

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

12th Jul 2021

Overnight News RoundUp

Creator of Oxford vaccine Sarah Gilbert warns vulnerable will have to shield as COVID-19 cases rise

- The most vulnerable in the population may have no choice but to restart shielding after the remaining lockdown rules are removed in England on 19 July, the creator of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine has warned.
- [The government has not yet issued guidance for how 3.8 million people classed as clinically extremely vulnerable should protect themselves from COVID-19 as social distancing and compulsory mask wearing comes to an end.](#)
- Dame Sarah Gilbert, who led the Oxford vaccine team, told the 'i': 'In people who have been vaccinated and have had the two doses, they will be well protected against disease that is severe enough to put them in hospital and against death. But that's only about half the country who have had their two doses, so that leaves about half the country that have not.'
- 'And there are unfortunately some people with particular health conditions that mean they just don't respond to a vaccine, and they are going to have to make sure that they are protected, probably by shielding again, if there is a lot of spread of the virus.'
- New guidance for the vulnerable could be issued on Monday when the Prime Minister confirms whether the final lifting of restrictions is going to go ahead on 19 July, No 10 has suggested.
- Charities and peers have demanded more clarity from the government, warning that the 3.8m are being left 'in limbo' and were unable to make firm plans for after 19 July if they were going to be asked to shield.
- A Downing Street spokesman said 'we've provided guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people throughout the pandemic and we will update that ahead of Step Four. If people are worried then they can speak to their GPs for advice on how to manage the risks for COVID-19.'
- Among the clinically vulnerable, 94% have had at least one vaccine dose and just over 90% have had a second dose. However, the vaccine is likely to work somewhat less well in those with serious pre-existing conditions and the very elderly. For the immunocompromised or immunosuppressed, being vaccinated sometimes provides very little protection at all.
- Sir Edward Davey, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, warned that the most vulnerable were being put in a difficult position by the change of rules, saying: 'If you were a shielder, would you go on the tube? I don't think so.'
- A coalition of 16 health charities has called for more government support to go to around 500,000 people who are believed to have severely weakened immune systems as coronavirus infections continue to rise with experts expecting a continued increase in the coming weeks.
- Fiona Loud of Kidney Care UK said: 'We of course understand and share the desire to return to something close to normality again, but this cannot be at the expense of thousands of lives. The needs and safety of those at risk must be considered as a matter of urgency as the country lifts the measures which were providing some protection for them.'

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<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/creator-oxford-vaccine-sarah-gilbert-warns-vulnerable-will-have-shield-covid-19-cases-rise-1096315>

G20 warns of risk to global recovery from virus variants

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Variants, vaccine shortfalls raise risks-G20. Global tax deal on course for October signing. But US, EU hurdles could complicate things. Call for financial stability to be ensured

<https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/g20-signs-off-tax-crackdown-warns-virus-variants-2021-07-10/>

Opinion | Uganda Did Everything Right on Covid. And the Worst Is Still Here.

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Early in the pandemic, Uganda bought itself precious time at great economic cost to protect its people from Covid-19. There were lockdowns, international travel was restricted, and border screenings were introduced to prevent entry of the coronavirus. Cases of Covid-19 identified at borders or in communities were isolated, and people who had been in contact with those infected were quarantined and checked on by public health authorities.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/opinion/uganda-covid-vaccines.html>

Students don't need masks at school if they are fully vaccinated, CDC says

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Fully vaccinated students do not need to wear masks in classrooms this fall, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday. The guidance, which goes beyond mask-wearing, is aimed at kindergartners through high school seniors, and is meant "to help keep kids in classrooms, as well as participating in any sports or extracurricular activities," said Erin Sauber-Schatz, who heads the CDC's Community Interventions and Critical Populations Task Force.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/students-don-t-need-masks-school-if-they-are-fully-n1273454>

U.S. CDC updates school guidance to emphasize in-person learning

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The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday updated its guidance for U.S. schools reopening in the fall, recommending masking indoors for everyone who is not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and three feet of distance within classrooms. The agency said school administrators can require indoor mask use even for students and educators who are vaccinated, depending on the needs of the community. Reasons would include schools with children under age 12, who are not currently authorized to receive COVID-19 vaccines, or high rates of COVID-19 transmission in the region.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/cdc-recommends-masking-indoors-unvaccinated-students-teachers-us-schools-2021-07-09/>

