

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

4th Jul 2022

Lockdown Exit

China Covid Outbreaks Widen With More Cases Found in Anhui

China's virus cases continued to climb over the weekend with hundreds of infections detected in Anhui province, where two counties were already in lockdown. Anhui, the center of the latest outbreak, reported 287 cases for Sunday. A lockdown was imposed in Lingbi county in northeastern Anhui from Friday afternoon, while the neighboring Si county conducted its sixth mass testing on Sunday. While China seems to have brought earlier outbreaks in mega cities Shanghai and Beijing under control, its Covid-Zero goal is facing a test again in its eastern provinces. Shanghai's neighboring Jiangsu province reported 59 cases on Saturday, while the city of Wuxi found 35 infections on Sunday.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-04/china-covid-outbreaks-widen-as-mass-testing-turns-up-more-cases>

Merck Covid-19 Pill Prescribed Frequently in Some Countries Despite Low Efficacy

Paul Griffin, an infectious diseases physician at the University of Queensland who advises both Pfizer and Merck on Covid-19 antivirals, said people in Australia may be unaccepting of even a modest risk associated with Paxlovid because the country had done well on Covid-19 in general. He added that risks can be worked through "if people understand what to look for and how to manage them." Japan has approved both antiviral drugs for patients who are at high risk of developing severe disease. The Japanese government isn't giving priority to Paxlovid over Lagevrio. Regulators in Japan also didn't require people to use contraception due to reproductive risks associated with Lagevrio.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/merck-covid-19-pill-prescribed-frequently-in-some-countries-despite-low-efficacy-11656846180>

Brexit Has the UK Traveling the Wrong Way in Time

The trouble about getting Brexit done, but aborting the revolution in government, is that you risk just turning the clock back to a time today's politicians only remember from their childhoods, if at all — the time before Britain joined the European Economic Community, under the leadership of Ted Heath in January 1973.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-07-03/niall-ferguson-brexit-has-the-uk-traveling-the-wrong-way-in-time>

China's Wuxi tightens COVID curbs as new clusters emerge

Cities in eastern China tightened COVID-19 curbs on Sunday as coronavirus clusters emerge, posing a new threat to China's economic recovery under the government's strict zero-COVID policy. Wuxi, a manufacturing hub in the Yangtze Delta on the central coast, halted operations at many public venues located underground, including shops and supermarkets. Dine-in services in restaurants were suspended, and the government advised people to work from home.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/chinas-wuxi-tightens-covid-curbs-new-clusters-emerge-2022-07-03/>

German health minister in move to boost use of COVID treatment Paxlovid

Germany's health minister said on Sunday he will push for more prescriptions of Pfizer's oral COVID-19 antiviral treatment Paxlovid by family doctors to reduce severe cases of the disease. "A system involving family doctors will be prepared to administer this far too rarely-used COVID life

saver more routinely," he wrote on Twitter on Sunday, adding that sufficient stockpiles were available.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/german-health-minister-move-boost-use-covid-treatment-paxlovid-2022-07-03/>

Government set to cut enhanced sick pay for NHS staff off work with Covid

The government is to cut special sick pay for NHS staff off work with Covid from next week – even as cases soar – The Independent has learnt. The Department of Health and Social Care is set to announce an end to the enhanced pay arrangements provided during the pandemic, meaning that staff who go off sick with either Covid or long Covid will be subject to normal sick-pay rules. Nursing leaders have hit back, arguing that the move is “neglectful and unfair” for NHS staff, who are disproportionately likely to be affected by Covid.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/government-sick-pay-long-covid-nhs-b2113744.html>

Muslim pilgrims flock to Mecca for first post-pandemic haj

Thousands of pilgrims started arriving in the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia on Friday, among some one million Muslims expected to attend the 2022 haj pilgrimage season after two years of major disruption caused by the COVID pandemic. Wrapped in white robes, with some carrying umbrellas against the burning desert sun, hundreds performed the first ritual of the haj, which involves walking in a circle around the Kaaba, the sacred building at the centre of Mecca's Grand Mosque

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/muslim-pilgrims-flock-mecca-first-post-pandemic-haj-2022-07-01/>

Russia scraps remaining COVID restrictions

Russia said on Friday it was ending all restrictions to combat the spread of COVID-19, including the requirement to wear masks, citing a steady decline in deaths from the virus. However, it did not rule out re-introducing restrictive measures if the situation deteriorates. Consumer watchdog Rospotrebnadzor said it was "suspending previously introduced restrictions, including the mask regime, a ban on public catering at night, and a number of other measures".

