

PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY



CURRENT NEWS ON ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS AND GLOBAL HEALTH

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May 20,

Hi,

LOCKDOWN. What a controversial word. It has become the subject of huge discussion, protest and widespread disagreement, even among professionals and politicians, let alone the ordinary citizen trying to make sense of it all and survive the pandemic in the best way possible. For the professionals and politicians, it's mainly a matter of degree and direction, not of validity. The big issue for them isn't the idea of lockdown, but what gets locked down, indoors vs. outdoors being the latest contest in Ontario. For the protesters, it likely stems from a total under appreciation, even denial, of what's really going on in the world (how they can ignore about 3.5 million deaths in just over a year is beyond me) and what's going on in the lives of their neighbours and events in their local hospitals (the Canadian province of Manitoba's health care system is so overwhelmed with Covid-19 cases that they are now sending such patients to Ontario hospitals). But, even with the most hardcore conspiracy lover, it can also come from a calculation (more a belief) that the cost or burden to the economy from a lockdown isn't worth it, some kind of cost-benefit analysis (though ignoring the calculation of how much a life is worth). In my opinion, the benefit part is totally misunderstood and their calculation comes from a naïve and self-centred perspective that they know more than all those whose lives are wrapped up in it, even local business owners who understand the value of lockdowns; and a total disregard of history (but they aren't alone in that).

Lockdown and quarantine are nothing new and have been practised for centuries, whether it was for the bubonic plague (also called the Black Death whose second wave lasted from 1347-1750), smallpox, or just about any other serious easily spread communicable disease. I read a great book recently, [The Fever of 1721](#) (in Boston, MA) and learned that any ship approaching the Boston harbour with a smallpox case onboard would be sent to a nearby island, with all crew including the captain, for six months before being allowed to dock with all their goods. While they didn't know the cause of the disease or how it's spread, they knew enough to know that it was contagious and had to be isolated to control it. Interestingly

enough, the book also chronicles the first vaccinations in the Americas and the birth of the free press.

I just wonder, though, would those who oppose lockdown on principle also get out and protest seatbelts, or speed limits, vaccines, nutritional advice or exercise? I would also advise those protesting to also look around and see who is at their side. Are there any doctors or nurses, public health professionals, or almost anyone schooled in science, or even close friends? Not likely. For doctors, nurses and any frontline worker, giving and risking so much of their lives to protect and service the rest of us, are insulted by overt acts of opposition to public health measures. I just heard that in Nepal where Covid-19 is raging, 40% of cases are among healthcare professionals, all in a situation being [blamed on people getting extremely careless](#), not paying attention to public health measures, including lockdown. How else does a virus spread? It has to go from one who is infected to another who is not. Look at Taiwan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and China now living a normal lifestyle for over a year now because they took lockdown seriously. Their economy grew while ours shrunk. Do you think they'd be protesting lockdown? What do you think they are thinking of us?

Those opposing lockdown cite restrictions to their fundamental rights and freedoms being taken away from them. I ask, what rights and freedoms have been taken? Yes, certainly many lost jobs and business, but suffering was limited by government action in many countries, though not all. Most business owners, though, realized right from the start that they have no sustainability to their business should the virus continue to spread, kill and maim. Are we not able to freely associate (though now with limits, but look who's protesting)? Are we not able to say whatever we want? Lockdown protesters certainly have freedom of speech, and are perhaps likely to be in cahoots with other wonky conspiracy theories now being spread widely, causing harm. Or how about freedom of religion, and the rights to healthcare and education. No one in Canada, the Americas or Europe (these being the places where lockdown protests happen) has had any of those taken from them. They can still practice any religion they want, though they may temporarily not be able to go to their local house of worship (so as to protect them), but they can still believe and practice whatever they want. And the rights of healthcare and education haven't gone anywhere either, but have been kept alive with virtual experiences and the valiant efforts of doctors and nurses, etc. and teachers who continue to show up and risk their and their family's health.

