

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

27th May 2022

Lockdown Exit

COVID-19: Wales set to lift final remaining coronavirus restrictions

The final remaining COVID restrictions are expected to be lifted in Wales, the government has said. Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford will announce the update on Friday, with the restrictions to be removed from Monday, 30 May. Wales moved to alert level 0 in January and the majority of measures were removed in March. But there are still some remaining: • Face coverings are legally required in health and care settings (but nowhere else) • Workplaces and premises open to the public must continue to carry out coronavirus work assessments • If you have COVID symptoms you must take a lateral flow test

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-wales-set-to-lift-final-remaining-coronavirus-restrictions-12622162>

Global firms warn of sluggish China demand due to lengthy COVID curbs

Two months into harsh COVID-19 lockdowns that have choked global supply chains, China's economy is staggering back to its feet, but businesses from retailers to chipmakers are warning of slow sales as consumers in the country slam the brakes on spending.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/global-firms-warn-of-sluggish-china-demand-due-to-lengthy-covid-curbs/ar-AAXKj32>

Hospitals are exploring a way to pay for uninsured Covid-19 care

The federal health department shut down a program that paid hospitals and clinics for caring for uninsured Covid-19 patients, but some hospitals are now eyeing a backdoor option to get those costs paid for. Throughout much of the pandemic, the costs of testing, vaccinating, and treating uninsured patients were mostly funneled to a multi-billion-dollar program run by the Health Resources and Services Administration, but that program ran out of money and shut down in April. The program paid out more than \$1 billion per month, which means its closure was a big hit for some facilities that serve large numbers of uninsured patients.

<https://www.statnews.com/2022/05/26/backdoor-option-for-uninsured-covid-care/>

Analysis: Britain's shrunken workforce hampers COVID recovery

Britain's economy regained its pre-COVID size late last year, but in one crucial way it has not recovered: there are 400,000 fewer workers than at the start of the pandemic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/britains-shrunken-workforce-hampers-covid-recovery-2022-05-26/>

New Study Shows Vaccination Reduces Long Covid Risk, but Modestly

Vaccination reduces your risk of developing long Covid, but not by much on average, new research suggests. A Veterans Affairs study out Wednesday found that vaccinated people with breakthrough Covid-19 infections had a 15% reduction in experiencing persistent or new symptoms and health conditions up to six months after infection compared with those who were unvaccinated and got Covid.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/can-vaccines-prevent-long-covid-new-details-on-risks-and-symptoms-11653492114>

Breakthrough infections may be less contagious; vaccine protection wanes faster in cancer patients

The following is a summary of some recent studies on COVID-19. They include research that warrants further study to corroborate the findings and that has yet to be certified by peer review.

Breakthrough infections may be less contagious Fully vaccinated individuals who get infected with the coronavirus spread the infection to fewer people and are contagious for less time compared to people who are partially vaccinated or unvaccinated, a small study from South Korea suggests. In 173 hospital workers with COVID-19, including 50 who had breakthrough infections, researchers found that the virus had been transmitted to others in the hospital by 7% of the vaccinated group compared with 26% of the unvaccinated, even though the two groups had similar viral loads when diagnosed. In a separate group of 45 people with mild COVID-19 who were being quarantined, the researchers observed shedding of infectious virus particles for four days in the six people who had been fully vaccinated, 8 days in the 11 partially vaccinated people, and 10 days in the 28 unvaccinated people.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/breakthrough-infections-may-be-less-contagious-vaccine-protection-wanes-faster-2022-05-26/>

Exit Strategies

Covid-19 Deaths Hover Near Lows, but Older Americans at Risk Even With Boosters

Covid-19 deaths in the U.S. are hovering near the lowest levels since the pandemic hit, showing how a population with built-up immune protection is less at risk of severe outcomes even as another wave of infections flows through the country. The nearly 300 deaths reported daily are again more concentrated among older people, underscoring hazards for the more vulnerable while the overall population appears less at risk. Particularly vulnerable people, such as those who are older and immunocompromised, will likely always have some risk of death from a Covid-19 infection, doctors and public-health experts said. Increasing booster rates and access to treatments, in addition to taking certain precautions, can help lower the threat presented by the virus, they said.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid-19-deaths-hover-near-lows-but-older-americans-at-risk-even-with-boosters-11653567898>

Why Are COVID Vaccines Deemed Non-Essential for Young Children in the UK?

