

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

23rd May 2022

Lockdown Exit

Apple Looks to Boost Production Outside China

Apple Inc. has told some of its contract manufacturers that it wants to boost production outside China, citing Beijing's strict anti-Covid policy among other reasons, people involved in the discussions said. India and Vietnam, already sites for a small portion of Apple's global production, are among the countries getting a closer look from the company as alternatives to China, the people said.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/apple-looks-to-boost-production-outside-china-11653142077>

Switzerland buys Pfizer's COVID-19 antiviral Paxlovid

Switzerland signed a contract to buy Pfizer's anti-viral drug Paxlovid to treat Covid-19, it said on Friday. The European country said it had signed a contract to buy 12,000 packages and first treatments for certain at-risk patients would start this month.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/switzerland-buys-pfizers-covid-19-antiviral-paxlovid-2022-05-20/>

Senior, Nursing Homes Rocked By Covid Costs Struggle to Escape Closure

That's a huge difference from the strongest financially performing nursing homes that saw up to 10% returns before the pandemic, said John Tishler, who specializes in transactions involving distressed and bankrupt health-care facilities at Nashville law firm Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis. The pandemic revealed and amplified long-existing shortcomings at the more than 15,000 nursing homes in the US, such as inadequate staffing, poor infection control and regulatory failures, according to an April report from the National Academy of Sciences. As of last month, more than 150,000 nursing home residents and 2,362 workers had died from Covid-19, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-19/senior-nursing-homes-rocked-by-covid-costs-struggle-to-escape-closure>

Beijing ramps up local COVID-19 lockdowns as Shanghai slowly starts to move again

Authorities in Beijing are ramping up COVID-19 restrictions, while some residents of Shanghai said they were able to leave their apartments on brief trips outside on Friday. Much of Chaoyang district in the eastern part of the Chinese capital was under lockdown on Friday, while 100 subway stations and 24 administrative districts in Fangshan district were locked down after 10 positive PCR tests among college students there. The Beijing municipal health commission reported 64 newly discovered local cases of COVID-19 on Thursday, of which 10 were students at the Beijing Institute of Technology's Fangshan campus. While the authorities haven't declared a lockdown, parts of the city are indeed in a locked-down state, a Fangshan resident surnamed Zhang told RFA.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/shanghai-covid-economy-05202022143926.html>

COVID-19 alert level in UK reduced - as Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 reclassified as variants of concern

The UK's coronavirus alert level has been reduced - as two rare types of Omicron have been reclassified as variants of concern. The level has moved from four to three after advice from the four nations' chief medical officers and the NHS England medical director. They said that "the current BA.2 driven Omicron wave is subsiding" and "direct COVID-19 healthcare pressures continue to

decrease in all nations". Their statement added: "Whilst it is reasonable to expect the number of cases to increase due to BA.4, BA.5 or BA2.12.1, it is unlikely in the immediate future to lead to significant direct COVID pressures." The alert level was last raised on 12 December as Omicron spread rapidly.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-omicron-ba-4-and-ba-5-classified-as-variants-of-concern-in-uk-12617681>

North Korea shuns outside help as COVID catastrophe looms

Like no other country, North Korea could do with help against COVID-19. The country's population is unvaccinated and susceptible to disease due to chronic malnourishment. Its dilapidated healthcare system lacks supplies of basic drugs and equipment. But even as North Korea faces the prospect of a humanitarian catastrophe amid its first officially confirmed coronavirus outbreak, Pyongyang is steadfastly refusing offers of international assistance. The United States and South Korea have not received a response to offers to help tackle the outbreak, including by sending aid, according to South Korean officials. The World Health Organization, which is "deeply concerned at the risk of further spread", said the country had not responded to requests for information about the outbreak.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/5/20/north-korea-shuns-outside-help-as-covid-catastrophe-looms>

