the coordinator of the task force, urged CDC officials to exclude from coronavirus death-count reporting some of those individuals who either do not have confirmed lab results and are presumed positive or who have the virus and may not have died as a direct result of it. Officials inside the CDC pushed back, claiming the move would skew mortality statistics. Since then, the team inside the CDC in charge of counting deaths has worked overtime to ensure the data it publishes on the agency’s website is accurate and as up-to-date as possible.

The running narrative within the team is that the U.S. has underestimated, not overcounted, the number of people who have died from the coronavirus. As of Sept. 1, the CDC has reported that 183,050 Americans have died since the start of the pandemic. (Courtesy <https://www.thedailybeast.com/>)



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• Tanglewood Clinic

Amy En-Hui Chen, M.D.
Family Medicine
Mandarin
• Meyerland Plaza Clinic

Frank Hua, M.D.
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Mandarin
• Spring Medical and Diagnostic Center

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