

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 2nd Sep 2021

---

### Overnight News RoundUp

---

#### One Minute Overview

**WHO Chief, Germany's Merkel Open Global Pandemic Hub in Berlin** - German Chancellor Angela Merkel and World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Wednesday officially opened the international Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin — a center designed to pool the world's resources to fight future global health emergencies. [The hub, originally announced in May, will be a collection agency for health data from around the world.](#) Equipped with a supercomputer, it will collect, analyze and disseminate information from international governments, and academic and private sector institutions.

**U.K. Plans to Give Third Vaccine Dose to Vulnerable People** - The U.K. is set to offer a third dose of Covid vaccines to people 12 and older with severely weakened immune systems following a recommendation from a committee that advises the government. [The extra doses should be given to people with leukemia, advanced HIV, recent organ transplants and others who were significantly immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second shot,](#) according to a statement Wednesday from Public Health England. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation is still deliberating on the potential benefits of boosters for the wider population and awaiting further evidence to make a decision, health authorities said.

**Opposition to vaccine crumbles: Just 14% of US adults now say they won't take the shot as work mandates kick in** - Work mandates biggest driver, 43 percent saying this would make them get job. [A further 57% of workers said they support vaccine requirements from employer.](#) Those who are in hard opposition to the vaccine make up a new low of 14 percent

**Pfizer starts dosing patients in oral COVID-19 drug trial** - Pfizer Inc and Merck & Co Inc announced on Wednesday new trials of their experimental oral antiviral drugs for COVID-19 as the race to develop an easy-to-administer treatment for the potentially fatal illness heats up. Pfizer said its latest mid-to-late-stage trial will enroll 1,140 non-hospitalized adults diagnosed with coronavirus infection who are not at risk of severe illness. Patients in the trial will be given Pfizer's pill, known as PF-07321332, and a low dose of ritonavir, an older medication widely used in combination treatments for HIV infection.

**UK Plans to Give Third Vaccine Dose to Vulnerable People** - The U.K. is set to offer a third dose of Covid vaccines to people 12 and older with severely weakened immune systems following a recommendation from a committee that advises the government. [The extra doses should be given to people with leukemia, advanced HIV, recent organ transplants and others who were significantly immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second shot,](#) according to a statement Wednesday from Public Health England. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation is still deliberating on the potential benefits of boosters for the wider population and awaiting further evidence to make a decision, health authorities said.

**Massive randomized study is proof that surgical masks limit coronavirus spread, authors say** - The authors of a study based on an enormous randomized research project in Bangladesh say

their [results offer the best evidence yet that widespread wearing of surgical masks can limit the spread of the coronavirus in communities.](#) The preprint paper, which tracked more than 340,000 adults across 600 villages in rural Bangladesh, is by far the largest randomized study on the effectiveness of masks at limiting the spread of coronavirus infections.

**WHO: New Coronavirus Variant 'Mu' May Be Resistant to Vaccines** - The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday [it is monitoring a new coronavirus variant known as "Mu," which was first identified in Colombia in January of 2021.](#) Mu, known scientifically as B.1.621, has been classified as a "variant of interest," the global health body stated in its weekly pandemic bulletin.

**Pfizer Booster Shot Lowered Coronavirus Infection Risk in Study** - A third shot of the Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE Covid vaccine provides added protection against the coronavirus during a delta outbreak, according to early data from Israel, where boosters began rolling out incrementally in mid-July. [People who received the supplemental dose had a 48% to 68% lower risk of infection a week to 13 days later, compared to those who got the standard two-dose regimen, a preliminary analysis of data from Maccabi Healthcare Services found.](#) The protection increased with time, with a 70% to 84% reduced risk of testing positive two weeks to 20 days after getting a third shot.

**What the data reveals about children and Covid-19 in the US** - As students and staff return to school, the highly transmissible Delta variant of Covid-19 has caused cases, hospitalizations and death rates to soar across the country. [Children under 12 are particularly vulnerable to infection as they are not yet eligible for vaccination, including the FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine.](#) Contrary to research early in the pandemic, children are just as likely to become infected as adults. According to the CDC, Covid-19 infection rates for adolescents aged 5 to 17 were as high as in adults 18 to 49, and higher than rates in adults over 50.

**Australia aims to 'live with virus' instead of eliminating it** - Australian authorities on Wednesday extended the COVID-19 [lockdown in Melbourne for another three weeks, as they shift their focus to rapid vaccination drives and move away from a suppression strategy to bring cases down to zero.](#) Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews flagged a staggered easing of the tough restrictions once 70% of the state's adult residents receive at least one dose, a milestone he hopes to reach at least by Sept. 23, based on current vaccination rates.