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-scraps-remaining-covid-restrictions-2022-07-01/>

UK Covid levels rise 30% in a week to estimated 2.3m cases

Covid infection levels in the UK have risen by more than 30% in a week, with an estimated 2.3 million people thought to have had the disease in late June. Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) based on swabs collected from randomly selected households show that in the week ending 25 June, 1,829,100 people in the community in England are estimated to have had Covid, equating to about one in 30 and up from 1,360,600 the week before. Increases were also seen in the rest of the UK, with an estimated one in 18 people in Scotland, one in 30 in Wales and one in 25 in Northern Ireland thought to have had Covid in the most recent week. While still shy of the peak infection levels seen earlier this year, when about one in 13 people in England had Covid, the estimated number of infections in the UK is the highest since late April and the highest yet seen for a summer month.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/01/uk-covid-levels-rise-estimated-cases-last-week>

Exit Strategies

A Clunky, Reusable Mask May be the Answer to N95 Waste

The pandemic has generated a bevy of painful lessons about the importance of preparing for public health emergencies. From the Trump administration's tepid early response to the C.D.C.'s bungled coronavirus testing rollout and its mixed messaging on masking, quarantining and the reopening of schools, the federal government has been roundly criticized for mishandling a health crisis that has left one million Americans dead and dented public faith in a once-hallowed institution.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/03/health/covid-ppe-masks-health-care.html>

GSK's New Vaccine Hire Looks Beyond Covid in Quest for Next Hit

GSK Plc is planning to launch a Covid shot that comes almost two years after Pfizer Inc. took the world by storm. For Phil Dormitzer, it's a reminder of why he was hired at the UK drugmaker: to help return its immunization business to the top after it stumbled during the pandemic. Dormitzer, who left Pfizer to become GSK's global vaccine research chief, will need to move beyond the Covid shot and deliver some breakthroughs to challenge his former employer and other rivals. The pressure is on as the British company prepares to spin off its consumer unit this month. "The focus on vaccines is huge right now," Dormitzer said in an interview from outside Boston, where he's based. "After the separation of the consumer-health business, it will be an even more prominent part of the overall organization."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-03/gsk-s-new-vaccine-hire-looks-beyond-covid-in-quest-for-next-hit>

Novavax expects COVID vaccine targeting Omicron in fourth quarter

Novavax Inc said on Friday it expects to provide a COVID-19 vaccine targeting Omicron in the fourth quarter as it accelerates development of shots to protect against the BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants. The U.S. FDA on Thursday recommended COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers change the design of their booster shots beginning this fall to include components tailored to combat the currently dominant Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/novavax-expects-covid-vaccine-targeting-omicron-fourth-quarter-2022-07-01/>

WHO urges Southeast Asia to scale up Covid vaccination rate as case rise

Amid an incessant rise in Covid cases, the World Health Organization called on countries in the South-East Asian region to accelerate COVID-19 vaccination coverage today. While significant progress has been made in the region towards vaccinating populations against COVID-19, several countries missed the global target to fully vaccinate 70 per cent of their total population with all primary doses of the vaccine by June end responsible for various regions witnessing a surge in cases. "We know that the current COVID-19 vaccines provide high levels of protection against severe disease and death for all variants. We must focus on rapidly achieving high vaccination coverage prioritizing health workers, older adults, those with underlying health conditions, and pregnant women. The pandemic is not over yet, we must scale up our efforts to protect communities," said Regional Director, WHO (South-East Asia), Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh in an official statement.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/who-urges-southeast-asia-to-scale-up-covid-vaccination-rate-as-case-rise-122070100700_1.html

PHA urges public to come forward for spring booster of Covid-19 vaccine

The Public Health Agency is asking those with a weakened immune system to book in for their Covid-19 vaccines, warning that the virus "is still out there". All individuals aged 12 years and over who are immunosuppressed are being advised to receive a spring booster dose of the vaccine, typically six months after their last dose. Health officials say the vaccine offers the "best defence against becoming seriously unwell, staying out of hospital and passing on the virus to loved ones and others around you". In an open letter to the public from the PHA, it's been confirmed that the spring booster vaccination programme will shortly be coming to an end.