Throughout the pandemic the University of Huddersfield's Department of Pharmacy has been raising awareness on what vaccines are, how they are formulated, and why they're an important part of the healthcare strategy as well as the progress on further developments in COVID vaccines, so that people can make an educated decision on becoming vaccinated or if choosing for their children. In response to the recent controversy about why COVID vaccines for children hadn't been approved in the UK but had in the US and why the UK was so slow to respond, the department's Dr Hamid Merchant has written an article explaining why we should not rush mass-immunising young children and how a delayed immunisation can be beneficial in offering a more suitable vaccine formulation for children, such as the nasal COVID vaccine that should be approved soon.

<https://www.technologynetworks.com/vaccines/news/why-are-covid-vaccines-deemed-non-essential-for-young-children-in-the-uk-361988>

Spain's Covid booster jab entry requirement for all holidaymakers explained

Brits holidaying in Spain could need Covid boosters to enter the sunny travel hotspot this summer. Jabbed travellers can bypass testing with the right proof of vaccination on hand. It comes as the country opened its doors to non-vaccinated travellers to the first time ever since the pandemic began. The changing rules is indicative of the times as countries relax some restrictions to boost travel while sometimes maintaining key rules on jabs. For example, tourists entering the UK don't need a vaccine certificate, but British citizens have been warned to meet Spanish authorities' validity period requirements. The Foreign Office has advised Brits exactly when they'll need a booster to enter Spain.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/lifestyle/travel/spains-covid-booster-jab-entry-27072059>

Japan starts 4th COVID vaccine shots for seniors, at-risk groups

Japan began offering fourth coronavirus vaccine shots Wednesday to older people, and those with underlying medical conditions. People eligible for fourth inoculations are those aged 60 and older as well as individuals between 18 and 59 with chronic health conditions, such as respiratory illnesses or heart conditions, or at high risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms if infected with the coronavirus, according to the health ministry. The ministry suggests people receive the booster shots at least five months after receiving their third inoculation. The majority of seniors began getting third shots in January, meaning that the fourth round of shots is expected to be in full swing from June onward.

<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2022/05/19dce075b2ef-japan-starts-4th-covid-vaccine-shots-for-seniors-at-risk-groups.html>

How important is the COVID-19 booster shot for 5-to-11-year-olds? 5 questions answered

COVID-19 case numbers are rising again in the U.S. – including among children. In mid-May 2022, the Food and Drug Administration authorized a booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine for U.S. children ages 5 to 11, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention followed by recommending a booster shot for this age group. Naturally, many parents are wondering about the importance and safety of a booster shot for their school-age children. Debbie-Ann Shirley, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at the University of Virginia, answers some common questions about COVID-19 and booster shots in kids that she hears in her practice and explains the research behind why booster shots are recommended for children ages 5 to 11.

<https://theconversation.com/how-important-is-the-covid-19-booster-shot-for-5-to-11-year-olds-5-questions-answered-183427>

COVID-19 boosters and building trust among UK minority ethnic communities

Ethnic disparities in COVID-19 persist, with increased rates of infection, severe disease, and death among people from minority ethnic groups.^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5} COVID-19 vaccination rates also remain lowest in these communities compared with white people in the UK. Among people older than 18 years, the proportion who have had three COVID-19 vaccinations in England in March, 2022, was lowest among Black Caribbean (38%), Black African (45%), and Pakistani (45%) ethnic groups.¹ These disparities are likely to be attributed to the intersection of key social determinants, including socioeconomic factors such as deprivation, overcrowding, and working patterns and conditions, alongside discrimination and structural violence in the health-care system and society.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)00945-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)00945-X/fulltext)