## **WHO Chief, Germany's Merkel Open Global Pandemic Hub in Berlin**

### **WHO Chief, Germany's Merkel Open Global Pandemic Hub in Berlin**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Wednesday officially opened the international Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin — a center designed to pool the world's resources to fight future global health emergencies. The hub, originally announced in May, will be a collection agency for health data from around the world. Equipped with a supercomputer, it will collect, analyze and disseminate information from international governments, and academic and private sector institutions.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/who-chief-germanys-merkel-open-global-pandemic-hub-berlin>

## **U.K. Plans to Give Third Vaccine Dose to Vulnerable People**

### **U.K. Plans to Give Third Vaccine Dose to Vulnerable People**

The U.K. is set to offer a third dose of Covid vaccines to people 12 and older with severely weakened immune systems following a recommendation from a committee that advises the government. The extra doses should be given to people with leukemia, advanced HIV, recent organ transplants and others who were significantly immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second shot, according to a statement Wednesday from Public Health England. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and

Immunisation is still deliberating on the potential benefits of boosters for the wider population and awaiting further evidence to make a decision, health authorities said.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-01/u-k-plans-to-give-third-vaccine-dose-to-vulnerable-people?srnd=premium-europe>

---

### **Majority of U.S. companies may mandate COVID-19 vaccine in coming months - survey**

#### **Majority of U.S. companies may mandate COVID-19 vaccine in coming months - survey**

More than half of U.S. companies are planning to impose COVID-19 vaccine mandates in the workplace by year end, with almost a quarter considering vaccination as a condition for employment, according to a national survey of nearly 1,000 employers. In the face of a resurgence in COVID-19 cases, spurred by the highly contagious Delta coronavirus variant, that has strained the U.S. health care system, many companies have come out with mask mandates and changed their vaccination policies.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/majority-us-companies-may-mandate-covid-19-vaccine-coming-months-survey-2021-09-01/>

---

### **Opposition to vaccine crumbles: Just 14% of US adults now say they won't take the shot as work mandates kick in**

#### **Opposition to vaccine crumbles: Just 14% of US adults now say they won't take the shot as work mandates kick in**

Work mandates biggest driver, 43 percent saying this would make them get job A further 57% of workers said they support vaccine requirements from employer Those who are in hard opposition to the vaccine make up a new low of 14 percent

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9947423/Opposition-vaccines-crumbing-just-fifth-adults-say-wont-shot.html?ito=social-twitter\\_dailymailus](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9947423/Opposition-vaccines-crumbing-just-fifth-adults-say-wont-shot.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailus)

---

### **Pfizer starts dosing patients in oral COVID-19 drug trial**

#### **Pfizer starts dosing patients in oral COVID-19 drug trial**

Pfizer Inc and Merck & Co Inc announced on Wednesday new trials of their experimental oral antiviral drugs for COVID-19 as the race to develop an easy-to-administer treatment for the potentially fatal illness heats up. Pfizer said its latest mid-to-late-stage trial will enroll 1,140 non-hospitalized adults diagnosed with coronavirus infection who are not at risk of severe illness. Patients in the trial will be given Pfizer's pill, known as PF-07321332, and a low dose of ritonavir, an older medication widely used in combination treatments for HIV infection.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-starts-dosing-patients-oral-covid-19-drug-trial-2021-09-01/>

---

### **Massive randomized study is proof that surgical masks limit coronavirus spread, authors say**

#### **Massive randomized study is proof that surgical masks limit coronavirus spread, authors say**

The authors of a study based on an enormous randomized research project in Bangladesh say their results offer the best evidence yet that widespread wearing of surgical masks can limit the spread of the coronavirus in communities. The preprint paper, which tracked more than 340,000 adults across 600 villages in rural Bangladesh, is by far the largest randomized study on the effectiveness of masks at limiting the spread of coronavirus infections.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/09/01/masks-study-covid-bangladesh/>

---

### **WHO: New Coronavirus Variant**

#### **WHO: New Coronavirus Variant "Mu" May Be Resistant to Vaccines**

The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday it is monitoring a new coronavirus variant

known as “Mu,” which was first identified in Colombia in January of 2021. Mu, known scientifically as B.1.621, has been classified as a “variant of interest,” the global health body stated in its weekly pandemic bulletin.