North Korea's Low Death Count Questioned Amid Covid-19 Outbreak

North Korea said Friday that nearly 10% of its 26 million people have fallen ill and 65 people have died amid its first COVID-19 outbreak, as outside experts question the validity of its reported fatalities and worry about a possible humanitarian crisis. After admitting the omicron outbreak last week following more than two years of claiming to be coronavirus-free, North Korea has said an unidentified fever has been explosively spreading across the country since late April. Its anti-epidemic center has since released fever tallies each morning via state media, but they don't include any COVID-19 figures.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-20/n-korea-s-low-death-count-questioned-amid-covid-19-outbreak>

Exit Strategies

Shanghai district to require all shops to shut, residents to stay home

Shanghai's central Jingan district, a key commercial area of the Chinese financial hub, said on Saturday it will require all supermarkets and shops to shut and residents to stay home until at least Tuesday. The district plans to carry out COVID mass testing from Sunday until Tuesday, it said on its official WeChat account. The use of all exit permits previously given to residents that allowed them to leave their homes will be suspended, the district added without saying why.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/shanghai-district-require-all-shops-shut-residents-stay-home-2022-05-21/>

North Korea reports over 200000 fever cases for fifth day amid COVID wave

North Korea on Saturday reported more than 200,000 new patients suffering from fever for a fifth consecutive day, as it fought its first confirmed coronavirus outbreak. The ongoing COVID wave, declared last week, has fuelled concerns over a lack of vaccines, inadequate medical infrastructure and a potential food crisis in the country of 25 million, which has refused outside help and kept its borders shut. At least 219,030 people newly showed fever symptoms as of Friday evening, taking the total number of such cases to 2,460,640, the official KCNA news agency reported, citing data from the state emergency epidemic prevention headquarters. The death toll rose by one to 66. KCNA did not say how many people had tested positive for the virus. In a separate report, KCNA said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had held a meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's powerful politburo early on Saturday to check the COVID situation and responses made over the nine days since the outbreak emerged.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/nkorea-reports-219030-more-people-with-fever-1-new-death-amid-covid-wave-yonhap-2022-05-20/>

Biden, Yoon vow to deter North Korea and offer COVID aid

President Joe Biden and his new South Korean counterpart agreed on Saturday to hold bigger military drills and deploy more U.S. weapons if necessary to deter North Korea, while offering to send COVID-19 vaccines and potentially meet Kim Jong Un. Biden and Yoon Suk-yeol said their countries' decades-old alliance needed to develop not only to face North Korean threats but to keep the Indo-Pacific region "free and open" and protect global supply chains. The two leaders are meeting in Seoul for their first diplomatic engagement since the South Korean president's inauguration 11 days ago.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/biden-skoreas-yoon-set-discuss-nuclear-cooperation-nkorea-2022-05-21/>

Hong Kong bypassed? European airlines warn they can't add flights while Covid-19 restrictions remain for travellers, aircrew

Several major European airlines have warned that they will not be able to add more flights to Hong Kong if the city's Covid-19 restrictions remain while the rest of the world opens up rapidly following the decline of the pandemic. The carriers said they were more likely to fly to places with fewer or no restrictions, including places that allowed aircrew to move about freely during layovers. Industry leaders also warned that the city could take years to regain its status as an aviation hub, while rival Singapore stood to benefit after relaxing its restrictions on travellers.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/transport/article/3178600/hong-kong-bypassed-european-airlines-warn-they-cant-add>

Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on procedure volumes in gastroenterology in the Netherlands

We used claims data extracted from the Dutch national health insurers information system (Vektis) to identify all gastroenterological health-care activities performed from Jan 1, 2019, to March 28, 2021, as part of a diagnosis treatment combination plan with a hepatogastroenterologist as the treating physician. The activities were analysed overall and across procedure types and diagnosis groups of interest (appendix pp 2-5). We compared absolute and relative changes for the index week during the COVID-19 pandemic with the reference week in 2019. We defined three timeframes on the basis of the number of weekly COVID-19 admissions: 3 the first wave from week 9 through week 22 of 2020; a subsequent recovery phase with relatively few admissions from week 23 through week 35; and a second wave with high ongoing admission rates from week 36 through to the end of the study period