<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/pha-urges-public-come-forward-24371050>

Japan eases travel advisory for China, others as COVID risk fades

The Japanese government said on Friday it had lowered its infectious diseases-related travel advisory from "do not make non-urgent trips" to "travel with caution" for China, India and 32 other

countries, as risks posed by COVID-19 infections eased. Other countries on the list includes South Korea, Italy, Germany and France.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/japan-eases-travel-advisory-china-others-covid-risk-fades-2022-07-01/>

Omicron-based coronavirus booster shots will roll out this fall

This fall, vaccine makers will begin rolling out coronavirus booster vaccines better tailored to fight the current phase of the pandemic. Two days after outside experts voted in favor of a new vaccine adapted to protect against omicron, the Food and Drug Administration announced that the fall shots would include a component from BA.4 and BA.5, the omicron subvariants gaining ground in the United States. The change shows the FDA trying to be more nimble in efforts to keep up with a changing virus. The precise formula has not been tested in people yet, but studies showed that vaccines tuned to fight a previous version of omicron modestly increased the short-term immune response in people compared with more shots of the original. The agency will depend in part on that data as it reviews the new vaccines.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/06/30/omicron-vaccine-booster-fall/>

UK Sees ICU Admissions Rise Among Elderly as Covid Cases Climb

UK hospital admissions linked to Covid are climbing again as omicron subvariants cause new outbreaks across the country. England's hospital admission rate for the week through June 26 stood at 11.11 per 100,000 people, jumping nearly 40% from 7.98 in the previous week, according to the UK Health Security Agency, with intensive-care cases spreading among older age groups. "We continue to see an increase in Covid-19 data, with a rise in case rates and hospitalizations in those aged 65 years and over, and outbreaks in care homes," said Mary Ramsay, director of clinical programs at the agency.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-30/uk-sees-icu-admissions-rise-among-elderly-as-covid-cases-climb>

What's Going On With Covid Vaccines For Children Under 5 In The UK?

Children over the age of six months and under the age of five will now be offered the Covid vaccine in the US, but will the UK follow? The US Food and Drug Administration's outside advisory committee voted unanimously to recommend the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines for kids under five across America, after data found both vaccines to be safe and effective. Both jabs will be rolled out in the US shortly. The Pfizer vaccine will cover children aged six months through to four years old, whilst the Moderna vaccine will cover children aged six months through to five years old.

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/will-children-under-five-get-covid-vaccine-uk_uk_62bd61e1e4b0f612572310cf

Partisan Exits

MorseLife, Florida nursing home, pays \$1.7 million after giving donors early access to covid vaccines

The text message from the chief executive of MorseLife Health System, a luxury nursing home in West Palm Beach, Fla., was unambiguous. "Of course go after the billionaires first," the CEO wrote to the facility's fundraisers in December 2020, explaining who should get priority for scarce coronavirus vaccine shots intended for residents and staffers. He advised: "Do not be weak be strong you have the opportunity to take advantage of everyone who needs the shot and figure out what they have and what we can go after ..." "I'll go for the billions," he promised. Eighteen months later, MorseLife has agreed to pay \$1.75 million to settle claims that it defrauded a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention program that sought to steer limited vaccine doses to the most vulnerable Americans in late 2020 and early 2021, according to the Justice Department, which released excerpts of the text messages.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/07/01/morselife-nursing-home-settlement-covid-vaccines/>

North Korea claims Covid-19 arrived by balloon from South Korea

North Korea claims that “alien things”, apparently carried by balloon across the border from South Korea, caused an outbreak of Covid-19. According to a report in the state media, the outbreak originated in Ipho-ri in Kumgang county, not far from the South Korean border, when two people encountered unspecified objects that were carrying the infection. “It was known that an 18-year-old soldier surnamed Kim and a five-year-old kindergartener surnamed Wi contacted with alien things in a hill around barracks and residential quarters in Ipho-ri early in April,” the Korean Central News Agency reported. “And they showed the clinic features, to be estimated as early symptom of the epidemic infection, and tested positive for novel coronavirus.”