<https://greekreporter.com/2021/09/01/new-coronavirus-variant-mu-resistant-vaccines/>

---

### **Pfizer Booster Shot Lowered Coronavirus Infection Risk in Study**

#### **Pfizer Booster Shot Lowered Coronavirus Infection Risk in Study**

A third shot of the Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE Covid vaccine provides added protection against the coronavirus during a delta outbreak, according to early data from Israel, where boosters began rolling out incrementally in mid-July. People who received the supplemental dose had a 48% to 68% lower risk of infection a week to 13 days later, compared to those who got the standard two-dose regimen, a preliminary analysis of data from Maccabi Healthcare Services found. The protection increased with time, with a 70% to 84% reduced risk of testing positive two weeks to 20 days after getting a third shot.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-01/pfizer-booster-shot-lowered-coronavirus-infection-risk-in-study>

---

### **What the data reveals about children and Covid-19 in the US**

#### **What the data reveals about children and Covid-19 in the US**

As students and staff return to school, the highly transmissible Delta variant of Covid-19 has caused cases, hospitalizations and death rates to soar across the country. Children under 12 are particularly vulnerable to infection as they are not yet eligible for vaccination, including the FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine. Contrary to research early in the pandemic, children are just as likely to become infected as adults. According to the CDC, Covid-19 infection rates for adolescents aged 5 to 17 were as high as in adults 18 to 49, and higher than rates in adults over 50.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/01/us/us-covid-kids-data/index.html>

---

### **Australia aims to 'live with virus' instead of eliminating it**

#### **Australia aims to 'live with virus' instead of eliminating it**

Australian authorities on Wednesday extended the COVID-19 lockdown in Melbourne for another three weeks, as they shift their focus to rapid vaccination drives and move away from a suppression strategy to bring cases down to zero. Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews flagged a staggered easing of the tough restrictions once 70% of the state's adult residents receive at least one dose, a milestone he hopes to reach at least by Sept. 23, based on current vaccination rates.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/covid-19-cases-rise-australias-victoria-lockdown-extension-looms-2021-09-01/>

---

### **Why some COVID-19 infections may be free of symptoms but not free of harm**

#### **Why some COVID-19 infections may be free of symptoms but not free of harm**

Eric Topol was worried when he first saw images of the lungs of people who had been infected with COVID-19 aboard the Diamond Princess, a cruise ship that was quarantined off the coast of Japan in the earliest weeks of the pandemic. A study of 104 passengers found that 76 of them had COVID but were asymptomatic. Of that group, CT scans showed that 54 percent had lung abnormalities—patchy grey spots known as ground glass opacities that signal fluid build-up in the lungs. These CT scans were “disturbing,” wrote Topol, founder and director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, with co-author Daniel Oran in a narrative review of asymptomatic disease published in the Annals of Internal Medicine. “If confirmed, this finding suggests that the absence of symptoms might not necessarily mean the absence of harm.”

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/science-and-technology/2021/09/why-some-covid-19-infections-may-be-free-of-symptoms-but-not-free-of-harm>

---

### **Moderna to recall COVID-19 doses in Japan after stainless steel contaminants found**

## **Moderna to recall COVID-19 doses in Japan after stainless steel contaminants found**

Moderna Inc and Takeda Pharmaceutical Co Ltd on Wednesday said they are working with Japanese authorities to recall three batches of COVID-19 vaccine after an investigation found stainless steel contaminants in some vials. Japanese authorities had suspended use of these batches of Moderna shots containing 1.63 million doses last week after being notified of the contamination issue.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/japan-finds-stainless-steel-particles-suspended-doses-moderna-vaccine-2021-09-01/>

## **Two FDA officials who oversee coronavirus vaccine reviews to depart**

---

### **Two FDA officials who oversee coronavirus vaccine reviews to depart**

A pair of senior Food and Drug Administration officials who oversee the agency's reviews of coronavirus vaccines are retiring, the agency said Tuesday. Marion Gruber, who leads the Office of Vaccines Research and Review, will depart the FDA at the end of October. Philip Krause, Gruber's deputy, will leave the agency in November. Peter Marks, director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, told staff that he would serve as the acting head of the vaccine office as the agency searches for a permanent replacement, according to an internal memo shared with The Washington Post.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/09/01/fda-vaccine-officials-depart/>

## **Australian health authorities warn against mixing Covid vaccine types**

---

### **Australian health authorities warn against mixing Covid vaccine types**

The evidence is strongest for receiving two doses of the same Covid-19 vaccine, rather than mixing different types, medical authorities have said amid concerns that some people may be cancelling their second AstraZeneca dose in the hope of securing a shot of Pfizer. As outbreaks of the Delta variant affect New South Wales and Victoria, people are being urged by state premiers and health authorities to get vaccinated as soon as possible with whatever vaccine is available, and to show up to their existing first and second-dose appointments.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/sep/01/australian-health-authorities-warn-against-mixing-covid-vaccine-types>