COVID-hit Shanghai heads for lockdown exit but China still lost in economic gloom

Pandemic-hit Shanghai, China's financial hub, unveiled more post-lockdown plans on Thursday as it moves towards a return to normalcy, but a nationwide economic recovery is still a distance away, heightening a sense of urgency for more support. China's biggest city by economic output has suffered from the lockdown imposed in early April. Other cities not under lockdown but still hemmed in by COVID curbs, including Beijing, have also struggled, with the highly transmissible Omicron provoking stronger responses from health authorities this year.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/shanghai-heading-out-lockdown-china-still-lost-economic-gloom-2022-05-26/>

US making COVID antiviral drug more available at test sites

The White House on Thursday announced more steps to make the antiviral treatment Paxlovid more accessible across the U.S. as it projects COVID-19 infections will continue to spread over the summer travel season. The nation's first federally backed test-to-treat site is opening Thursday in Rhode Island, providing patients with immediate access to the drug once they test positive. More federally supported sites are set to open in the coming weeks in Massachusetts and New York City, both hit by a marked rise in infections. Next week, the U.S. will send authorized federal prescribers to several Minnesota-run testing sites, turning them into test-to-treat locations. Federal regulators have also

sent clearer guidance to physicians to help them determine how to manage Paxlovid's interactions with other drugs, with an eye toward helping prescribers find ways to get the life-saving medication to more patients.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-new-york-city-medication-3d59f62083db3f5646ac140009e33427>

Partisan Exits

South Africa COVID vaccine hesitancy due to side-effect fears- survey

Fears over the possible side effects and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines have been the main drivers of hesitancy among thousands of South Africans, a government-backed online survey showed on Thursday.

<https://www.moneyweb.co.za/in-depth/own-your-life/sa-covid-vaccine-hesitancy-due-to-side-effect-fears-survey/>

Johnson takes responsibility for lockdown parties

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he took full responsibility for a series of boozy parties at his Downing Street official residence during lockdowns, when COVID rules placed severe curbs on socializing outside the home. Lucy Fielder has more.

<https://www.reuters.com/video/watch/idOV062825052022RP1>

Unwanted, Teen Pregnancies Rose During Covid Pandemic

All day long, kids stream in and out of the Tiffany-blue front door at Project Elimu, the premier ballet school in Kibera, a vibrant, low-income community in Nairobi, Kenya. But not all of the school's visitors are dancers. Some, like 18-year-old Esther, are in acute distress, facing abuse at home or struggling with early pregnancy and parenthood. Esther is one data point in a wave of girls who became pregnant during the pandemic. According to the UNFPA, the United Nation's sexual and reproductive healthy agency, some 1.4 million women and girls became pregnant unintentionally as a result of contraception interruptions in the first year of the pandemic alone.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-05-26/contraception-s-cost-teen-pregnancy-in-poor-countries-sets-back-gender-equality>

Continued Lockdown

Global firms warn of sluggish China demand due to lengthy COVID curbs

Two months into harsh COVID-19 lockdowns that have choked global supply chains, China's economy is staggering back to its feet, but businesses from retailers to chipmakers are warning of slow sales as consumers in the country slam the brakes on spending.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/global-firms-warn-sluggish-china-demand-due-lengthy-covid-curbs-2022-05-26/>

Scientific Viewpoint

WHO asks countries to increase surveillance for Monkeypox

About 200 confirmed and more than 100 suspected cases of Monkeypox have been detected so far outside of the countries where it usually spreads, a World Health Organization official said on Thursday, urging countries to increase surveillance for the infectious disease. Monkeypox, a mild viral infection, is endemic in the African countries of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-asks-countries-increase-surveillance-monkeypox-2022-05-26/>