All children 'to be offered flu jab' amid fears of horror winter

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All children in Britain could be offered flu jabs this autumn amid fears that the UK could be facing one of its worst flu seasons in history. Those under the age of 16, as well as over 50s, will be included in the rollout, alongside millions of others with common health conditions, according to the Telegraph. Sources told the paper that vaccinations will be expanded this year to cover all pupils at secondary school, making it the biggest immunisation programme on record. Jabs are usually only granted to under-fives, primary school pupils, and those in the first year of secondary school.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/children-flu-jab-season-b944904.html>

Native Americans continue to boast highest vaccination rates in the US

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Native Americans have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic, dying at higher rates than other populations. Now, Native Americans have the highest COVID-19 vaccination rate in the United States. After successfully vaccinating much of their own population, the Indian Health Service has even begun offering doses to visitors.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/562270-native-americans-continue-to-boast-highest>

Oxford told to reduce travel with mass testing for under 30s to slow Covid surge

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People living in Oxford are being urged to reduce their travel and surge testing is being brought into the city to tackle soaring Covid cases. Mass testing for people under 30s is also being rolled out. As part of the new measures, which will come into place on Monday, people living in Oxford will also be urged to get the Covid jab. Similar measures have already been introduced across the North West, and Bedford and Birmingham.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-oxford-told-reduce-travel-24502245>

Covid 'immunity debt' sees influx of sick children in New Zealand hospitals

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Immunity debt from Covid-19 lockdown is causing an influx of babies with a severe respiratory virus into hospitals in New Zealand, it is reported. The phenomenon occurs where people who have not been exposed to normal levels of viruses and bacteria experience a surge in infections as normal life resumes.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/nz-children-covid-immunity-debt-b1880753.html>

Public alarm grows at Boris Johnson's plan for Covid 'freedom day'

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Boris Johnson faces a growing revolt over plans to end most Covid restrictions on 19 July – including the mandatory wearing of face masks on public transport and in hospitals – as half of the public now say they want “freedom day” to be delayed. Last night, as doctors and other NHS workers demanded that mask-wearing continue in hospitals, regional political leaders broke ranks, saying they would override the national government on the issue and strongly advise people to continue wearing masks on public transport.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/10/public-alarm-grows-at-boris-johnsons-plan-for-covid-freedom-day>

As the Delta variant spreads, Republican reluctance will mean thousands more deaths

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Unfortunately, millions of Trump's followers were convinced by his behavior during his last year in office that COVID was not a crisis. No matter what he says today, they remain convinced that the virus was a political attack, a hoax or simply overblown, regardless of the monumental body count.

And then there's the relentless disinformation campaign coming from right-wing media. Here's a little taste:

<https://www.salon.com/2021/07/09/as-the-delta-variant-spreads-republican-reluctance-will-mean-thousands-more-deaths/>

Covid passports 'WILL be compulsory in pubs, clubs and restaurants' to prevent fourth wave

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The government hopes Covid passports will encourage vaccine-shy young people to get jabbed. By September, all adults over 18 should have been offered both vaccine doses, allowing for the passports. Patrons will need to show proof of either two vaccine doses or a recent negative test under the proposals

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9774653/Covid-passports-compulsory-pubs-clubs-restaurants-prevent-fourth-wave.html>

South Africa extends tight COVID-19 restrictions for another 14 days

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South Africa extended tight COVID-19 rules on Sunday for another 14 days, maintaining restrictions that include a ban on gatherings, a curfew from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. and a prohibition on the sale of alcohol. The country, the worst-hit on the African continent in terms of recorded cases and deaths, is in the grip of a third wave of infections driven by the more infectious Delta coronavirus variant.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/south-africa-extends-tight-covid-19-restrictions-another-14-days-2021-07-11/>

Sydney faces COVID-19 lockdown extension amid record 2021 cases

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Australia's New South Wales flags lockdown extension after record cases Reuters Locked-down Sydney warned worse may be ahead, COVID-19 cases at 2021 high swissinfo.ch Sydney to face prolonged COVID-19 lockdown amid record cases Nasdaq Sydney COVID-19 Lockdown Extended For Another Week Due to Rise in Coronavirus Cases Latest LYView Full coverage on Google News