## **Painless, Silent Organ Damage Seen in Covid 'Long Hauler' Study**

---

### **Painless, Silent Organ Damage Seen in Covid 'Long Hauler' Study**

Kidney damage is painless and silent, and it's the latest ailment to be identified afflicting a large swath of Covid-19 survivors. Injury to the blood-filtering organ can occur among people who recover from the coronavirus at home, and escalates with the severity of Covid, a study found. Even non-hospitalized patients with no renal problems have almost a twofold higher risk of developing end-stage kidney disease, compared with someone who never had Covid. The findings, reported Wednesday in the Journal of the American Society of Nephrology, highlight yet another pernicious burden of the pandemic that's sickened more than 200 million people globally.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-01/painless-silent-organ-damage-seen-in-large-long-hauler-study?srnd=premium-europe>

## **Covid-19: Irish Cabinet agrees to end most restrictions by 22 October**

---

### **Covid-19: Irish Cabinet agrees to end most restrictions by 22 October**

The Irish Cabinet has agreed on a plan that would effectively end most Covid-19 restrictions by 22 October. The cabinet said the easing of rules is dependent on 90% of adults being vaccinated and Covid-19 cases remaining manageable. From 6 September, large crowds will be allowed to gather for religious ceremonies. Places of worship and outdoor sporting venues will also be allowed to hold 50% capacity from that date.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-58400777>

## **COVID-19: Scotland to require vaccine passports for nightclubs and large events, Nicola Sturgeon says**

---

### **COVID-19: Scotland to require vaccine passports for nightclubs and large events, Nicola Sturgeon says**

Nicola Sturgeon says that while events covered by the scheme "matter to our economy, and to our cultural and social life", they are "not essential services".

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-scotland-to-require-vaccine-passports-for-nightclubs-and-large-events-nicola-sturgeon-says-12396794>

## **France starts COVID-19 booster shot campaign for the elderly**

---

### **France starts COVID-19 booster shot campaign for the elderly**

France on Wednesday started administering booster shots of COVID-19 vaccine to people over 65 and those with underlying health conditions as the delta variant spreads in the country. France is the first big EU country to introduce widespread booster shots, and several other European countries are expected to follow suit.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/france-covid-paris-people-world-health-organization-b1912475.html?fr=operaneWS>

## **US Sending Millions of COVID-19 Vaccine Doses to Pakistan**

---

### **US Sending Millions of COVID-19 Vaccine Doses to Pakistan**

As Pakistan deals with a surge in COVID-19 cases due to the delta variant, the United States will begin moving 4 million doses of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine to the country on Thursday, a White House spokesperson told VOA. The 4,149,990 doses, sent through COVAX, the global vaccine-sharing initiative co-led by Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance), the WHO (World Health Organization) and CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness), are in addition to the more than 9.2 million doses of Moderna and Pfizer vaccine already donated to Pakistan since June.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/us-sending-millions-covid-19-vaccine-doses-pakistan>

## **CDC asks the unvaccinated not to travel this weekend and says even vaccinated need to weigh the risk**

---

### **CDC asks the unvaccinated not to travel this weekend and says even vaccinated need to weigh the risk**

Due to the surge of Covid-19 cases, the director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is asking unvaccinated Americans not to travel during the Labor Day holiday weekend. The US is surpassing an average of 160,000 new cases a day, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. With the spread of the more transmissible Delta variant and many students returning to the classroom for a new academic year, the rise is concerning officials and health experts. "First and foremost, if you are unvaccinated, we would recommend not traveling," CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said at a White House Covid-19 Response Team Briefing on Tuesday.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/01/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

## **Vaccinations in rural India increase amid supply concerns**

---

### **Vaccinations in rural India increase amid supply concerns**

India has dramatically increased COVID-19 vaccination rates in its vast rural hinterland, where around 65% of the country's nearly 1.4 billion people live. But supply constraints remain for the world's largest maker of vaccines and experts say it's unlikely India will reach its target of vaccinating all adults by the end of the year. India opened shots for all adults in May. But the campaign faltered in villages due to vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. That started changing in mid-July and of the nearly 120 million shots administered in the past three weeks, around 70% were in India's villages — up from around half in the initial weeks of May.