I just wish the lockdown protesters would smarten up and start protesting something that really matters, like Black Lives, Indigenous Lives and all other forms of systemic racism, or like LGBTQ+ rights, peace in the Middle East, the control and elimination of TB, malaria and so many other diseases that continue to kill and sicken millions, or what about the hundreds of thousands of mothers who die giving birth, or [famine in Madagascar](#) and Yemen, the ongoing Covid-19 tragedies in India and Brazil, even [Sweden](#), or any of the other gross inequalities and injustices in our midst, including vaccine nationalism. And we can't forget the climate crisis and ecosystem destruction. If such energy was better directed it would actually accomplish something good and worthwhile. Grandstanding, and categorically opposing lockdown measures and other majority embraced public health measures, are a waste of everyone's time.

[It's reported](#) that Isaac Newton claimed to have done some of his best thinking when his studies were interrupted by the closure of Cambridge University due to the plague. William Shakespeare wrote many of his greatest works when the theatres in London were locked down due to an epidemic. "What we know for sure

is that Shakespeare knew all about plague, and about lockdowns." In *Romeo and Juliet* his Friar John relates:

Going to find a barefoot brother out,

One of our order, to associate me,

Here in this city visiting the sick,

And finding him, the searchers of the town,

Suspecting that we both were in a house

Where the infectious pestilence did reign,

Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth.

Today's **Planetary Health Weekly** (#20 of 2021) contains stories of hope and fact, hoping to address despair and delusion, including:

- Germany raises ambition to net zero by 2045 after landmark court ruling,
- UK calls on countries to consign coal to history at COP26,
- CORONAVIRUS UPDATES:
 - Ten million reasons to vaccinate the world,
 - Caregiver perceptions of children's psychological well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic,
 - Experiences of a health system's faculty, staff and trainee's career development, work culture and childcare needs during the pandemic,
 - Ibuprofen is safe – doesn't raise Covid death risk,
 - Fauci tells Nobel summit to avoid anti-science 'happy talk,'
 - The black fungus nightmare facing India's coronavirus patients,
 - Covid-19 spreads to rural India where villages are ill-equipped to fight,
 - Warm vaccine lukewarm response as India's homegrown vaccine hits funding wall,
 - China's Sinopharm vaccine approved for emergency use by WHO,
 - China gives nothing away on whether it supports waiving vaccine IP protections,
 - U.S. reverses stance and backs giving poorer countries access to Covid vaccine,
 - The pandemic's brutal toll on Venezuelan doctors and nurses,
 - Venezuela is collapsing without Covid-19 vaccines,
 - Britons catching Covid after vaccination get milder form of the disease,
 - B.C.'s world-class' biotech sector plays key role in developing Covid-19 treatments and vaccines, and
 - Canada is no longer a global health leader on Covid-19 vaccine equity,
- THEN
- Which countries in Asia Pacific are doing most to protect the environment in 2021?
- Asia to drive rapid rise in carbon emissions this year,
- Southern Madagascar at risk of famine amid worst drought in 40 years,
- University of Victoria (B.C.) takes a big step towards fossil fuel divestment,

- International Energy Agency urges massive energy efficiency gains to hit net-zero targets,
- Vietnam's extraordinary rooftop solar success deals another blow to the remaining coal pipeline,
- Asian Development Bank plans exit from coal finance,
- Big agriculture is best?
- Oil and gas more expensive than renewables says UN Secretary General,
- With a sexual assault rate four times Canadian average, Labrador advocates seek help,
- Quote on U.S. vaccine nationalism,
- New event next week at University of Maryland's Center for Global Engagement on 'decolonizing global health education,'
- Check out this great organization First Draft (working to expose misinformation),
- The palm oil problem,
- The moms who are battling climate change,
- Tar sands executive named as Canadian 'climate champion,'
- Earth Day 2021 recap,
- New book: "Empire of Pain" on the dynasty behind an opioid crisis,
- Five tips to finding a job in a pandemic, and finally
- END SHOTS of Spring Beauty at Whitefish Lake, Ontario.