Rebound COVID Is Just the Start of Paxlovid's Mysteries

The first data on Paxlovid, out last November, hinted that the COVID antiviral would cut the risk of hospitalization and death by 89 percent. Pundits called the drug "a monster breakthrough," "miraculous," and "the biggest advance in the pandemic since the vaccines." "Today's news is a real game-changer," said Albert Bourla, the CEO of Pfizer, which makes the drug. The pills are "a

game changer,” President Joe Biden repeated a few months later. Now, finally, the game is being changed. The government has ordered 20 million courses of Paxlovid, committing half of the \$10 billion in additional COVID funding that is being negotiated in the Senate; and Pfizer says that the number of patients taking the drug increased by a factor of 10 between mid-February and late April. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2022/05/paxlovid-covid-rebound-pfizer-clinical-trials/638438/>

Children urged to come forward for Covid booster trial in these ten areas

Children aged between 12 and 15 are being urged to volunteer for a new study exploring different options for a third Covid booster vaccine. The University of Oxford-led Com-COV 3 study aims to recruit 380 volunteers across 10 UK sites, including Oxford's Churchill Hospital. Those taking part will need to have received two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, at least three months before joining. Researchers will then deliver a third dose as part of the study.

<https://www.itv.com/news/meridian/2022-05-26/children-urged-to-come-forward-for-covid-booster-trial-in-these-ten-areas>

Mucosal COVID vaccine candidate powerfully protective in macaques

The severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is capable of infecting people of any age. Although COVID-19 is often mild in young children relative to adults, thousands of children have been admitted to hospitals in the United States (US) owing to SARS-CoV-2 infection, with around one-third of them having no prior medical issues. Over 800 US children aged 0 to 11 years have died from COVID-19, and during the 2021/2022 fall/winter SARS-CoV-2 outbreak in the US, children constituted more than 25% of COVID-19 cases. Moreover, COVID-19 rarely produces a multisystem inflammatory disease in children (MIS-C).

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220526/Mucosal-COVID-vaccine-candidate-powerfully-protective-in-macaques.aspx>

Long COVID risk falls only slightly after vaccination, huge study shows

Vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 lowers the risk of long COVID after infection by only about 15%, according to a study of more than 13 million people¹. That's the largest cohort that has yet been used to examine how much vaccines protect against the condition, but it is unlikely to end the uncertainty. Long COVID — illness that persists for weeks or months after infection with SARS-CoV-2 — has proved difficult to study, not least because the array of symptoms makes it hard to define. Even finding out how common it is has been challenging. Some studies^{2,3} have suggested that it occurs in as many as 30% of people infected with the virus. But a November study⁴ of about 4.5 million people treated at US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals suggests that the number is 7% overall and lower than that for those who were not hospitalized.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-01453-0>

Newcastle's QuantuMDx Group launches rapid COVID-19 and flu test

A life sciences firm has unveiled new technology it says can identify COVID-19, flu and respiratory illnesses in minutes. Newcastle-based QuantuMDx Group says its Q-POC equipment provides “differential diagnosis” and will enable “rapid triage and effective treatment strategies, particularly in at-risk groups of patients”. Bosses say it will help identify co-infection earlier, which will shorten treatment and patient hospital stays, with test results returned in 35 minutes. Jonathan O’Halloran, chief executive [pictured above], said: “The recent COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for rapid, high-quality PCR panels to accurately diagnose infectious diseases, and so I am pleased to announce the launch of this new respiratory panel. “With the coming winter likely to bring parallel pressure from these viruses, on-demand rapid accurate PCR testing has the potential to provide clinicians with an optimum solution for respiratory infection control.

<https://netimesmagazine.co.uk/business/newcastles-quantumdx-group-launches-rapid-covid-19-and-flu-test/>

Multi-inflammatory index predicts mortality in critically ill COVID-19 patients

A multi-inflammatory index (MII) biomarker have been shown to have good predictive power for mortality among COVID-19 patients admitted to an intensive care unit (ICU). This was the main finding of a study by a team of Turkish researchers.

<https://hospitalhealthcare.com/clinical/emergency-and-critical-care/multi-inflammatory-index-predicts-mortality-in-critically-ill-covid-19-patients/>

COVID-19 in babies - here's what to expect

Parents are understandably worried about what would happen if their infant caught COVID-19. Babies may be considered vulnerable due to immature immune systems, and are also not eligible for most of the treatments and vaccinations available for older children and adults. The good news is, most babies experience mild illness. Here's what to expect if your baby tests positive.

