

November 6, 2020

### Summary

The United States has 9,654,501 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 235,347 reported related deaths. The country set daily records for new cases with 107,872 cases on November 4 and 121,504 cases on November 5. A study at Columbia University found children infected with COVID-19 produce fewer antibodies than adults and those they do produce are primarily one type, suggesting children clear the virus more quickly. Presidential candidate Joe Biden plans to assemble his own coronavirus task force to advise his transition team if he wins the election. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced plans to expand COVID-19 testing for lawmakers on Capitol Hill; Congress has previously declined to implement widespread testing of its members. Two former nursing home administrators in Massachusetts were arraigned on criminal neglect charges after 76 residents of their facility died of the virus, the country's first criminal prosecution based on COVID-19 deaths.

250,000 cases have been reported on college campuses throughout the United States. New Mexico governor Michelle Lujan Grisham said state health officials expect to run out of general hospital beds "in a matter of days." Connecticut governor Ned Lamont announced new measures effective Friday that place limits on restaurants, religious ceremonies, event spaces, and private gatherings through Thanksgiving. Rhode Island governor Gina Raimondo announced new restrictions taking effect immediately through November 22, including mandatory masks for all people in public, a stay at home advisory between 10pm and 5am, and restrictions on business hours and capacity limits. Raimondo said the main source of spread has been gatherings like house parties, and if those don't stop he "will be back in two weeks with a shutdown order."

New York reported 18 deaths, 1,321 hospitalizations, and 285 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on November 5. Approximately 3,209, or 2% of 160,705 tests administered in New York on November 5 were positive for COVID-19. On November 6, New York announced it would downgrade several micro-cluster zones to lower level restrictions as positivity rates decreased in those areas. The State maintained its designation for several counties and upgraded Westchester County to a "yellow" zone. Mayor de Blasio announced that two Staten Island ZIP codes had experienced an uptick in cases, though not enough to warrant designation as a micro-cluster; de Blasio announced the City would conduct targeted outreach and testing in the neighborhoods. New York State's new out-of-state travel quarantine rules—which require most out-of-state travelers to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival in New York unless they "test out" of quarantine after 4 days—went into effect on November 5. Mayor de Blasio announced the City had reached its goal to achieve \$680 million in labor savings during fiscal year 2021, although it still needs \$5 billion in federal or state relief to offset declining tax revenues as a result of the pandemic.

## Presidential updates

- [Presidential Candidate Biden Planning to Assemble Transition COVID-19 Task Force If He Wins Election](#), November 3
  - Politico reported that presidential candidate Joseph Biden is planning to assemble his own coronavirus task force to advise transition officials if he wins the election.
  - Biden's task force would include former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner David Kessler, New York University's Dr. Celine Gounder, Yale's Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith, former Obama White House aide Dr. Zeke Emanuel, and former Chicago Health Commissioner Dr. Julie Morita.
  - The task force would advise transition officials on managing surging COVID-19 cases, ensuring that COVID-19 vaccines are safe, and protecting at-risk populations.
  - Several members of the prospective task force have already begun working with the Biden campaign. For example, Murthy and Kessler have been leading coronavirus briefings for Biden as often as four times per week during the campaign.

## World Health Organization (WHO)

- [WHO COVID-19 Updates](#), November 6
  - WHO [published](#) plans for a global study on the origins of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The plan reviews current knowledge supporting origin tracing work, and lays out a two-phase plan, including relatively specific short-term studies and outlines of potential long-term studies.
  - WHO [updated](#) interim technical guidance on critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19, recommending that each country should assess its risk and rapidly implement the necessary measures at appropriate scale to reduce both COVID-19 transmission and economic, public, and social impacts.
  - WHO delegates from all member states will [gather](#) virtually for the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the WHO, from November 9-14. The Assembly, which usually occurs in May, was delayed due to the pandemic.

