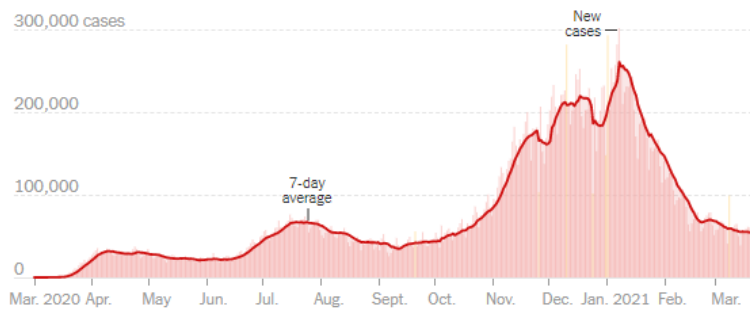


- **COVID-19 cases continue to decline but have hit a plateau**, likely due to more variant strains, reopening plans, increased travel and Covid fatigue

Coronavirus in the U.S.: Latest Map and Case Count

Updated March 24, 2021, 2:35 P.M. E.T.
 Leer en español



	TOTAL REPORTED	ON MARCH 23	14-DAY CHANGE
Cases	30 million+	59,782	-7% →
Deaths	544,495	892	-40% ↘
Hospitalized		39,439	-13% ↘

- The **UK variant (B117) is 30-40% more transmissible** and has been doubling every 10 days, with concerns that it will soon become the dominant strain in US; “hot spots’ like FL are emerging
- Researchers found the B117 variant of SARS-CoV-2 **may be 35-61% deadlier** than other variants
- **Vaccines are effective against B117 and other variants so VACCINATION is vital**
- **ALL VACCINES are 99% effective at reducing hospitalization and death and very safe**
 - **Protective vaccine antibodies from both previously infected and vaccinated mothers transmit in utero to their baby** through placental blood and later through breast milk
- Standard safety measures clearly reduce transmission so PLEASE CONTINUE TO:
 - Wear your mask
 - Avoid large gatherings, especially indoors
 - Wash hands and stay home if sick
- **Herd immunity** may be present by this summer! July 4th could be ‘independence day’ from C-19
 - A large ongoing study in Texas has found that between 14 percent and 34 percent of all Texans have COVID-19 antibodies, including about 30 percent of children age 5 to 19.
 - **Reinfections rare after COVID-19** with natural immunity protection maintained for >6 months; 80% protection in adults and about 50% in >65 year olds

- **Vaccine News**

- US now providing ~ **2.5M vaccinations per day**, an increase of 40% in the last month
- Over **25% of people in the US have received at least one COVID-19 shot**. About 14% of people are fully vaccinated. 65% of over age 65 years have at least first shot.
- 88% who received first dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine also received their 2nd dose
- Moderna has started a clinical trial to test its SARS-CoV-2 “vaccine in children under 12, including babies as young as six months,” and is expecting “to enroll 6,750 healthy children in” the U.S. and Canada. The company is also conducting a separate clinical trial testing the “vaccine in 3,000 children ages 12 to 17.”
- New study shows vaccines may reduce ‘long haul’ COVID symptoms

COVID-19 vaccines appear to cause sharp drop in infections in health-care workers

- Three separate studies of health-care workers in American and Israeli health systems all published in The New England Journal of Medicine suggested *vaccinations have played a role in significantly reducing COVID-19 infections* at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas, the Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem, and the health systems of both the University of California, San Diego, and the University of California, Los Angeles. In the UC systems, of the more than 14,000 people tested for COVID-19, only seven received positive results more than 15 days after their second dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

NOTE: These CMO Updates are intentionally non-political.

The following news story is shared with you only because it may help all of us better understand how we react to information and how we can overcome our biases, regardless of political affiliation, and how **together we can help end this pandemic and return to normal life.**

COVID-19 misperceptions vary by political party

A central finding from a recent survey of 35,000 Americans by Gallup and Franklin Templeton reveals that both liberals and conservatives suffer from misperceptions about the pandemic — in opposite directions. “Republicans consistently underestimate risks, while Democrats consistently overestimate them,” Jonathan Rothwell, Gallup’s principal economist, and Sonal Desai, a Franklin Templeton executive, write.

The mistakes people make

More than one-third of Republican voters, for example, said that people without Covid symptoms could not spread the virus. Similar shares said that Covid was killing fewer people than either the seasonal flu or vehicle crashes. All of those beliefs are wrong, and badly so. Asymptomatic spread is a major source

of transmission, and Covid has killed about 15 times more Americans than either the flu or vehicle crashes do in a typical year.

Democrats, on the other hand, are more likely to exaggerate the severity of Covid. When asked how often Covid patients had to be hospitalized, a very large share of Democratic voters said that at least 20 percent did. The actual hospitalization rate is about 1 percent.

Democrats are also more likely to exaggerate Covid's toll on young people and to believe that children account for a meaningful share of deaths. In reality, Americans under 18 account for only 0.04 percent of Covid deaths.

It's true that some of these misperceptions reflect the fact that most people are not epidemiologists and that estimating medical statistics is difficult. Still, the errors do have a connection to real-world behavior, Rothwell told me.

Republicans' underestimation of Covid risks helps explain their resistance to wearing a mask — even though doing so could save their own life or that of a family member. And Democrats' overestimation of risks explains why so many have accepted school closures — despite the damage being done to children, in lost learning, lost social connections and, in the case of poorer children, missed meals.

The states with the highest share of closed schools are all blue states: California, Oregon, Maryland, New Mexico, Hawaii, Nevada, Massachusetts and New Jersey. "I think in many ways it's based on the fact that these voters are misinformed about the risks to young people and they're misinformed about the risks generally," Rothwell said.

Information can help

The reasons for these ideological biases aren't completely clear, but they are not shocking. Conservatives tend to be more hostile to behavior restrictions and to scientific research. And liberals sometimes overreact to social problems. (A classic example was the overpopulation scare of the 1960s and '70s, when people on the left wrongly predicted that the world would run out of food.)

Covid, of course, represents a real crisis, one that has already killed more than a half-million Americans and continues to kill more than 1,000 per day. As in the case of many crises, underreaction has been the bigger problem with Covid — but it has not been the only problem.

Perhaps the best news from the Gallup survey was that some people were willing to revisit their beliefs when given new information. Republicans took the pandemic more seriously after being told that the number of new cases was rising, and Democrats were more favorable to in-person schooling after hearing that the American Academy of Pediatrics supports it. (NYTimes)