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langas/article/PIIS2468-1253\(22\)00164-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langas/article/PIIS2468-1253(22)00164-9/fulltext)

Tales of Covid-19 reinfection

But here's an individual story for anyone coming to terms with the persistence of Covid-19 and a lesson that if you've had it, you can easily test positive again. Late-night host Jimmy Kimmel did. And it's wreaking havoc on his schedule just like infection does for school kids, teachers, service workers, office workers or anyone else who does the responsible thing and goes into isolation. "I'm such a positive person, I tested positive AGAIN. I am feeling fine," Kimmel said on Twitter this week, announcing guest hosts for his show. The news comes after he previously announced a positive test and guest hosts to fill in while he quarantined at home at the beginning of the month. There are many examples of people who got Covid-19 multiple times. Jen Psaki, the former White House press secretary, leaps to mind. But Kimmel's second positive test came a very short time after his first.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/19/politics/covid-reinfection-vaccine-booster-what-matters/index.html>

Shanghai economy hit on all sides in April by COVID lockdown

China's commercial hub of Shanghai reported on Friday a broad decline in its economy last month when a city-wide COVID lockdown shut factories and kept residents at home, sparking concerns among foreign firms over their presence in the country. Output of Shanghai's industries, located at

the heart of manufacturing in the Yangtze River Delta, shrank 61.5% in April from a year earlier, the local statistics bureau said.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/shanghai-economy-hit-all-sides-april-by-covid-lockdown-2022-05-20/>

Locked-down Shanghai finds new cases, breaking "zero COVID" streak

Shanghai announced its first new COVID-19 cases outside quarantined areas in five days on Friday and imposed stricter curbs in two districts, but did not signal any change to the planned end of a prolonged city-wide lockdown on June 1. The commercial hub of 25 million, in its seventh week of lockdown, has been slowly allowing more people to leave their homes in recent days, with many residential compounds issuing passes for brief walks or trips to the supermarket.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/shanghai-detects-new-infections-after-five-days-zero-covid-2022-05-20/>

Taiwan export orders fall for first time in 2 years, hurt by China lockdowns, global weakness

Taiwan's export orders -- a bellwether for global technology demand -- fell for the first time in 25 months in April, taking a larger-than-expected hit from COVID lockdowns in China and broader global supply chain disruptions. Export orders unexpectedly fell 5.5% from a year earlier to \$51.9 billion last month, data from the Ministry of Economic Affairs showed on Friday. The decline was the first in more than two years, since the COVID-19 pandemic began sweeping the world in 2020, and up-ended analysts' forecasts for 8.3% growth.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/taiwan-export-orders-fall-first-time-2-years-hurt-by-china-lockdowns-global-2022-05-20/>

Partisan Exits

French Open Updates | Play Starts Without COVID Restrictions

Two-time Grand Slam champion Garbiñe Muguruza is out of the French Open in the first round for the second year in a row. Muguruza won the title at Roland Garros in 2016 and was seeded 10th this year but was defeated 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 by Kaia Kanepi of Estonia on Sunday. Kanepi turns 37 next month and is the oldest player in the women's draw in Paris. She is ranked 46th and is participating in her 15th French Open. Her best showings were quarterfinal appearances in 2008 and 2012; she has appeared in seven Grand Slam quarterfinals but never won one. The match ended under a drizzle and Muguruza missed a service return on match point, then cracked her racket against the ground.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-22/french-open-updates-play-starts-without-covid-restrictions>

Biden, Yoon vow to deter North Korea and offer COVID aid

President Joe Biden and his new South Korean counterpart agreed on Saturday to hold bigger military drills and deploy more U.S. weapons if necessary to deter North Korea, while offering to send COVID-19 vaccines and potentially meet Kim Jong Un. Biden and Yoon Suk-yeol said their countries' decades-old alliance needed to develop not only to face North Korean threats but to keep the Indo-Pacific region "free and open" and protect global supply chains