<https://theconversation.com/covid-19-in-babies-heres-what-to-expect-181940>

COVID-19: Amyloids could explain blood clots, neurological symptoms

The cause of the many mysterious and lingering symptoms brought on by SARS-CoV-2 infection, or COVID-19, has remained a hard-to-solve puzzle for scientists. Researchers have been looking into various systems in the body in an effort to find answers. A sometimes controversial area of study has been micro clots in people with long COVID, caused by fibrin, which is a substance that contributes to coagulation. This has made both the immune system and circulatory system interesting candidates for further study. A recent study, published in the Journal of American Chemical Society, has provided a suggested mechanism to explain why some people develop complicated COVID-19 symptoms after infection.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/misfolded-spike-protein-could-explain-complicated-covid-19-symptoms>

COVID-19: 55% of early pandemic survivors still symptomatic 2 years on

The first cases of COVID-19 were reported in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019 Trusted Source. It has now been over two years since the beginning of the outbreak connected to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan. Since then, many COVID-19 survivors have reported lingering health issues or symptoms that suddenly appear months and even a year after the initial infection. It is important to note that these patients experienced COVID-19 before vaccines were developed against SARS-CoV-2. A recent study looked into the current conditions of COVID-19 patients from Wuhan two years later.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/long-covid-half-of-patients-still-report-at-least-1-symptom-2-years-on>

Should You Use a Pulse Ox When You Have COVID-19?

The primary treatment for low oxygen levels is oxygen therapy. Oxygen therapy gets oxygen into your bloodstream and helps take the pressure off your lungs so that you recover from COVID-19. There are a few ways to receive oxygen therapy. In most cases, you'll receive extra oxygen through a nasal cannula. A nasal cannula is plastic tubing that sits in your nose. Oxygen from a tank goes into the tubing and then into your body. Doctors and respiratory therapists can adjust the amount of oxygen you receive until your blood oxygen levels return to normal. As you start to recover, they can slowly reduce the amount of oxygen you receive through the tubing.

healthline.com/health/what-oxygen-level-is-too-low-covid#using-a-pulse-oximeter

Long COVID affects more older adults; shots don't prevent it

New U.S. research on long COVID-19 provides fresh evidence that it can happen even after breakthrough infections in vaccinated people, and that older adults face higher risks for the long-term effects. In a study of veterans published Wednesday, about one-third who had breakthrough infections showed signs of long COVID. A separate report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that up to a year after an initial coronavirus infection, 1 in 4 adults aged 65 and older had at least one potential long COVID health problem, compared with 1 in 5 younger adults. Long COVID refers to any of more than two dozens symptoms that linger, recur or first appear at

least one month after a coronavirus infection. These can affect all parts of the body and may include fatigue, shortness of breath, brain fog and blood clots.

<https://apnews.com/article/long-covid-breakthrough-infections-e05e67c5bb12c18c594aaf5ec6dec954>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Myanmar's COVID-19 tally rises to 613,260

The total number of COVID-19 infections in Myanmar rose to 613,260 on Thursday after four new cases were confirmed in the past 24 hours, according to the ministry of health. The ministry said health authorities tested 6,624 people for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, and the daily positivity rate was 0.06 percent. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,434 as no new deaths were confirmed in the past 24 hours, the ministry's figures showed. The total number of patients who recovered from COVID-19 in the country has reached 592,244 on Thursday with 15 more patients recovered in the past 24 hours, the ministry's figures showed.

