

Coronavirus death toll hits 1M worldwide

The news comes as Europe braces for a 'second wave'.

There have been over 1 million coronavirus-associated deaths worldwide since the illness was first reported in Wuhan, China, in late 2019, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

In January, as the virus began to spread outside of the country's borders, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a global health emergency, but it wasn't officially deemed a global pandemic until March.

Since then, the world has been watching as companies race to develop a vaccine, and numerous countries issued lockdowns in hopes of containing the virus' spread and cutting down on the number of fatalities, but outbreaks at nursing homes and other care facilities added thousands to the death toll. Advancements in testing capabilities and contact tracing allowed for some return to normalcy, but not without officials warning of risk and governors issuing a series of mandates for face coverings and social distancing.


Still, as countries reopened borders and loosened the coronavirus-related restrictions on travel, dining and other social events, health officials sounded the alarm over possible spikes in cases and the danger of a second wave.

"As we get into the fall and the winter, you really want the level of community spread to be as low as you possibility get it," Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease expert and face of the White House's Coronavirus Task Force, told ABC News recently. "There's certainly parts of the country that are doing well, but there are states that are starting to show an uptick in cases and even some increases in hospitalizations in some states. And, I hope not, but, we very well might start seeing increases in deaths."

CORONAVIRUS INFECTED YOUNG ADULTS MORE THAN OTHER AGE GROUPS OVER SUMMER, CDC REPORT SAYS

Fauci said now is the time to "double down" on enforcing public health measures

in an effort to avoid having another shutdown in the U.S.

In the U.K., a number of regions have been forced to re-enter a lockdown period following a spike in positive COVID-19 test results, and WHO's regional director for Europe, Hans Kluge, said it should serve as a "wake-up call" to others who may be experiencing "quarantine fatigue." 

"Weekly cases have now exceeded those reported when the pandemic first peaked in Europe in March," Kluge said, according to the New York Post. "Although these numbers reflect more comprehensive testing, it also shows alarming rates of transmission across the region."

MOST AMERICANS LIKELY VULNERABLE TO CORONAVIRUS INFECTION, CDC DIRECTOR SAYS

Health officials had also hoped that antibody testing would provide guidance on how to safely reopen, but a study based on data made available in 46 states in the U.S. found that less than 10 percent of Americans have COVID-19 antibodies. Last week, Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), told a Senate committee that preliminary results from large-scale serology testing across the U.S. suggested that most Americans likely remain vulnerable to infection.

The health agency also released data that shows the mortality rate from COVID-19 remains extremely low for young people, but there's a recent rise in cases among this population, and those individuals pose a risk for the more vulnerable age groups who are more susceptible to the virus. Americans aged 20-29 now account for more than 20% of all cases, with officials noting that the shift in age, particularly in the southern regions hit by outbreaks in June, suggests that the "younger adults likely contributed to community transmission of COVID-19."

CRUISE LINES AWAIT CDC DECISION ON POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF 'NO SAIL' ORDER

The U.S., which has had over 7.1 million cases of COVID-19 and has made massive strides in testing capabilities since the outbreak first began, currently leads the world in coronavirus-related deaths with nearly 205,000 fatalities, while Brazil follows with almost 142,000 coronavirus-associated deaths. The U.S.

passed the grim 200,000 milestone marker last week, while the government has been prepping for mass distribution of a vaccine once a candidate is approved.

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