

November 4, 2020

### Summary

The United States has 9,441,473 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 233,265 reported related deaths. COVID-19 cases among American children are spiking. The United States recorded 61,000 new pediatric cases during the week of October 22, its highest weekly total since the start of the pandemic. Andrew Pollard, Chief Investigator of the AstraZeneca-Oxford University COVID-19 vaccine trials, told British lawmakers that data from the trials could be available by the end of 2020. CDC added pregnancy to its list of underlying medical conditions that increase the risk of severe COVID-19. CDC recently published data indicating that pregnant women infected with COVID-19 are significantly more likely to require intensive care than non-pregnant women of the same age. NIH Director Collins issued a statement urging Americans to wear face masks in public; Collins cited a study conducted by Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluations indicating that near-universal face mask wearing could save tens of thousands of lives this winter.

At least 31 states set single-day records during October for new COVID-19 cases. Connecticut governor Ned Lamont announced the state will pull back from Phase 3 re-opening to Phase 2, tightening restrictions on restaurants and social gatherings and asking residents to remain home between 10 PM and 5 AM. The state moved into Phase 3 less than a month ago. Texas now has the most confirmed COVID-19 cases of any state since the beginning of the pandemic, surpassing California's total of 938,500. In Utah, between 3,000 and 10,000 people attended a Halloween rave event near the city of Provo that was advertised as a protest against COVID-19 restrictions. After reaching record highs, North Carolina's rolling seven-day new case average dipped for a second straight day on November 2.

New York reported 14 deaths, 1,227 hospitalizations, and 268 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Tuesday, November 3. Approximately 2,126, or 1.6%, of the 133,534 tests administered in New York on November 3 were positive for COVID-19. Governor Cuomo sent a letter to CDC Director Robert Redfield and HHS Secretary Alex Azar criticizing a portion of the current vaccination plan that would require vaccine recipients to provide personal identification information to the federal government, citing concerns about the Trump administration's immigration enforcement tactics. Many New York City parents have withdrawn their children from public schools and sent their children to private schools or enrolled them in public schools in other communities in response to the City's COVID-19 restrictions on in-person learning. Unemployment caused by the pandemic has spurred an increase in street vendors seeking to make ends meet.

## Presidential updates

- [Exit Polls Examine Americans' Attitudes Regarding Pandemic, Pandemic's Effect on Presidential Election](#), November 4
  - In exit [polls](#) of voters participating in the November 3 elections conducted by Edison Research, only 17 percent of voters said that the pandemic was the top issue affecting their vote. A larger share of voters (35%) identified the economy as the top issue and a slightly larger share (20%) said that racial inequality was the most important issue.
  - When asked which was more important, containing COVID-19, even if it hurts the economy, or rebuilding the economy, even if it hurts efforts to contain the virus, 51% of voters said that containing the virus was more important and 42% said that rebuilding the economy was more important.
  - 17% of voters said that the United States' efforts to contain the virus are going very well, 31% said efforts are going somewhat well, 16% said efforts are going somewhat badly, and 34% said efforts are going very badly.
  - These exit-poll responses largely fell on party lines. Voters who said containing the virus was more important overwhelmingly voted for former Vice President Joseph Biden while the majority of voters who said rebuilding the economy was more important voted for President Trump.
  - Voters supporting former Vice President Joseph Biden were also more likely than voters supporting President Trump to say that the United States' efforts to contain the virus were going "somewhat badly" or "very badly."

## World Health Organization (WHO)

- [WHO COVID-19 Updates](#), November 4
  - WHO updated technical [guidance](#) on harmonizing health service capacity assessments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The update refines and develops guidance initially published on May 31.

## U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [CDC Adds Pregnancy to List of Risk Factors for Severe COVID-19](#), November 2
  - A Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [study](#) found that pregnant women infected with COVID-19 were significantly more likely to require intensive care, to be connected to a specialized heart-lung bypass machine, and to require mechanical ventilation than non-pregnant women of the same age who had COVID-19 symptoms.
  - CDC added pregnancy to the [list](#) of conditions that put adults of any age at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
  - The study examined outcomes of 409,462 symptomatic women between the ages of 15 to 44 who tested positive for COVID-19. 23,434 of the women were pregnant.
  - Researchers noted that, although pregnant women are at increased risk, the absolute risk of severe outcomes is low among women 15 to 44, regardless of pregnancy status.

## New York State

- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), November 4
  - New York reported 14 deaths, 1,227 hospitalizations, and 268 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Tuesday, November 3.
  - Approximately 2,126, or 1.6%, of the 133,534 tests administered in New York on November 3 were positive for COVID-19.
  - On November 2, 2020, Governor Cuomo [sent](#) a letter to CDC Director Robert Redfield and HHS Secretary Alex Azar questioning the federal government's need to collect personal identification information from everyone who receives a COVID-19 vaccine, and demanded that the federal government prohibit information sharing with DHS or ICE. The governor argued that an explanation was necessary because of Trump administration's immigration enforcement policies.