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

- [CDC Interpretation of Forecasts of New Deaths and Hospitalizations](#), November 5
  - CDC [consolidated](#) data from 36 models projecting the COVID-19 death rate. Predicted rates of increase differ among the forecasts, depending on assumptions about the prevalence and rigor of social distancing behaviors.
  - CDC's national ensemble forecast predicts that COVID-19 deaths will increase over the next four weeks. CDC predicts that the number of cumulative COVID-19 deaths will be between 250,000 and 266,000 by November 28.
  - CDC [consolidated](#) data from ten models projecting the number of daily COVID-19 hospitalizations. Four national models predict an increase in daily hospitalizations over the next four weeks, two models predict a decrease, and two models are uncertain about the direction of the trend. The forecasts estimate 2,600 to 13,000 new COVID-19 hospitalizations per day by November 30.

## **New York State**

- [New York State COVID-19 Updates](#), November 6
  - New York reported 18 deaths, 1,321 hospitalizations, and 285 COVID-19 patients in intensive care on Thursday, November 5.
  - Approximately 3,209, or 2% of the 160,705 tests administered in New York on November 5 were positive for COVID-19.
  - On November 6, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that several micro-cluster zones that were among the first neighborhoods to experience targeted lockdowns would be downgraded as a result of lower positivity rates, while just one county—Westchester County—was elevated as a new “yellow” zone. A handful of other counties remain at their current zone designation.
  - On November 5, New York’s new quarantine rules for out-of-state travelers entering New York [went](#) into effect. Aside from essential workers, travelers who were out of state for less than 24 hours, and travelers from states contiguous with New York, all out-of-state travelers are required to test negative within three days of entering New York and quarantine upon arrival. On the fourth day of quarantine, the out-of-state traveler may “test out” of quarantine if they receive a negative COVID-19 test result. Otherwise, the traveler must remain in quarantine for two weeks following their arrival in New York.

## **New York City**

- [New York City COVID-19 Updates](#), November 6
  - On November 5, Mayor de Blasio [announced](#) that New York City reached its goal of \$680 million in labor savings for fiscal year (“FY”) 2021 following an agreement with the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators that will save \$45 million in FY2021. The City still claims it needs a minimum of \$5 billion in federal or state relief in order avoid layoffs during FY2022. The City’s budget crunch comes as a result of decreased tax revenue due to the pandemic.
  - Parts of Staten Island—ZIP codes 10305 and 10314—have seen test-positivity rates [climb](#) over 3% in recent days, according to Mayor de Blasio. The Mayor cautioned that the increased positivity rate will not lead to targeted lockdown restrictions like the ones implemented in Brooklyn and Queens last month, but the City will make extensive outreach, testing, and mask distribution in the two ZIP codes. Mayor de Blasio noted that similar responses worked well to reduce small increases in other neighborhoods in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and southeast Queens.

## **Other Related Updates**

- [Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report](#), November 5
  - Department of Labor (DOL) [reports](#) that another 751,000 workers filed initial claims for unemployment benefits last week, down from 758,000 the prior week.
  - The number of new claims had been trending downward since March, when nearly seven million people filed for unemployment insurance in a single week.
  - 362,883 new claims were filed for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the federal program intended to help freelancers, gig workers, the self-employed, and others not normally eligible for state jobless benefits.

