

Coronavirus updates April 7 2020

Coronavirus updates Plus: Dr. Anthony Fauci says social distancing is helping, and the CDC advises people to wear nonmedical cloth face masks when venturing out.

The coronavirus pandemic has upended life across the globe. Health care systems are scrambling to control the virus, and governments are instituting strict social distancing measures to flatten the curve. The situation is constantly evolving as COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, rapidly spreads.



Below are the latest developments in the coronavirus outbreak each day.

Coronavirus updates April 7

China reportedly ends Wuhan lockdown

The Chinese city of Wuhan, where the coronavirus first emerged, was reopened on Wednesday after being sealed off since January, reported The New York Times. The lockdown ended as only three new cases were reported in the city in the past three weeks, according to the Times. People are now reportedly allowed to leave the city after showing authorities, using a government-sanctioned phone app, they aren't a contagion risk.

Tough restrictions on individuals and businesses are still in place in Wuhan, according to the Times, and schools remain closed. Officials also reportedly continue to urge everyone to stay home as much as possible.

Pompeo: 45,000 Americans evacuated from other countries

During a press briefing Tuesday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the State Department has helped more than 45,000 citizens return to the US amid the coronavirus outbreak. American have been evacuated from 75 countries on more than 460 flights, Pompeo said, adding that some of the efforts "could be pulled from a Hollywood script."

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is reportedly stable

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson remained in stable condition overnight, according to the BBC, which cited a Downing Street spokesperson. Johnson is said to be in good spirits after going into intensive care on Monday. He's getting "standard" oxygen treatment and hasn't been diagnosed with pneumonia.

Coronavirus updates April 6

Boris Johnson in ICU

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been moved into intensive care Monday evening, Number 10 Downing Street spokesperson confirmed via email. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab will be deputizing on his behalf where necessary after being asked by the prime minister.

"Since Sunday evening, the Prime Minister has been under the care of doctors at St Thomas' Hospital in London," the spokesperson said. "Over the course of this afternoon, the condition of the Prime Minister has worsened and, on the advice of his medical team, he has been moved to the Intensive Care Unit at the hospital."

President Donald Trump offered his best wishes to the prime minister during his daily press conference.

"Americans are all praying for his recovery," Trump said. "He's been a really good friend. He's been really something very special, very strong -- resolute, he doesn't quit, doesn't give up."

US deaths reach 10,000

Coronavirus deaths in the US have surpassed 10,000, according to tracking numbers from John Hopkins. As of 11:30 a.m. PT Monday, COVID-19 fatalities in the US sat at 10,335 with 347,000 cases nationwide. By comparison, deaths in Italy number 16,523, deaths in Spain are at 13,169, deaths in France number 8,093, deaths in the UK are at 5,383, deaths in Iran are at 3,739 and fatalities in China are at 3,335.

Israel on lockdown

A country-wide lockdown will begin in Israel on Tuesday until April 10. Also, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu imposed a 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew on April 8 to ensure that people stay home for the Seder as Passover begins at sundown.

Social distancing may be working

Dr. Anthony Fauci, a top expert on infectious disease and member of the coronavirus task force, offered a bit of hope in the battle against the coronavirus at the White House press conference Monday. He said the

extraordinary social distancing measures that Americans have undertaken seems to be having an effect, as hotspots like New York City may soon reach their peak of infections and deaths. He cited Governor Andrew Cuomo, who noted on Monday, that the number of hospitalizations and admissions to intensive care units over the past three days has started to level off.

"Everybody who knows me knows I'm conservative about making projections," he said. "But those are the kind of good signs that you look for."

Still, Fauci cautioned about "claiming victory prematurely." But he said these reductions could mean that more good news is on the way. "That's the first thing you see when you start to see the turnaround."

He added that "despite all the suffering and the death that has occurred, what we have been doing has been working."

As for when American life may get back to normal, Fauci said that is unlikely until there is a vaccine that is widely available. He added that getting back to regular societal functions will have to happen gradually.