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/biden-skoreas-yoon-set-discuss-nuclear-cooperation-nkorea-2022-05-21/>

Biden Says North Korea Hasn't Responded to Offer of Covid Help

President Joe Biden said North Korea hasn't taken the US up on an offer to provide Covid-19 vaccines, despite an outbreak that a White House official described as worrying. "We've offered vaccines, not only to North Korea, but to China as well. We are prepared to do that immediately. We have gotten no response," Biden told reporters following a meeting Saturday in Seoul with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. The US is concerned about the Covid-19 situation in North Korea and is willing to provide Pyongyang with assistance, a White House official told reporters earlier Saturday.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-21/biden-says-north-korea-hasn-t-responded-to-offer-of-covid-help>

Coronavirus: Shanghai faces exodus of talent as lockdown dashes workers hopes for good jobs and a better life

Shanghai is facing an exodus of talent and labour as thousands of people leave the pandemic-hit city which has been in total lockdown since April 1, knocked by worries that local authorities will backtrack from plans to switch to normal virus control measures in June after achieving a societal zero-Covid goal. At the city's Hongqiao railway station, passengers have to queue up for two hours before they can even access the terminal. Those who plan on leaving need to show train tickets, approval letters from sub-district authorities and negative nucleic reports within 48 hours of their journey, before gaining permission to enter the terminal. A rapid antigen test is also required at the security checkpoints.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/money/other/coronavirus-shanghai-faces-exodus-of-talent-as-lockdown-dashes-workers-hopes-for-good-jobs-and-a-better-life/ar-AAxxy9C>

Dan Andrews hands out more than 50,000 fines to Victorians breaching his hated Covid-19 rules - but most still haven't been paid

More than 50,000 fines have been handed to Victorians for breaching COVID-19 restrictions. Some 5721 people were nabbed for not wearing a face covering, a budget estimates inquiry has been told, while 112 people were caught failing to isolate when required.

<https://www.msn.com/en-au/news/australia/dan-andrews-hands-out-50000-fines-to-covid-rule-breakers/ar-AAx0SFm>

Nicola Sturgeon tests positive for Covid-19

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has tested positive for Covid-19. Ms Sturgeon tweeted she had been experiencing mild symptoms on Friday evening. She will work from home over the next few days and told followers she would "hopefully" be back out and about later next week. The First Minister met Sinn Fein vice president and first minister designate of Northern Ireland, Michelle O'Neill, at Bute House earlier on Friday.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/nicola-sturgeon-first-minister-health-northern-ireland-sinn-fein-b2083997.html>

Judge: COVID asylum restrictions must continue on border

Pandemic-related restrictions on migrants seeking asylum on the southern border must continue, a judge ruled Friday in an order blocking the Biden administration's plan to lift them early next week. The ruling was just the latest instance of a court derailing the president's proposed immigration policies along the U.S. border with Mexico. The Justice Department said the administration will appeal, but the ruling virtually ensures that restrictions will not end as planned on Monday. A delay would be a blow to advocates who say rights to seek asylum are being trampled, and a relief to some Democrats who fear that a widely anticipated increase in illegal crossings would put them on the defensive in an already difficult midterm election year.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-government-and-politics-mexico-texas-43976f307da98b3e800f884e87f244fe>

COVID restrictions for migrants at U.S. border can not end yet, judge rules

U.S. authorities were blocked by a federal judge on Friday from lifting COVID-19 restrictions that empower agents at the U.S.-Mexico border to turn back migrants without giving them a chance to seek asylum. The nationwide injunction issued by U.S. District Judge Robert Summerhays in Louisiana means the restrictions, which were set to end on May 23, will remain in place across the border as the litigation proceeds, unless a higher court overturns the ruling. The Department of Justice (DOJ) said it intends to appeal.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-judge-blocks-plan-lift-covid-border-restrictions-migrants-2022-05-20/>