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/north-korea-claims-covid-19-arrived-by-balloon-from-south-korea-255l68cbf>

North Korea blames 'alien things' near border with South for COVID outbreak

North Korea claimed on Friday that the country's first COVID-19 outbreak began with patients touching "alien things" near the border with South Korea, apparently shifting blame to the neighbour for the wave of infections in the isolated country. Announcing results of an investigation, the North ordered people to "vigilantly deal with alien things coming by wind and other climate phenomena and balloons in the areas along the demarcation line and borders," the official KCNA news agency said. The agency did not directly mention South Korea, but North Korean defectors and activists have for decades flown balloons from the South across the heavily fortified border, carrying leaflets and humanitarian aid. South Korea's unification ministry, handling inter-Korean affairs, said there was "no possibility" of the virus entering the North through leaflets sent across the border. According to KCNA, an 18-year-old soldier and a five-year-old kindergartner who contacted the unidentified materials "in a hill around barracks and residential quarters" in the eastern county of Kumgang in early April showed symptoms and later tested positive for the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/nkorea-says-covid-outbreak-began-with-patients-touching-alien-things-near-border-2022-06-30/>

U.S. Supreme Court nixes religious challenge to New York vaccine mandate

The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday declined to hear a challenge to New York's mandate that healthcare sector workers be vaccinated against COVID-19 brought by a group of doctors, nurses and others who objected on religious grounds.

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/us-supreme-court-nixes-religious-challenge-new-york-vaccine-mandate-2022-06-30/>

Scientific Viewpoint

Study determines ideal COVID19 vaccine type, timing during pregnancy

Since the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, data has indicated that inoculation during pregnancy can help to protect both the mother and baby. New research collaboratively conducted at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH), published in the peer-reviewed Nature Communications, looked further into the extent of this protection by examining which vaccine is most effective, and when.

<https://www.jpost.com/health-and-wellness/article-710945>

COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5-11 years

When considering risks, post-implementation studies have found BNT162b2 to be safe in children aged 5-11 years.¹⁷ Importantly, the small but serious risk of vaccine-induced myocarditis appears to be much lower in children aged 5-11 years (reporting rate of 2.2 cases per million doses) than in adolescents or young adults.¹⁷ Implementation of a large-scale immunisation programme, however, comes with both financial and opportunity costs—for example, diversion of health-care staff and resources could potentially affect the provision of other crucial health-care services, such as routine childhood immunisation programmes. Clinicians and parents must balance the relatively small risks

of severe disease outcomes with the relatively small risks that accompany vaccination in children aged 5–11 years. Although many countries continue to actively recommend COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5–11 years, some countries, such as Sweden, have advised against vaccinating healthy 5–11 year-olds,¹⁸ whereas others, such as Norway, have made the vaccine available should parents wish to vaccinate their children.¹⁹ With the US Food and Drug Administration authorisation of use of COVID-19 vaccines in children younger than 5 years,²⁰ the same dilemmas are likely to resurface, although with even more marginal risk-benefit ratios. In particular, considering that the global population has been living through the pandemic for more than 2 years and has been exposed to multiple waves of different SARS-CoV-2 variants, governments, policy makers, and clinicians need to urgently address the added value of vaccination—be it primary or boosters—for protection against severe disease outcomes in children who have already been infected by the virus. Above all, public messaging of the risks and benefits of vaccinating children against COVID-19 needs to be clear to encourage public confidence in vaccines and trust in those advocating for vaccination to prevent other, more serious diseases.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)01245-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)01245-4/fulltext)

Pfizer seeks approval from US FDA for Covid-19 treatment

Pfizer has submitted a New Drug Application (NDA) to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) seeking approval for Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir tablets and ritonavir tablets) to treat Covid-19 patients at increased disease progression risk. An inhibitor of SARS-CoV-2 main protease (Mpro), Paxlovid is intended to be given orally. Due to the oral form, the therapy can be prescribed in the early infection stage to avert severe illness. Paxlovid received emergency use authorization to treat mild-to-moderate Covid-19 in adults and paediatric patients aged 12 years and above who are at increased disease progression risk.