Also, during the press conference President Trump said that the US has completed 1.7 million tests for the coronavirus in the US. That number is up significantly from the figure given on Friday, which was 1.4 million tests completed.

Coronavirus updates April 5

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is hospitalized

Ten days after testing positive for COVID-19, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was brought to a hospital for tests, his office said. His doctor advised him to go after he displayed "persistent symptoms." His housing secretary told the BBC that Johnson is "still very much in charge of the government" despite spending the night in hospital.

Last night, on the advice of my doctor, I went into hospital for some routine tests as I'm still experiencing coronavirus symptoms. I'm in good spirits and keeping in touch with my team, as we work together to fight this virus and keep everyone safe.

— Boris Johnson #StayHomeSaveLives (@BorisJohnson) April 6, 2020

Coronavirus updates April 4

In US, social distancing 'making a difference'

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said during a White House briefing that mitigation efforts like social distancing are helping in the country. "As sobering and as difficult as this is, what we are doing is making a difference," Fauci said.

Meanwhile, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has started testing for antibodies to see if healthy people previously had the coronavirus, The New York Times reported. The tests could help the agency better

understand the virus and its spread, indicating how prevalent the virus has been and whether a significant number of people have had it without actually getting sick, the Times said. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 have topped 305,000 in the states as of Saturday afternoon Pacific Time, with more than 8,000 deaths, according to the virus-tracking dashboard put together by researchers at Johns Hopkins University.

Shifts in Europe

Spain moved past Italy as the European country with the largest number of coronavirus infections: 124,870 Spanish cases versus 124,630 Italian infections as of Saturday afternoon Pacific Time, according to the Hopkins tracking tool. Spain said it would extend its countrywide lockdown until April 25. Meanwhile, some officials in Italy are considering the idea of measuring virus antibodies in people's blood when it eventually comes time to decide who gets to leave lockdown and return to work, The New York Times reported. Such antibodies are a possible sign of immunity.

On Saturday, authorities in Italy, the first country in Europe to announce a nationwide lockdown, on March 9, said the number of coronavirus patients in hospital intensive care units had fallen for the first time, a positive sign. France also had a bit of good news, saying that the rate of coronavirus admissions to ICUs has been slowing. Still, the country's director general of health urged people to "stay at home to save lives," saying that "now is not the time to relax the effort." Across the channel, the UK reported that 708 coronavirus deaths had occurred there overnight, a record for the country.

Coronavirus updates April 3

CDC recommends masks worn outside at all times

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that people in the states wear a mask whenever they're outside their homes, President Trump announced Friday afternoon. The CDC says people should use a basic cloth or fabric mask that can be washed and reused, and should leave medical or surgical grade masks for health workers. But Trump emphasized that it's a voluntary recommendation, and he doesn't want to wear one.

"With the masks it's going to be really a voluntary thing ... I'm choosing not to do it," Trump said. "It may be good, probably good ... maybe I'll change my mind."

The news follows residents of Colorado and Pennsylvania being asked to wear nonmedical masks whenever they're outside the house, including at grocery stores, earlier Friday. N95 and paper masks should be left for medical workers, both states said. The mayors of both New York City and Los Angeles made the same recommendation.

Meanwhile, California Gov. Gavin Newsom warned that the peak of coronavirus cases in California will arrive during the first few weeks of May, based on current modeling.

1.4 million tests done in the US

Trump added during Friday's briefing that he's leaving stay at home orders up to each state's governor, with Vice President Mike Pence saying the task force is continuing to target outbreaks in Detroit, Chicago, Boston and New Orleans, as well as in New York, New Jersey and Maryland. Coronavirus treatment will be free for

everyone in the US, Pence said, and 1.4 million tests have now been performed across the country. Trump has also invoked the Defense Production Act to prohibit the export of medical equipment to other countries.