Scientific Viewpoint

Bangkok Election: Candidates Pledge to Tackle Pollution

Thailand's capital will vote for a new governor on Sunday for the first time in almost a decade with the winner facing the challenges of rebuilding Bangkok's pre-pandemic status as a tourism hub and tackling persistent pollution. More than 4.4 million people, including an estimated 700,000 first-time voters, will pick the next governor from a list of 30 candidates for a four-year term. Polls close at 5 p.m. and unofficial results will be known by midnight, authorities said. Chadchart Sittipunt, a former transport minister contesting as an independent, has consistently led pre-election surveys with respondents backing him for his track record in improving public transport systems including the nation's railways.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-22/bangkok-votes-for-new-chief-as-covid-recovery-tops-challenges>

Hypoxemia in COVID-19-Related ARDS: Links to BMI, Prior Respiratory Disease

The presence of hypoxemia in patients with COVID-19-related acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) is associated with such risk factors as body mass index (BMI) and prior respiratory illness, according to clinical trial results recently published in the Journal of Critical Care. Organized by the Argentine Society of Intensive Care Medicine, the SATICOVID19 clinical trial (ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT04611269), a prospective, multicenter cohort study, identified determinants of oxygenation over time (as measured by the ratio of arterial oxygen partial pressure to fractional inspired oxygen over days 1, 3, and 7 from ICU admission) among patients with COVID-19 ARDS. Study authors also analyzed the differences in physiological parameters, ventilation management, and outcomes over time associated with the 3 categories of ARDS severity outlined in the Berlin definition of ARDS.

<https://www.pulmonologyadvisor.com/home/topics/critical-care/covid-19-ards-linked-to-bmi-and-prior-respiratory-disease/>

Monkeypox cases detected in US, Europe, but experts caution against comparing it to COVID-19

Countries in Europe and North America are continuing to report more cases of monkeypox, but experts say the disease so far does not pose a serious risk to the public. At least 17 infections of the rare disease have been confirmed in non-endemic areas such as the United States, United Kingdom, Portugal, Sweden and Italy, and dozens of possible cases are under investigation in those nations as well as in Canada and Spain.

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/monkeypox-cases-detected-us-europe-experts-caution-comparing/story?id=84831037>

COVID-19 leading cause of death in people with diabetes in fourth quarter of 2020

The proportion of deaths attributed to COVID-19 in people with diabetes in the U.S. in the last 3 months of 2020 was slightly higher than the percentage of people who died due to cardiovascular disease or diabetes, according to study data. In a letter published in Diabetes Care, researchers found the rate of all-cause mortality in people with diabetes increased from the third quarter of 2019 through the fourth quarter of 2020, with the higher rate primarily due to a sharp increase in COVID-19 deaths.

<https://www.healio.com/news/endocrinology/20220517/covid19-leading-cause-of-death-in-people-with-diabetes-in-fourth-quarter-of-2020>

COVID-19 could derail SDGs for next five years - report

The COVID-19 pandemic will further derail the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the next five years without concerted action, warn international scientists. The SDGs were adopted by the United Nations in September 2015, and call for governments and organisations to achieve goals

such as ending poverty, eradicating hunger and ensuring everyone has access to clean, affordable energy by 2030. However, the economic fallout on the SDGs from COVID-19 was clear in 2020 when at least 255 million full-time jobs were lost, triggering a hunger crisis, especially in the global South, according to the report *Unprecedented and Unfinished: COVID-19 and Implications for National and Global Policy* published by the International Science Council (ISC).

<https://www.scidev.net/global/news/covid-19-could-derail-sdgs-for-next-five-years-report/>

Planning underway for Covid winter booster campaign

A COVID-19 winter booster campaign is being planned by the Scottish Government on the back of expert advice. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recommended that, in order to maximise protection for the most vulnerable, boosters should be offered later this year to certain priority groups. The Government has now said it is working closely with NHS boards to plan for the rollout. Fourth doses of a vaccine are currently being offered to those aged 75 and over and people at highest risk. Health Secretary Humza Yousaf said: "The Scottish Government welcomes the interim advice from the JCVI that, in order to maximise protection in those most vulnerable to serious illness, COVID-19 booster vaccines should be offered to certain priority groups from this autumn. Prioritising those most at risk has been our approach from the outset.