I hope you'll enjoy this issue. Best, david

David Zakus, Editor and Publisher



Beautiful Daffodil

Hawkrigg Lane, Ontario, May 17, 2021

Germany Raises Ambition to Net Zero by 2045 After Landmark Court Ruling



Credit: German chancellor Angela Merkel (Photo: [GCIS/Flickr](#))

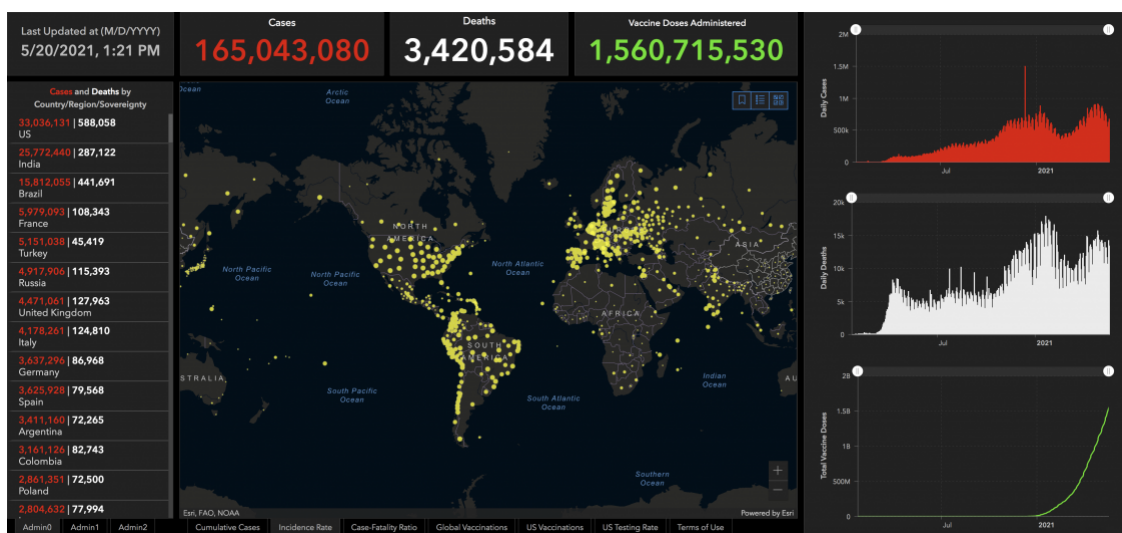
The sudden shift follows a [landmark court ruling](#) in favour of youth plaintiffs and reflects rising public demand for green policies ahead of September's election. Finance minister Olaf Scholz and environment minister Svenja Schulze announced the proposed targets to press in Berlin on May 4: a 65% emissions reduction by 2030, 85-90% by 2040 and net zero emissions by 2045, all compared to 1990 levels. Previously, the goals were 55% by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050.

As adopted Germany will have the second deepest 2030 emissions reduction target of any major emitter, compared to 1990 levels, after the UK. It would be the biggest economy to match Sweden's 2045 net zero ambition. Read more at [Climate Change News](#)

SEE ALSO

At National Observer: [UK Calls on Countries to 'Consign Coal to History' at COP26](#)

SARS-CoV-2 & COVID-19 UPDATES



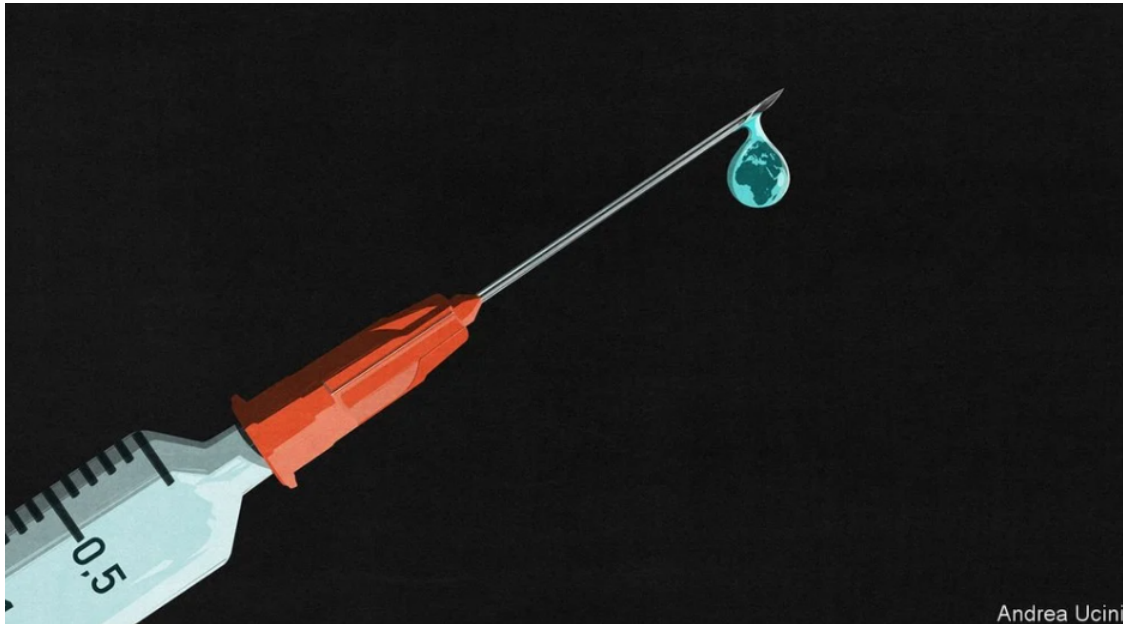
Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/ma...>