The federal stimulus payment will be directly deposited into millions of bank accounts by April 15, the Treasury Department said. However, the Associated Press says people without direct deposit information might not get paid until mid August or later.

Coronavirus updates April 2

Americans aren't doing enough to flatten the curve

Social distancing effectively prevents new coronavirus cases, but some Americans aren't taking the president's guidelines seriously, the White House warned Thursday. That could lead to more outbreaks and make it harder to get the virus in check, an expert said, making it imperative for people to stay away from others to avoid getting sick.

Dr. Deborah Birx, a doctor advising the administration during the COVID-19 pandemic, noted that the curve depicting infections over time in parts of the US has been steep, which indicates the coronavirus isn't under control. That's because not everyone is following recommendations to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people, stay at least six feet apart and wash their hands. People falling sick now were infected after the US issued those guidelines, Birx said.

"We're all trying to protect each other, and we have to adapt to this new reality we're in right now," she added. "Trying really, really hard for this next 28 days ... will make a tremendous difference."

The US will likely recommend everyone wear masks

Currently, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says members of the general public don't need to wear face masks unless they're sick or caring for someone who is ill. But many outbreaks and infections are being caused by people who are infected but show no symptoms.

Vice President Mike Pence said new mask-wearing guidelines could be issued in the next several days. It's likely the new recommendation will say that all people should wear cloth masks outside their homes, whether they're sick or not. At the same time, people wearing masks should exercise the same caution and social distancing steps as if they weren't wearing masks.

The president on Friday will announce plans to pay for uninsured coronavirus patient care

The White House has declined to re-open Obamacare health coverage enrollment to help people afford medical bills without going bankrupt. Instead, Pence on Thursday said President Trump will soon announce plans to directly reimburse hospitals for expenses related to uninsured coronavirus patients. The money likely will come from a \$100 billion fund set up to help hospitals during the pandemic, Pence said. He said Trump will make a decision about the plan on Friday.

Global coronavirus cases surpass 1 million

Coronavirus cases globally have reached the 1 million milestone, with more than 50,000 deaths worldwide. The US has the highest case count, at over 236,000, while Italy has the highest number of fatalities, at almost 14,000.

Trump invokes Defense Production Act

In addition to using the legislation last week to compel GM to make ventilators, Trump has announced invoking the Act to ensure manufacturers including General Electric, Hill-Rom, Medtronic, ResMed, Royal Philips, and Vyair Medical can "secure the supplies they need to build ventilators needed to defeat the virus." More than 100,000 ventilators are being built right now or soon to be started, Trump said during the White House coronavirus task force briefing. 3M is also working on face masks as part of the Defense Production Act, and GM will begin production of ventilators "very soon," Trump added.

Meanwhile, Trump has tested negative for COVID-19 again. The IRS will begin distributing the CARES Act stimulus checks to US taxpayers on April 9, according to the Washington Post, though some people could reportedly be waiting until September. PayPal told NBC News it's in talks with US Treasury to help distribute the money.

New US jobless claims top 6.6 million

The new figures for seasonally adjusted initial unemployment claims in the US grew at a jaw-dropping rate in just one week. A total of 6,648,000 Americans applied for unemployment insurance in the week ending March 28, according to the US Department of Labor.

That figure blows away last week's record-breaking 3.3 million initial claims. And they both look nothing like the figures from earlier in March before the brunt of the pandemic hit the US economy. For the week ending March 14, the number of new claims was 282,000.

As the unemployment figures were released on Thursday morning, the number of US coronavirus cases had topped 216,000. And the number of deaths in the US had surpassed 5,100.

Coronavirus updates April 1

More states announce lockdown as US cases hit 200,000

1. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announced a lockdown starting Thursday night at midnight ET.
2. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp has announced a stay at home order starting Friday, according to NBC News
3. Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves announced a lockdown for the state from Friday at 5:00 p.m. local time until Monday, April 20, at 8:00 a.m.

As of 2:00 p.m. PT, there were more than 200,000 cases in the US.

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