### **German firms seek details of employees' vaccine status**

The German government is looking into whether it could temporarily ease data privacy rules to allow companies to find out whether their employees are vaccinated against COVID-19, ministers said on Wednesday. Many countries are making vaccination mandatory for healthcare staff and public sector workers and some companies – particularly in the United States – have started demanding that employees are inoculated

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/1/german-firms-seek-details-of-employees-vaccine-status>

### **Wealthy nations far short of COVID vaccine donation target**

---

#### **Wealthy nations far short of COVID vaccine donation target**

Two people who led an independent review of the world's response to COVID-19 raised deep concerns today about the slow pace of vaccine donations by high-income countries to lower-income countries. In other developments, the World Health Organization (WHO) today released a list of 24 new tools—such solar-powered oxygen concentrators—that can help battle current and future pandemic threats.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/08/wealthy-nations-far-short-covid-vaccine-donation-target>

### **In Indonesia, drone deliveries provide lifeline for isolating COVID patients**

---

#### **In Indonesia, drone deliveries provide lifeline for isolating COVID patients**

A group of drone enthusiasts in Indonesia are using their aerial skills to help during the pandemic by providing a contactless medicine and food delivery service to COVID-19 patients isolating at home. Armed with five drones, the seven-member team have been working around the clock in Makassar, the capital of the South Sulawesi province, since early July to provide deliveries.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-drone-deliveries-provide-lifeline-isolating-covid-patients-2021-09-01/>

### **Most highly allergic people can be safely immunized against COVID-19**

---

#### **Most highly allergic people can be safely immunized against COVID-19**

Most highly allergic individuals can be safely immunized against COVID-19, according to a study published online Aug. 31 in JAMA Network Open. Ronen Shavit, M.D., from Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer, Israel, and colleagues describe immunization of highly allergic individuals with the Pfizer-BioNTech (BNT162b2) COVID-19 vaccine in a prospective cohort study conducted from Dec. 27, 2020, to Feb. 22, 2021. A total of 8,102 patients with allergies underwent risk assessment using an algorithm that included a detailed questionnaire; 429 patients were considered highly allergic and immunized under medical supervision.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-09-highly-allergic-people-safely-immunized.html>

### **Coronavirus: UK daily deaths above 200 for first time since March**

---

#### **Coronavirus: UK daily deaths above 200 for first time since March**

The number of daily deaths within 28 days of a positive test recorded in the UK rises above 200 for the first time since 9 March. The figure of 207 could be partially affected by the bank holiday causing a lag in reporting. Vaccine passports are to be required for entry to nightclubs and many large events in Scotland from later this month, Nicola Sturgeon says

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-58406184>

### **India's Economic Figures Belie Covid-19's Toll**

---

#### **India's Economic Figures Belie Covid-19's Toll**

The coronavirus continues to batter India's damaged economy, putting growing pressure on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to nurture a nascent recovery and get the country back to work. The coronavirus, which has struck in two waves, has killed hundreds of thousands of people and at times has brought cities to a halt. Infections and deaths have eased, and the country is returning to work. Economists predict that growth could surge in the second half of the year on paper.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/31/business/economy/india-economy-covid.html>

---

### **Doctors dismayed by patients who fear coronavirus vaccines, but clamor for unproven ivermectin**

#### **Doctors dismayed by patients who fear coronavirus vaccines, but clamor for unproven ivermectin**

Oklahoma doctor Matthew Payne regularly encounters covid-19 patients in his hospital who say they had feared coronavirus vaccines and thought they had found a safer approach — taking ivermectin, a medicine long used to kill parasites in animals and humans. “There is surprise and shock when they initially get sick and have to come to the hospital,” said Payne, a hospitalist at Stillwater Medical Center. “They’ll say, ‘I’m not sure why I feel so bad. I was taking the ivermectin,’ and I will say, ‘It doesn’t do any good.’ ”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/09/01/ivermectin-covid-treatment/>

---

### **Philippines health workers protest neglect as COVID-19 strains hospitals**

#### **Philippines health workers protest neglect as COVID-19 strains hospitals**

Scores of healthcare workers protested in the Philippine capital on Wednesday to demand an end to what they called government neglect and unpaid benefits, as pressure builds at hospitals fighting one of Asia's longest-running coronavirus epidemics. Protesters wearing protective medical gear gathered at the Department of Health (DOH) and held placards demanding their risk allowances and hazard pay, and the resignation of Health Secretary Francisco Duque.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-health-workers-protest-neglect-covid-19-strains-hospitals-2021-09-01/>

---

### **North Korea turns down Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine doses**

#### **North Korea turns down Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine doses**

North Korea has rejected roughly three million COVID-19 vaccine doses developed by China's Sinovac Biotech, saying the shots should be sent to harder-hit countries, the Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday,

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/north-korea-turns-down-sinovac-covid-19-vaccine-doses-wsj/ar-AANYJsk>