<https://english.news.cn/asiapacific/20220526/6b0008a1c6c246b4b375599d1dbdd924/c.html>

Maharashtra, Manipur, UP record highest number of COVID-19 deaths in 2020

Maharashtra, followed by Manipur and Uttar Pradesh, have recorded the highest number of COVID-19 deaths in 2020, when 1.6 lakh people succumbed to the virus in the country. In 2020, the total number of registered deaths in the country was 81,15,882 of which 18,11,688 were medically certified deaths.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/maharashtra-manipur-up-record-highest-number-of-covid-19-deaths-in-2020/articleshow/91818786.cms>

Dominant coronavirus mutant contains ghost of pandemic past

The coronavirus mutant that is now dominant in the United States is a member of the omicron family but scientists say it spreads faster than its omicron predecessors, is adept at escaping immunity and might possibly cause more serious disease. Why? Because it combines properties of both omicron and delta, the nation's dominant variant in the middle of last year. A genetic trait that harkens back to the pandemic's past, known as a "delta mutation," appears to allow the virus "to escape pre-existing immunity from vaccination and prior infection, especially if you were infected in the omicron wave," said Dr. Wesley Long, a pathologist at Houston Methodist in Texas. That's because the original omicron strain that swept the world didn't have the mutation.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ap-united-states-people-covid-texas-b2088187.html>

Latino and Indigenous Mexican farm-working communities face high risk of COVID-19

Although everyone has been affected by COVID-19 and the pandemic it spawned, not all populations have been affected equally. In the United States, for example, COVID-19 cases and death rates have been disproportionately high in Latino and Indigenous populations. To understand how determinants of health affect perceptions of the coronavirus, its spread, and decision making around COVID-19 testing and vaccination in vulnerable populations, a team of researchers at the University of California, Riverside, conducted a study in the Eastern Coachella Valley region of inland Southern California, home to Latino and Indigenous Mexican farm-working communities. Led by Ann Cheney, an associate professor of social medicine, population, and public health in the School of Medicine, the team reports in BMC Public Health that these immigrant populations are vulnerable to inequalities that increase their risk of COVID-19 exposure, morbidity, and mortality.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220526/Latino-and-Indigenous-Mexican-farm-working-communities-face-high-risk-of-COVID-19.aspx>

Two children under 5 die from COVID-19 complications

Two girls under the age of 5 were among the 104 deaths linked to COVID-19 reported Thursday, bringing the number of children under 10 who have passed away from the disease in Taiwan to

seven, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) said. One of the two girls was a 1-year-old who died of septic shock after contracting COVID-19, and the other was a 4-year-old who had developed encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain, and then suffered multiple organ failure, said Lo Yi-chun (羅宜君), deputy head of the CECC's medical response division. The two tested positive for COVID-19 on May 17 and May 11, respectively, and passed away on May 23 and May 20. Lo also reported that a 7-year-old boy had developed a severe infection of COVID-19.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202205260012>

WHO: COVID-19 cases mostly drop, except for the Americas

The number of new coronavirus cases and deaths are still falling globally after peaking in January, the World Health Organization said. In its latest weekly assessment of the pandemic, the U.N. health agency said there were more than 3.7 million new infections and 9,000 deaths in the last week, drops of 3% and 11% respectively. COVID-19 cases rose in only two regions of the world: the Americas and the Western Pacific. Deaths increased by 30% in the Middle East, but were stable or decreased everywhere else. WHO said it is tracking all omicron subvariants as “variants of concern.” It noted that countries which had a significant wave of disease caused by the omicron subvariant BA.2 appeared to be less affected by other subvariants like BA.4 and BA.5, which were responsible for the latest surge of disease in South Africa.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/who-ap-south-africa-shanghai-americas-b2088118.html>

China reports 545 new COVID cases on May 25 vs 590 a day earlier

China reported 545 new coronavirus cases on May 25, of which 130 were symptomatic and 415 were asymptomatic, the National Health Commission said on Thursday. That compares with 590 new cases a day earlier - 117 symptomatic and 473 asymptomatic infections, which China counts separately. There were 1 new deaths, bringing the death toll to 5,225.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/china-reports-545-new-covid-cases-may-25-vs-590-day-earlier-2022-05-26/>

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<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-south-africa-middle-east-5ae593b4118e68009c1ea0eecb0c56a0>