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Bullish and Bearish COVID Developments: CDC Advisors Say the Delta Surge Is Over

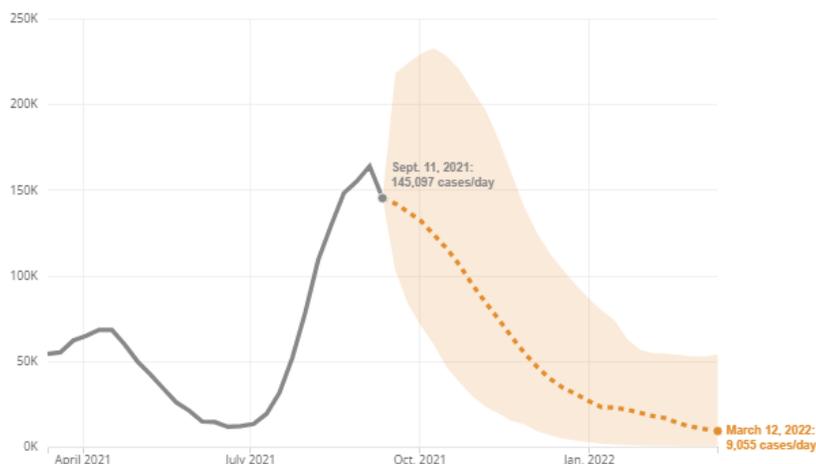
By: Marshall L. Stocker, Ph.D., CFA | September 24, 2021

Boston - According to a new analysis by a consortium of researchers advising the CDC, the Delta surge will likely decline steadily now through next spring — without a significant bump up in the winter. As a result, we expect this will be our last weekly update on health policy responses and other COVID developments.

Infections Projected To Drop To About 9,000 Per Day By March

This scenario assumes childhood vaccinations take off and no new, more-transmissible variants emerge.

■ Historical new cases/day (7-day avg.) ■ Estimated new cases/day ■ Uncertainty interval*



Notes

*There is reasonable confidence that the epidemic trajectory will remain within this range if the scenario assumptions hold, taking into account both the uncertainty of individual models and differences between models.

Source: [COVID-19 Scenario Modeling Hub](#)

Credit: [Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR](#)

Health Policy Responses

- An FDA advisory panel voted on September 17 against approving a booster shot for people 16 and older who received the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. On September 22, however, the FDA did approve a third dose for anyone 65 or older and those aged 18 to 64 who are vulnerable to severe COVID or working in jobs with a high risk of exposure.
- The U.S. will require adult travelers to be vaccinated for entry into the country.
- Unvaccinated heads of state attending the United Nation General Assembly this week will not be allowed to eat at New York's restaurants.
- Tennessee is limiting monoclonal antibody treatment to people who are not vaccinated, and Idaho allowed overwhelmed hospitals to ration care if necessary.
- Canada gave full approval to the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines and authorized new names of *Comirnaty* and *Spikevax*, respectively, while the AstraZeneca vaccine will be called *Vaxzevria*; 69% of all Canadians are fully vaccinated.
- In Asia, Cambodia began vaccinating 6-to-11 year olds, mostly with China's Sinovac and Sinopharm; Vietnam has given emergency-use approval for Cuba's Abdala COVID-19 vaccine; and Singapore's prime minister has received a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine, eight months after his initial dose.
- In Europe, around 3,000 French health care workers have been suspended for refusing to be vaccinated, and the Pope urged everyone to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Bullish Virus Developments

- New cases in the U.S. have clearly rolled over, despite the return to school.
- Vaccinated pregnant women pass protection to babies, according to a new study in the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology, but only 30% of pregnant women are vaccinated.
- People given a booster shot six months or longer after their first dose had a 12-fold increase in antibodies — compared to a four-fold increase for those

who got a second dose at two months. This study suggests protection would be stronger if boosters were received later.

- A two-dose version of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is 94% effective against COVID-19.
- Blood tests on 8,500 individuals were used to estimate that almost 90% of people in Mumbai — India's financial capital with a population of 12.5 million — have COVID-19 antibodies.

Bearish Virus Developments

- A new CDC study has found that during a COVID-19 outbreak involving the Delta variant in a highly vaccinated incarcerated population, transmission rates were high, even among vaccinated persons. The conclusion is that congregate settings are a particular challenge even for the vaccinated.
- A CDC study released last week showed that 18% of COVID cases, 14% of hospitalizations and 16% of deaths are now occurring in fully vaccinated people — a substantial increase from the 5% to 8% infection, hospitalization and death rates seen just two months before.
- Moderna's vaccine protection wanes by 36% after 12 months according to a new study, making the case for a booster shot.
- One in three unvaccinated COVID-19 patients suffers from long COVID, with fatigue the most commonly reported symptom.
- There is a shortage of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests.

Other Developments

- Pfizer versus Moderna, according to Dr. Jeffrey Wilson, an immunologist at the University of Virginia: "Pfizer is a big hammer. Moderna is a sledgehammer."
- Zoom is offering booths that allow workers to keep zooming when they return to the office.
- PhDComics.com has received high praise by scientists for explaining SARS-CoV-2. One fun fact: Before 2020, there were 700 scientific papers per year on coronaviruses; that annual figure now tops 70,000.

Source of all data: Eaton Vance research as of September 23, 2021 unless otherwise specified.

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["Deaths per day in the U.S. are projected to fall below 100 by March 2022, the lowest level since the pandemic began."](#)

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