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/australia-says-pfizer-expand-covid-19-vaccine-supply-amid-sydney-outbreak-2021-07-08/>

Woman infected with two different Covid variants at the same time, researchers find

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A 90-year-old woman in Belgium was infected with two different variants of the Covid-19 virus at the same time, researchers have found, in what is one of the first documented cases of its kind. The unvaccinated woman was admitted to hospital in the Belgian city of Aalst on 3 March of this year following a number of falls and was confirmed as being Covid positive on the same day. Despite showing no initial signs of respiratory distress, she soon deteriorated and died five days after her admission.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/covid-variant-cases-infection-mutation-b1881309.html>

Pfizer to Request FDA Authorization for Covid Vaccine Booster Shot in August

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Pfizer plans to request U.S. emergency authorization in August for a third booster dose of its Covid-19 vaccine, based on early data showing that it can sharply increase immune protection against the coronavirus. At the same time, however, federal health officials signaled that they would take a cautious approach to potential booster shots, and underlined that the currently available vaccines are effective at keeping people from being sickened by the coronavirus. Pfizer has received initial data from an early human study showing that a third dose of its existing coronavirus vaccine

is safe and can raise neutralizing antibody levels by 5 to 10 fold compared with the original vaccine, the company's research head, Mikael Dolsten, said

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-08/pfizer-plans-to-request-fda-nod-for-covid-booster-in-august>

Sinovac's Vaccine Found Inferior to Pfizer Shot in Chile Study

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Sinovac's vaccine was less potent than Pfizer's at stopping Covid-19 in Chile where the two shots were used simultaneously, allowing the first real-world comparison of the two inoculations. China's CoronaVac was 66% effective in preventing Covid among fully vaccinated adults, compared with 93% or the jab made by Pfizer and its partner BioNTech. The research shows both shots protect against severe disease. Sinovac's inactivated inoculation, given to more than 10 million Chileans, was slightly less effective in preventing hospitalization and deaths than Pfizer's messenger RNA vaccine, which was administered to fewer than half a million people, according to the study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-08/china-made-vaccine-found-inferior-to-pfizer-shot-in-chile-study>

Pfizer, U.S. health officials to discuss COVID boosters on Monday -company

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COVID-19 vaccine maker Pfizer Inc will meet with federal health officials as soon as Monday to discuss the need for a booster dose of the coronavirus vaccine as it prepares to seek authorization, the company said on Sunday. The meeting comes days after the drugmaker and its partner BioNTech SE announced plans to seek U.S. and European regulatory approval for a third dose of their COVID-19 shot amid the spread of variants and data they said showed heightened risk of infection six months after initial inoculation.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/pfizer-us-health-officials-discuss-covid-boosters-monday-company-2021-07-11/>

Saudi Arabia approves Moderna's COVID vaccine -state news agency

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Saudi Arabia's Food and Drug Authority on Friday approved Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for use in the kingdom, the state news agency (SPA) said. The authority added that after this approval, authorities will start procedures to import the two-dose vaccine, the news agency said. Saudi Arabia had earlier approved the use of the Pfizer, AstraZeneca and the Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/saudi-arabia-approves-modernas-covid-vaccine-state-news-agency-2021-07-09/>

Benefits of mRNA COVID vaccines outweigh rare heart risks, says WHO

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The benefits of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines outweigh the very small risk they might cause heart inflammation, as the jabs reduce hospitalisations and deaths, an advisory panel of the World Health Organization said on Friday. In a statement, the WHO said that reports of two rare conditions - myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart, and of its lining, called pericarditis - had typically occurred within days of vaccination, mainly among younger males after the second dose.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/benefits-mrna-covid-vaccines-outweigh-rare-heart-risk-says-who-2021-07-09/>

COVID and the brain: researchers zero in on how damage occurs

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How COVID-19 damages the brain is becoming clearer. New evidence suggests that the coronavirus's assault on the brain could be multipronged: it might attack certain brain cells directly, reduce blood flow to brain tissue or trigger production of immune molecules that can harm brain

cells. Infection with the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 can cause memory loss, strokes and other effects on the brain. The question, says Serena Spudich, a neurologist at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, is: "Can we intervene early to address these abnormalities so that people don't have long-term problems?"