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/20153544.planning-underway-covid-winter-booster-campaign/>

Welsh Government announces who will get Covid jabs this autumn

From this autumn, the Welsh Government has announced. The government has confirmed a list of those who will be offered a Covid jab between September and December this year following the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's (JCVI) latest review of the existing vaccine programme in Wales. Following the review, the Welsh Government has confirmed it will offer a single dose of a Covid-19 vaccine to: Residents in a care home for older adults, and staff working in care homes for older adults, Frontline health and social care workers All those 65 years of age and over, Adults aged 16 to 65 years in a clinical risk group

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health/who-get-covid-vaccine-wales-24008903>

Mysterious Hepatitis Outbreak in Children Spurs Global Race for Answers

Article reports that stomach bugs, Covid-19 and a normally harmless virus are among the suspects researchers have identified as possible drivers of a mysterious rash of hepatitis cases among children. Public-health researchers in the U.S., U.K and other parts of Europe are running studies aimed at pinpointing the cause of unexplained severe hepatitis, or liver inflammation, that has sickened more than 400 children around the world in recent months, leading to at least 26 liver transplants and at least six deaths. So far, they have few concrete answers.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/mysterious-hepatitis-in-kids-spurs-a-hunt-for-answers-11653039000>

U.S. CDC says adenovirus leading hypothesis for severe hepatitis in children

Infection with adenovirus, a common childhood virus, is the leading hypothesis for recent cases of severe hepatitis of unknown origin in children that have led to at least six deaths, U.S. health officials said on Friday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said it is continuing to investigate whether 180 cases identified in 36 states and territories since last October represent an increase in the rate of pediatric hepatitis or whether an existing pattern has been revealed though improved detection.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-cdc-says-adenovirus-leading-hypothesis-severe-hepatitis-children-2022-05-20/>

At least 25m people in UK to be offered Covid booster this autumn

Millions of people in the UK will be offered further Covid booster shots in the autumn under draft guidance published by the government's vaccine watchdog. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation said another round of jabs would help protect the most vulnerable adults and frontline social care and health workers against severe Covid in the winter. Despite "considerable

uncertainty” over the likelihood, timing and severity of any future wave of Covid in the country, the committee said the threat from the virus would be greatest in the winter months.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/19/covid-booster-vaccine-people-in-uk-to-be-offered-this-autumn>

The quest for longer-lasting Covid-19 vaccines

China's commercial hub of Shanghai reported on Friday a broad decline in its economy last month when a city-wide COVID lockdown shut factories and kept residents at home, sparking concerns among foreign firms over their presence in the country. Output of Shanghai's industries, located at the heart of manufacturing in the Yangtze River Delta, shrank 61.5% in April from a year earlier, the local statistics bureau said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/20/health/mrna-vaccine-technology-covid-19-durability/index.html>

Paxlovid Rebound: FDA Investigating Reports Of Covid-19 Relapses After Taking Pfizer Antiviral

For example, there's that pre-print case report uploaded to Research Square on April 26, 2022, of a 71-year-old man who had been fully vaccinated and boosted against Covid-19. He began taking Paxlovid as soon as he had tested positive for Covid-19, two days after he had gotten exposed to the virus. His Covid-19 symptoms essentially disappeared after two days of Paxlovid, which seemed like a good thing. Yet, nine days after he had first tested positive and four days after he had completed the five-day course of Paxlovid, guess what happened? His runny nose, sore throat, and difficulty breathing returned, along with SARS-CoV-2 levels in his body going up again. It was like déjà vu all over again. Viral genome sequencing showed that during both his initial symptoms and his return of symptoms, he was infected with the BA.1 Omicron subvariant of the SARS-CoV-2. This suggested that he has experienced not two separate infections but a single one that improved before subsequently getting worse.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucelee/2022/05/19/paxlovid-rebound-some-suffering-covid-19-relapses-after-taking-pfizer-antiviral/>