<https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/news/pfizer-approval-fda-paxlovid/>

Two-week break from methotrexate may boost Covid-19 vaccine effect

A two-week break from taking methotrexate after a Covid-19 booster vaccine can help improve its effectiveness, a UK trial has suggested. Analysis of immune responses in 127 participants who were randomly allocated to suspend methotrexate use for two weeks and 127 to continue using it as usual, showed such a difference that researchers stopped the trial early. At four weeks and 12 weeks after the Covid-19 jab, participants' spike-antibody levels were more than two-fold higher in the paused methotrexate group compared with those who continued to take the drug. Reporting in *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, the researcher also found a worsening of disease control at week four in those who had stopped taking methotrexate but that it had normalised by week 12. Overall, there was no impact on quality of life or general health, suggesting the approach could be useful for more than a million people in the UK who take the immune-suppressing drug for inflammatory conditions.

<https://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/news/clinical-areas/dermatology/two-week-break-from-methotrexate-may-boost-covid-19-vaccine-effect/>

Modified mRNA COVID shots could increase protection as boosters - EMA

Coronavirus vaccines tweaked to include the Omicron variant strain can improve protection when used as a booster, the European Medicines Agency and other global health regulators said on Friday. Following a meeting on Thursday, the EMA said global regulators had agreed on key principles for updating COVID-19 shots to respond to emerging variants. While the existing coronavirus vaccines continue to provide good protection against hospitalisation and death, the group said, vaccine effectiveness has taken a hit as the virus has evolved.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/modified-mrna-covid-shots-could-increase-protection-boosters-ema-2022-07-01/>

Oxford Biomedica signs new deal to make AstraZeneca COVID shot

Britain's Oxford Biomedica said on Friday it had signed a new three-year agreement to potentially make AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine beyond 2022, but no volumes were defined in an indication of waning demand for the shot. Cell and gene therapy firm Oxford Biomedica said in April that it had manufactured more than 100 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine since their partnership began in September 2020. Commitments under the deal are scheduled to end this year.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/oxford-biomedica-signs-new-deal-make-astrazeneca-covid-shot-2022-07-01/>

US FDA wants COVID boosters targeting Omicron BA.4, BA.5 subvariants

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Thursday recommended COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers change the design of their booster shots beginning this fall to include components tailored to combat the currently dominant Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants of the coronavirus. If authorized, the changes would mark the first major retooling of COVID vaccines, but also could slow their rollout as the FDA has recommended a design somewhat different from what the companies had already tested and started producing.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/fda-recommends-inclusion-ba4-ba5-subvariants-covid-boosters-2022-06-30/>

Omicron-specific COVID shots could increase protection as boosters - EMA

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<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/modified-mrna-covid-shots-could-increase-protection-boosters-ema-2022-07-01/>

Oxford Biomedica (LON:OXB) Signs Covid Vaccine Deal With AstraZeneca

Oxford Biomedica Plc has signed a three-year agreement with AstraZeneca Plc to manufacture the UK drug giant's Covid-19 vaccine on an as-needed basis. The agreement is an extension of the original supply and development agreement signed between the two companies in September 2020, as the coronavirus swept around the world, according to a statement Friday. Oxford Biomedica stock was up more than 3% in early trading in London.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-01/oxford-biomedica-signs-covid-shot-supply-deal-with-astrazeneca>

Coronavirus Resurgence

A viral reprise: When COVID-19 strikes again and again

Medical experts warn that repeat infections are getting more likely as the pandemic drags on and the virus evolves – and some people are bound to get hit more than twice. Emerging research suggests that could put them at higher risk for health problems. There's no comprehensive data on people getting COVID-19 more than twice, although some states collect information on reinfections in general. New York, for example, reports around 277,000 reinfections out of 5.8 million total infections during the pandemic. Experts say actual numbers are much higher because so many home COVID-19 tests go unreported.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-politics-health-us-news-23798569e659f402f15e5197f82cd150>