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01693-6>

Scotland's Covid case surge drops off after the football team's exit from Euro 2020, expert claims

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Professor Paul Hunter claims Scotland's cases' rounding off was caused by the team's exit from Euro 2020. Cases in Scotland skyrocketed last month, up from less than 500 on June 1 to more than 4,000 on July 1. Researchers blamed the sudden surge on people meeting up in pubs and homes to watch matches

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9771957/Scotlands-Covid-case-surge-drops-football-teams-exit-Euro-2020-expert-claims.html>

Inhaled COVID-19 vaccine prevents disease and transmission in animals

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In a new study assessing the potential of a single-dose, intranasal COVID-19 vaccine, a team from the University of Iowa and the University of Georgia found that the vaccine fully protects mice against lethal COVID-19 infection. The vaccine also blocks animal-to-animal transmission of the virus. The findings were published July 2 in the journal Science Advances.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/07/210708135321.htm>

Health Ministry experts vote to vaccinate under-12s in exceptional cases

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Decision coincides with Pfizer clinical trials on safety and efficacy of vaccine among children aged six months to 12 years, will be administered to those considered high risk; team for handling epidemics also okays third shot for residents of nursing homes as national infection rate hits 0.9%

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/bj11jtn00po>

Very Few Kids Need to Shield From Covid, Large U.K. Study Finds

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Most young people face an "extremely low" risk of illness and death from Covid-19 and have no need to shield from the virus, according to researchers behind a large U.K. study. The analysis, which its authors say is the most comprehensive on the topic to date, backs up clinical reports that show children and teens are less likely to be hospitalized or face severe effects from the virus. Covid-19 does increase the chance of serious illness in the most vulnerable children -- those with complex disabilities and severe existing medical conditions -- but even in those cases the risks are smaller compared with adults.

www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-08/very-few-kids-need-to-shield-from-covid-large-u-k-study-finds?srnd=premium-europe

Pfizer to Ask Regulators to Authorize Covid-19 Vaccine Booster

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Pfizer Inc. will seek clearance from U.S. regulators in coming weeks to distribute a booster shot of its Covid-19 vaccine to heighten protection against infections, as new virus strains rise. The company also said it plans to start clinical trials in August of an updated version of its vaccine that would better protect against the Delta variant. Pfizer and partner BioNTech said Thursday that they will seek authorization for the third shot, based on encouraging initial study data. The companies said

the data showed that a booster shot given at least six months after the second dose produced antibodies protective against the original strain of the virus and a more recent strain, Beta.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-to-ask-regulators-to-authorize-covid-19-vaccine-booster-11625784072>

In Children, Risk of Covid-19 Death or Serious Illness Remains Extremely Low, New Studies Find

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Children are at extremely slim risk of dying from Covid-19, according to some of the most comprehensive studies to date, which indicate the threat might be even lower than previously thought. Some 99.995% of the 469,982 children in England who were infected during the year examined by researchers survived, one study found. In fact, there were fewer deaths among children due to the virus than initially suspected. Among the 61 child deaths linked to a positive Covid-19 test in England, 25 were actually caused by the illness, the study found. The three studies, by researchers in the U.K. reviewing its national health system's medical records or pulling together data from other countries, were published on preprint servers Thursday. The studies haven't yet been reviewed by independent experts and are preliminary.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/in-children-risk-of-covid-19-death-or-serious-illness-remain-extremely-low-new-studies-find-11625785260>

Children face risk of long Covid as Delta dominates

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An infectious diseases expert has warned Ireland needs a plan for treating long Covid as the Delta variant rips through the country's young people. Jack Lambert, professor of clinical medicine at University College Dublin, said young people are already being treated for the debilitating symptoms that can linger for months after infection. Children were at risk, he said. "We have treated teenagers with chronic fatigue syndrome following a viral illness, even before Covid-19 existed. We know it is going to happen," he added

<https://www.independent.ie/world-news/coronavirus/children-face-risk-of-long-covid-as-delta-dominates-40639042.html>

Arab countries pledge aid as Tunisia struggles with COVID pandemic

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Several countries promised to help Tunisia fight the coronavirus on Friday as the north African country recorded its highest daily death toll since the pandemic began, putting its health care system under severe stress and depleting oxygen supplies. President Kais Saied said in a statement that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had pledged to send vaccinations and whatever medical equipment Tunisia needed.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/arab-countries-pledge-aid-tunisia-struggles-with-covid-pandemic-2021-07-09/>