Once again, globally, it's continues badly as in previous

weeks, especially in India, Nepal, Brazil, though over 1.5 billion vaccinations have been given and improvements are being seen in the countries with greatest coverage. Over the last week there were about 4.3 million new cases of Covid-19 (down a wee bit) and 82,500 new related deaths (same as last week). But the pandemic continues to rage, with many countries who were spared in the first wave a year ago now experiencing much grief.

(See also ENDSHOTS at the end of this newsletter for various COVID-19 charts and stats from Canada and around the world.)

"It is the plague in seemingly all sincerity." Bob Woodward



Ten Million Reasons to Vaccinate the World

The Economist just published its estimate of the true death toll from Covid-19. It tells the real story of the pandemic. But it also contains an urgent warning. Unless vaccine supplies reach poorer countries, the tragic scenes now unfolding in India risk being repeated elsewhere. Millions more will die.

Using known data on 121 variables, from recorded deaths to demography, they built a pattern of correlations that let them fill in gaps where numbers are lacking. Their model suggests that Covid-19 has already claimed 7.1m-12.7m lives. Our central estimate is that 10m people have died who would otherwise be living. This tally of "excess deaths" is over three times the official count, which nevertheless is the basis for most statistics on the disease, including fatality rates and cross-country comparisons. Read more at [Economist](#)

READ MORE COVID-19 STORIES:

At JAMA Network: [Caregiver Perceptions of Children's Psychological Well-being During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

At JAMA Network: [Experiences of a Health System's Faculty, Staff, and Trainees' Career Development, Work Culture, and Childcare Needs During the COVID-19](#)

[Pandemic](#)

At National Observer: [Avoid Anti-science 'Happy Talk,' Fauci Tells Nobel Summit](#)

At SCMP: [The Black Fungus Nightmare Facing India's Coronavirus Patients](#)

At Reuters: [COVID-19 Spreads to Rural India, Villages Ill-equipped to Fight](#)

At Economic Times: [Warm Vaccine, Lukewarm Response: Indian Institute of Science's Homegrown Covid-19 Vaccine Hits Funding Wall](#)

At NY Times: [China's Sinopharm Vaccine Approved for Emergency Use By W.H.O.](#)

At SCMP: [Coronavirus: China Gives Nothing Away on Whether it Supports Waiving Vaccine IP Protections,](#)

At Reuters: [U.S. Reverses Stance, Backs Giving Poorer Countries Access to COVID Vaccine](#)

At Caracas Chronicles: [The Pandemic's Brutal Toll on Venezuelan Doctors and Nurses](#)

At The Lancet: [Venezuela is Collapsing Without COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

At Telegraph: [Britons Catching Covid after Vaccination Get Milder Form of the Disease](#)

At Vancouver Sun: [B.C.'s 'World-class' Biotech Sector Plays Key Role in Developing COVID-19 Treatments and Vaccines](#)

At The Lancet: [Canada is no Global Health Leader on COVID-19 Vaccine \(Equity\)](#)

Which Countries in Asia Pacific Are Doing Most to Protect the Environment in 2021?



