

COVID-19: What's New for August 21, 2020

IHME's latest COVID-19 forecasts indicate that the US will reach nearly 310,000 deaths by December 1, 2020. If mask wearing in public increases to 95%, more than 69,000 lives could be saved.

Key observations

1. The large epidemics in Arizona, California, Florida, and Texas have peaked or stabilized. Overall, for the US, national cases have been declining since late July, while deaths have stayed quite steady at approximately 1,000 per day. (Figures 1 and 2)
2. A small cluster of states have effective R (the number of new infections caused by each infection) greater than 1: Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Many states are just below an effective R of 1, meaning small changes in individual behavior could lead to effective R rising above 1. (Figure 3)
3. Due to scaled-up testing, the fraction of infections being detected has steadily risen during the epidemic such that the fraction of infections detected and reported as confirmed cases is likely well over 25%. (Figure 5).
4. States with daily death rates over 4 per million are in a belt across the South: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. This is also true of Arizona and Nevada in the Southwest. (Figure 6)
5. US mobility as measured through cellphone app use rose from mid-April until mid-June and then declined a small degree until early August. Mobility appears to be starting to increase again. We expect the return to school and some return to work in some states will tend to increase mobility through September. The lowest levels of mobility are currently seen in California and Hawaii. (Figure 8).
6. Mask use in public is holding steady around 55% since late July. Mask use over the national average is seen in Arizona, California, Florida, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and most of the Northeastern states. (Figure 9).
7. We forecast 310,000 deaths by December 1. This forecast assumes that states with epidemics leading to a daily death rate greater than 8 per million will re-impose mandates to control transmission. In the forecast, the US daily death rate will drop very slowly in September and then rise to nearly 2,000 per day by December 1. Without re-imposition of mandates in select states, the daily death rate could be much higher by December 1. (Figures 12 and 13)
8. The states that will likely have to re-impose mandates between now and Dec 1 are: Florida, Mississippi, and Texas (in August); Georgia, Nevada (in September); California, Louisiana, Minnesota (in October); and Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Washington (in November).
9. Increasing mask use in the US to 95% through measures such as state or federal mandates with penalties and/or a concerted public information campaign could save 69,000 lives by December 1.

A NOTE OF THANKS

We would like to extend a special thanks to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for key data sources; our partners and collaborators in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Turkey, and Ukraine for their support and expert advice; and to the tireless data collection and collation efforts of individuals and institutions throughout the world.

In addition, we wish to express our gratitude for efforts to collect social distancing policy information in Latin America to University of Miami Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas (Felicia Knaul, Michael Touchton), with data published here: <http://observcovid.miami.edu/>; Fundación Mexicana para la Salud (Héctor Arreola-Ornelas) with support from the GDS Services International: Tómatelo a Pecho A.C.; and Centro de Investigaciones en Ciencias de la Salud, Universidad Anáhuac (Héctor Arreola-Ornelas); Lab on Research, Ethics, Aging and Community-Health at Tufts University (REACH Lab) and the University of Miami Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas (Thalia Porteny).

Further, IHME is grateful to the Microsoft AI for Health program for their support in hosting our COVID-19 data visualizations on the Azure Cloud. We would like to also extend a warm thank you to the many others who have made our COVID-19 estimation efforts possible.

For all COVID-19 resources at IHME, visit <http://www.healthdata.org/covid>.

Questions? Requests? Feedback? Please contact us [here](#).