For now, wary US treads water with transformed COVID-19

The fast-changing coronavirus has kicked off summer in the U.S. with lots of infections but relatively

few deaths compared to its prior incarnations. COVID-19 is still killing hundreds of Americans each day, but is not nearly as dangerous as it was last fall and winter. “It’s going to be a good summer and we deserve this break,” said Ali Mokdad, a professor of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle. With more Americans shielded from severe illness through vaccination and infection, COVID-19 has transformed — for now at least — into an unpleasant, inconvenient nuisance for many. “It feels cautiously good right now,” said Dr. Dan Kaul, an infectious diseases specialist at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor. “For the first time that I can remember, pretty much since it started, we don’t have any (COVID-19) patients in the ICU.”

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-health-infectious-diseases-fb25f987bab09a11be31a32e832dd9de>

Eastern China cities tighten COVID curbs as new clusters emerge

Cities in eastern China tightened COVID-19 curbs on Sunday as coronavirus clusters emerge, posing a new threat to China's economic recovery under the government's strict zero-COVID policy. Wuxi, a manufacturing hub in the Yangtze Delta on the central coast, halted operations at many public venues located underground, including shops and supermarkets. Dine-in services in restaurants were suspended, and the government advised people to work from home.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/chinas-wuxi-tightens-covid-curbs-new-clusters-emerge-2022-07-03/>

Why You'll Probably Get Covid (Again) Soon

The question used to be: “Have you had Covid?” Now it’s: “How many times have you had it?” Both of us have had a Covid (re)infection in recent months. Many of us know people currently sick with Covid or recently recovered. In the week ending June 24, an estimated 1 in 30 people in the UK (some 2.3 million people) were infected with Covid, up 32% from the previous week.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-07-01/covid-cases-rising-the-next-pandemic-winter-will-look-different>

FT Omicron variants drive surge in UK Covid-19 infections

Covid-19 infections in England have jumped by 34 per cent in a week as new Omicron variants drive a wave of cases across the UK, according to the Office for National Statistics. More than one in 30 people in the UK are carrying the virus, according to ONS, with half a million more people infected than a week earlier. The data released on Friday, covering the week to June 24, show that an estimated 1.8mn people — 3.35 per cent of the population in England — would test positive for Covid.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f765fd55-3a2c-4dd6-b863-61854c9a7e67>

Covid-19 infections in UK jump by more than half a million in a week

Covid-19 infections in the UK have jumped by more than half a million in a week, with the rise likely to be driven by the latest Omicron variants BA.4 and BA.5, figures show. Hospital numbers are also continuing to increase, with early signs of a rise in intensive care admissions among older age groups. A total of 2.3 million people in private households are estimated to have had the virus last week, up 32% from a week earlier, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This is the highest estimate for total infections since late April, but is still some way below the record high of 4.9 million seen at the peak of the Omicron BA.2 wave at the end of March.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/office-for-national-statistics-scotland-wales-government-vaccination-b1009662.html>

UK Covid Cases Surge 32% in One Week as BA.4, BA.5 Omicron Subvariants Spread

Britain’s Covid-19 infections are rising sharply with omicron subvariants sparking new outbreaks across the country and raising concerns that the latest wave could upend health systems and businesses. The number of people testing positive for Covid-19 is estimated at 2.3 million in the week through June 24, up 32% from the previous week, according to data published by the Office for

National Statistics on Friday. News of a country-wide jump in cases comes a day after regulators reported that England's hospital admissions are climbing again, with intensive-care cases spreading among older age groups.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-01/uk-covid-cases-surge-32-in-one-week-as-subvariants-spread>

UK Sees ICU Admissions Rise Among Elderly as Covid Cases Climb

UK hospital admissions linked to Covid are climbing again as omicron subvariants cause new outbreaks across the country. England's hospital admission rate for the week through June 26 stood at 11.11 per 100,000 people, jumping nearly 40% from 7.98 in the previous week, according to the UK Health Security Agency, with intensive-care cases spreading among older age groups. "We continue to see an increase in Covid-19 data, with a rise in case rates and hospitalizations in those aged 65 years and over, and outbreaks in care homes," said Mary Ramsay, director of clinical programs at the agency.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-30/uk-sees-icu-admissions-rise-among-elderly-as-covid-cases-climb>