North Korea's Dr Fauci? Health official emerges as face of COVID campaign

At 9:30 a.m. every day this week, a soft-spoken official has appeared on North Korean television to report the number of people with fever and new deaths, and to explain measures to stop North Korea's first confirmed COVID-19 outbreak. The little-known official, Ryu Yong Chol, has become the public face of the isolated country's battle against the epidemic, the equivalent of U.S. COVID-19 czar Dr Anthony Fauci or the director of South Korea's disease prevention agency, Jeong Eun-kyeong.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-koreas-dr-fauci-health-official-emerges-face-covid-campaign-2022-05-20/>

COVID-19: JCVI recommends autumn booster jabs for some groups

Scientific advisers have sent the government their recommendations for who should be offered a COVID booster jab this autumn. Experts from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) said the extra shot would help maintain protection over the winter against severe COVID-19. It recommends jabs for:

- Over-65s
- Care home residents and staff
- Frontline health and social care workers
- People over 16 in vulnerable groups

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-jcvi-recommends-autumn-booster-jabs-for-some-groups-12616779>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Whats Your Risk of Catching Covid? This \$150 Device Helped Me Find Out

My boyfriend wasn't feeling well. Then again, that wasn't too surprising. We had just spent a weekend at New Orleans' annual jazz festival, where we spent long days baking in 90 degree weather and drinking plenty of beer to stay cool. But hangovers and heatstroke weren't the only

potential culprits. The risk of Covid was everywhere. I knew that because for weeks I had been carrying around a palm-sized, \$150 carbon dioxide monitor that assesses exactly that. Then Jesse told me that he couldn't smell anything. A bright pink line soon confirmed the answer I'd been dreading. He had Covid. Three days later — after two years of avoiding it — I tested positive, too.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-05-22/whats-your-risk-of-catching-covid-this-150-device-helped-me-find-out>

North Korea reports 'positive trend' in COVID fight as fever cases dip

For the first time in nearly 10 days North Korea's daily "fever" cases dropped below 200,000, state media said on Sunday, reporting "a positive trend" after measures were taken to control the country's first acknowledged COVID-19 outbreak. The COVID wave, declared on May 12, has fuelled concerns over a lack of vaccines, inadequate medical infrastructure and a potential food crisis in the country of 25 million. It has refused most outside help, kept its borders shut and allows no independent confirmation of official data. Apparently lacking in testing supplies, North Korea has not confirmed the total number of people testing positive for the coronavirus. Instead, health authorities report the number with fever symptoms, making it difficult to assess the scale of the COVID wave, experts have said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/nkorea-reports-positive-trend-covid-fight-fever-cases-dip-2022-05-21/>

Shanghai reopens some public transport, still on high COVID alert

Shanghai reopened a small part of the world's longest subway system on Sunday after some lines had been closed for almost two months, as the city paves the way for a more complete lifting of its painful COVID-19 lockdown next week. With most residents not allowed to leave their homes and restrictions tightening in parts of China's most populous city, commuters early on Sunday needed strong reasons to travel. Shanghai's lockdown and curbs in other cities have battered consumption, industrial output and other sectors of the Chinese economy in recent months, prompting pledges of support from policymakers

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/shanghai-reopens-some-public-transport-still-high-covid-alert-2022-05-22/>

COVID may be factor in lack of North Korea response to outreach, White House official says

U.S. President Joe Biden, in Seoul before heading to Japan as part of his first Asia trip as president, had a simple message for North Korea's Kim Jong Un: "Hello... period," he told reporters on the last day of his visit to South Korea on Sunday. Biden said he was "not concerned" about new North Korean nuclear tests, which would be the first in nearly five years. But his wry response when asked what message he had for Kim underscored the administration's low-key approach to the unresolved tensions with North Korea. It is a stark contrast with former President Donald Trump's showy threats, summits, and "love letters" with Kim.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/covid-may-be-factor-lack-nkorea-response-us-outreach-official-2022-05-22/>