Tunisia: healthcare sector on verge of collapse

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A spokeswoman for the Tunisian Ministry of Health said on Thursday that the country's healthcare sector is on the verge of collapse, with intensive care units full and medical staff exhausted as the coronavirus continues to spread. "We are witnessing a catastrophic situation," Nissaf Ben Alaya told Mosaïque FM. "It requires a lot of effort to find a spare [hospital] bed... We are struggling to secure oxygen... Doctors are suffering from exhaustion to an unprecedented extent." Tunisia recorded approximately 10,000 new coronavirus cases and 134 deaths on Wednesday. That is a daily record for the pandemic in the country, amid growing fears that it will be unable to cope. "The boat is sinking" added Ben Alaya.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20210709-tunisia-healthcare-sector-on-verge-of-collapse/>

COVID cases climb as Southeast Asia feels force of Delta variant

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Having escaped the worst when the coronavirus pandemic erupted last year, Southeast Asia is now suffering dramatic rises in deaths and cases, while vaccination shortfalls and highly contagious variants derail containment efforts. As countries like Britain, Germany and France prepare to remove most remaining restrictions after devastating outbreaks, governments in Southeast Asia are tightening measures, hoping targeted lockdowns will act as circuit-breakers in arresting record jumps in cases and deaths that started rising in May.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/caseloads-climb-southeast-asia-feels-force-delta-variant-2021-07-09/>

Libya closes borders with Tunisia for a week due to rise in coronavirus cases

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Libya's new unity government on Thursday announced it was closing its borders with Tunisia for a week due to the rise in coronavirus cases in the neighboring country, a government spokesman said. The decision came as a precautionary step to what the government described as "worsening situation and collapsed health system," as well as the increasing number of cases with coronavirus delta variant in Tunisia.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/libya-closes-borders-with-tunisia-week-due-rise-coronavirus-cases-2021-07-08/>

Locked-down Sydney warned worse may be ahead, COVID-19 cases at 2021 high

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Australia's New South Wales state reported its biggest daily rise in locally acquired coronavirus infections this year on Saturday, with authorities warning that worse may yet to come for Sydney, which is in a three-week hard lockdown. There were 50 new cases of community transmission in the country's most populous state, up from 44 a day earlier, the previous 2021 record high. This brings the outbreak of the highly infectious Delta variant to 489 cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australias-new-south-wales-reports-2021-record-daily-rise-covid-19-cases-2021-07-10/>

The Irish vaccine developer who says we were 'lucky' with Covid-19

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It's the icing on the cake after a very busy year," he says, while acknowledging the efforts of the whole Oxford-based team, including Irish professor Teresa Lambe and many other scientists who worked tirelessly to create a vaccine against Covid-19.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/work/the-irish-vaccine-developer-who-says-we-were-lucky-with-covid-19-1.4613033>

Indonesia to widen coronavirus curbs to 15 locations

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Malls to close, restaurant dining halted. Moderna vaccines to be used as boosters for health workers. Indonesia reports 38,124 new cases, 871 deaths

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-widen-emergency-covid-19-curbs-15-cities-2021-07-09/>

Dutch reimpose COVID curbs as cases jump in young adults

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The Dutch government reimposed COVID-19 curbs on nightclubs, music festivals and restaurants on Friday in an effort to halt a surge in COVID-19 infections among young adults. The Netherlands lifted most lockdown measures on June 26, as cases were falling. Roughly two-thirds of the population has

had at least one vaccination shot.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands/dutch-to-reimpose-some-covid-19-curbs-as-cases-rise-anp-idUSKCN2EF10K>

Unvaccinated hospitalized patients say they regret not getting the shot

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"It is heart-wrenching to see unvaccinated individuals come into the hospital with regret," said Dare, an infectious diseases physician. They are patients who, "if they could do it all over again, would have had the vaccine in a second." Arkansas has one of the lowest vaccination rates in the country, with less than 35 percent of adults having been fully vaccinated. Now, the state's low vaccine uptake has crashed headlong into the highly contagious delta variant of the coronavirus, leaving some hospital systems once again teetering on the brink of collapse more than a year into the pandemic.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/unvaccinated-hospitalized-patients-say-they-regret-not-getting-shot-n1273342>