## New York City

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), November 4
  - A growing number of New York City parents have [withdrawn](#) their children from public schools to send them to private or other public school systems where smaller classrooms and in-person learning are more common. Parents enrolling their children in other public school systems have either moved out of New York City or enrolled their children in towns where they owned a second home. Generally, these parents were frustrated by the NYC Department of Education's inconsistent re-opening approach and motivated to ensure their children have in-person learning experiences.
  - Unemployment caused by the pandemic has [spurred](#) many to become street vendors in an effort to make ends meet. In the wake of social-justice protests this summer, Mayor de Blasio announced that the police would no longer enforce street-vendor regulations, opening the door for the increase in vendors. According to the Randy Peers, the President and CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, the unlicensed street vendors directly compete with bricks-and-mortar businesses that are also struggling to reopen.

## Other Related Updates

- [AstraZeneca, Oxford Say COVID-19 Vaccine Trial Data Could Be Available in 2020](#), November 3
  - Drug maker AstraZeneca is developing its COVID-19 vaccine candidate together with researchers at Oxford University.
  - Chief Investigator of the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine trials Andrew Pollard [told](#) British lawmakers that data from the trials could be available by the end of 2020.
  - Pollard also said that there is a "small chance" AstraZeneca will be ready to deploy its vaccine before Christmas.
- [Study Reveals Risk Factors in Variety of Close Contact Scenarios](#), November 2
  - A retrospective [study](#) published in *The Lancet* detailed risk factors for COVID-19 transmission in a variety of close contact situations.
  - The study used data from over 7,500 close contacts with confirmed COVID-19 patients in Singapore between January and April 2020.

- Overall, 6% of household close contacts developed symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19; 1% of work or social close contacts developed symptoms and tested positive.
  - Sharing a bedroom or vehicle with an infected person, or speaking within two meters—particularly for more than 30 minutes—were significant risk factors for transmission.
  - Researchers estimated that a system-based testing strategy missed 62% of COVID-19 diagnoses of the subject patients’ close contacts.
  - Researchers concluded that “[t]argeted community measures should include physical distancing and minimizing verbal interactions. Testing of all household contacts, including asymptomatic individuals, is warranted.”
- [NIH Director Collins Urges Public to Wear Face Masks](#), November 3
    - NIH Director Collins issued a [statement](#) urging Americans to “do the right thing” and wear face masks in public to curb the spread of the virus. Collins explained that only about half of Americans always wear a face mask in public and cited a study indicating that incomplete mask wearing could dramatically increase the COVID-19 death toll.
    - The [study](#), conducted by Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluations and published in Nature Medicine, models COVID-19 deaths over the next few months.
    - The study indicates that, if incomplete mask wearing continues and American do not adhere to social distancing measures, total COVID-19 deaths in the United States could soar to one million by the end of February.
    - The study assumes that once mortality reaches eight deaths per million people, the United States will reinstate limits on social and economic activity, cutting those one million deaths to 510,000.
    - The study indicated that if 95% of Americans immediately began wearing masks in public, the country could cut those 510,000 deaths to 380,000.
    - Collins expressed that, “What’s important here...[is] the realization that...this pandemic is far from over, and, together, we have it within our power to shape what happens next. If more people make the decision to wear masks in public today, it could help to delay—or possibly even prevent—the need for future shutdowns. As such, the widespread use of face coverings has the potential to protect lives while also minimizing further damage to the economy and American livelihoods.”
  - [Cases Spike Among U.S. Children](#), October 29
    - Nearly 200,000 [children](#) were diagnosed with COVID-19 in October in the United States, accounting for 23% of all pediatric cases since the pandemic began. Children represented 11.1% of cases overall for the period.
    - In the week of Oct. 22 alone, over 61,000 new pediatric cases were reported, the highest weekly total since the pandemic began.
    - The hospitalization rate among children varies widely by state, from 0.5% in Hawaii to 6.7% in New York City.
  - [FDA COVID-19 Updates](#), November 4
    - Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [alerted](#) clinical laboratory staff and health care providers that false positive results can occur with antigen tests for the rapid detection

of COVID-19. FDA is aware of reports of false positives and continues to monitor and evaluate these devices.

- FDA issued warning letters to two companies, [Spartan Enterprises Inc. dba Watershed Wellness Center](#), and [NovaBay Pharmaceuticals, Inc.](#), for selling fraudulent COVID-19 related products.
- A U.S. District Court in Oklahoma [granted](#) a motion for default judgment and permanent injunction against Xephyr LLC dba N-Ergetics, permanently enjoining the company from selling or distributing unapproved new drugs or misbranded drugs with claims that the product can cure, mitigate, treat, or prevent diseases in people, including COVID-19. FDA issued a warning [letter](#) to the company in March.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [When Down the Hall Becomes Across State Lines—Part 2](#), October 23
- [When Down the Hall Becomes Across State Lines—Part 1](#), October 22
- [Private Funds Exam and Enforcement in the COVID Period: What Advisors Need to Know Now](#), October 22
- [Risk Assessments Need to Account for Public Nuisance Litigation](#), October 13

Send questions to:

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