- [\*Study Indicates Children Produce Fewer COVID-19 Antibodies\*](#), November 5
  - A study conducted by immunologists at Columbia University and [published](#) in the medical journal Nature Immunology indicates that children produce weaker and fewer types of COVID-19 antibodies than adults, suggesting that children clear the virus more quickly.
  - The immunologists analyzed antibodies in four groups of patients infected with COVID-19: (1) 19 adult convalescent plasma donors who recovered from COVID-19 without being hospitalized; (2) 13 adults hospitalized with acute respiratory distress syndrome resulting from severe COVID-19; (3) 16 children hospitalized with multi-system inflammatory syndrome (“MIS-C”), a rare condition affecting some children infected with COVID-19; and (4) 31 infected children who did not have the syndrome.
  - Individuals in each group had antibodies. However, children with and without MIS-C made primarily one type of antibody, called IgG, that recognizes the spike protein on the surface of the virus. Adults, in contrast, made several types of antibodies to the spike and other viral proteins.
  - Notably, neither group of children developed antibodies to a viral protein called the nucleocapsid that exists within the genetic material of the virus.
  - According to Columbia immunologist Dr. Farber who led the study, because the nucleocapsid is found within the virus and not on its surface, the immune system would only see it and make antibodies to it if the virus spread widely throughout the body. Dr. Farber explained that the absence of antibodies to the nucleocapsid in children suggests that “there’s really a reduced infection course” in children.
  - The fact that children produce fewer types of antibodies could undermine the results of antibody tests; many antibody tests are specific to the nucleocapsid and may therefore fail to accurately determine whether children have been infected.
  - Immunologists from other institutions warned that the study had certain limitations. For example, Dr. Petter Brodin of the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm [noted](#) that the study compared antibodies in individuals at different points in their infection. Dr. Brodin explained that, because the type of antibodies produced by the body varies over time, the study risks “comparing apples and oranges.”
  - The immunologists that conducted the study concluded that, “These results suggest a distinct infection course and immune response in children independent of whether they develop MIS-C, with implications for developing age-targeted strategies for testing and protecting the population.”
  
- [\*United States’ First Criminal Prosecution Based on COVID-19 Deaths Moves Forward\*](#), November 5
  - Two former administrators of the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home, a Massachusetts nursing home for veterans, were arraigned on criminal neglect charges based on COVID-19 deaths that occurred on their watch.
  - The charge stem specifically from the administrators’ decision to combine two dementia wards into one ward in March 2020, a move that allegedly allowed the virus to spread more easily throughout the facility’s population.
  - 76 residents of the facility have died of the virus.
  - Both administrators pleaded not guilty and were released without bail.

- [\*Denmark To Kill All Farmed Mink After Reports that Virus Jumped from Mink to Human\*](#), November 6
  - The Danish government will [slaughter](#) millions of mink at more than 1,000 farms, citing concerns that a mutation in the coronavirus that has infected mink could possibly interfere with the effectiveness of a vaccine in humans.
  - Tyra Krause, senior public health specialist at Denmark’s State Serum Institute, the government’s public health and infectious disease arm, [said](#) the coronavirus mutation that affect mink “showed less sensitivity” to antibodies in early lab results, which could make a potential vaccine less effective.
  - Kare Molbak, head of the State Serum Institute, said the government has notified the World Health Organization (WHO) of the mutation, and also said 12 people in the Jutland region are known to have the virus mutation and that it shows a weak reaction to antibodies.
  - Dutch scientists reported that the virus was jumping between mink and humans in September, but the paper has not yet been peer reviewed.
  - Mink have been infected in other countries, including the United States, where thousands of mink were killed in Utah because of a coronavirus outbreak.
  
- [\*Remdesivir Treatment for Five vs. Ten Days Does Not Produce Significantly Different Outcomes\*](#), November 5
  - A [study](#) on severely ill hospitalized COVID-19 patients comparing five-day and ten-day courses of remdesivir showed no significant differences in outcome related to duration of treatment.
  - The study was a randomized, open-label phase 3 trial involving hospitalized patients with confirmed COVID-19 who had evidence of pneumonia and oxygen saturation of 94% or less. Patients in the study did not require mechanical ventilation at baseline.
  - 397 patients were randomly assigned in a 1:1 ration to receive intravenous remdesivir for either five or ten days.
  - Endpoints at 14 days for clinical status, time to clinical improvement, recovery, and death from any cause were similar between the two groups. Researchers note that without a control group, the magnitude of overall benefit from remdesivir cannot be determined.
  
- [\*FDA COVID-19 Updates\*](#), November 6
  - FDA will [host](#) virtual town halls for SARS-CoV-2 test developers to answer technical questions about the development and validation of tests on December 2, December 9, and December 16, all from 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm ET.

Other recent events covered in detail elsewhere:

- [\*New HHS Advisory Opinions Support Broad Application of PREP Act Immunity for COVID-19 Response\*](#), November 3
- [\*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](#), October 22

Send questions to:

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