At nearly 71 per cent, Bhutan has the largest proportion of forest cover in Asia. Credit: [Cameron Woodworth/Flickr.com](#)

A year after a deadly pandemic first gripped the world and climate change triggered a cascade of calamities in the Asia Pacific region, from raging forest fires to a series of typhoons, the focus of this year's [Earth Day](#) could not have been more timely. The theme is dedicated to restoring the world's ecosystems through natural processes, emerging technologies and innovative thinking.

"At the heart of Earth Day's 2021 theme, *Restore Our Earth*, is optimism, a critically needed sentiment in a world ravaged by both climate change and the pandemic," [said](#) Kathleen Rogers, president of the Earth Day Network, the organization that leads Earth Day worldwide. Read more at [Eco-Business](#).

See Also at Eco-Business: [Asia to drive rapid rise in carbon emissions this year](#)

Southern Madagascar at Risk of Famine Amid Worst Drought in 40 Years



Women wait to receive emergency hot meals for their malnourished children in the village of Sihanamaro, Androy region, southern Madagascar (Credit: [WFP/Krystyna Kovalenko](#))

Southern Madagascar is in crisis with more than a million people facing acute food insecurity as the region suffers its worst drought in four decades. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) are pleading for help from the international community, warning that “lives are at stake as hunger tightens its grip” in the region.

For the first time since [a methodology to rank food security threats](#) was introduced in 2016, people have been recorded in the “catastrophe” category – the highest level of the five-step scale describing people who have exhausted their coping strategies. In the space of a few months, the situation has worsened “in an exponential manner,” Theodore Mbainaissem, head of WFP’s Ambovombe office, in southern Madagascar, told Climate Home News. The future looks “even more catastrophic,” he added. Read more at [Eco-Business](#).

University of Victoria (B.C.) Takes a Big Step Towards Fossil Fuel Divestment



Credit: Pressure by students, faculty and staff forced the University of Victoria to align its investments with its commitments to sustainability and reconciliation. Photo by Colin Smith

In a breakthrough for the fossil fuel divestment movement, the University of Victoria, British Columbia, [announced](#) that it planned to fully divest one of its two primary investment funds — a \$256-million working capital fund managed by its board of governors — from fossil fuels.

With this decision, UVic joins other Canadian universities that have, so far, divested for a mixture of financial, moral and reputational reasons, namely, [Guelph](#), [Concordia](#), [Lakehead](#), the [University of British Columbia](#), and [Université du Québec à Montréal](#). It also joins [more than 1,300 organizations](#), worth a collective \$14.5 trillion, that have pulled their funds from fossil fuel companies. In 2020, fossil fuel companies became [the worst-performing sector](#) on the stock market for the second year in a row.

Divestment is now a sound financial decision. But for members of the divestment movement, it's not just about saving money. When reputable organizations pull their investments in fossil fuels, they help marginalize oil, gas and coal companies. They make it harder for these companies to wield their political power to delay action on [climate change](#). Read more at [National Observer](#).

IEA URGES 'MASSIVE' ENERGY EFFICIENCY GAINS TO HIT NET-ZERO TARGETS



Credit: /Pikist

Countries will need “massive improvements” in energy efficiency to achieve their net-zero targets under the Paris Agreement, International Energy Agency (IEA) policy analyst Alyssa Fischer argues in a recent commentary.

Energy efficiency is the “first fuel”, Fischer [writes](#), accounting for more than 40% of the greenhouse gas emission reductions to be achieved by 2040 under the IEA’s Sustainable Development Scenario, part of its annual [World Energy Outlook](#). That role is all the more important given the economic assumptions surrounding the analysis. Read more at [the Energy Mix](#).

GOOD NEWS

Vietnam’s Extraordinary Rooftop Solar Success Deals Another Blow to the Remaining Coal Pipeline

Vietnam’s Rooftop Solar Capacity Growth

In a six-month span, solar capacity increased sharply.



Source: EVN

IEEFA

Vietnam's solar power industry has sprung another surprise. As of 31 December 2020, the closing date for eligibility to the second solar feed-in-tariff program, a total of 9.3 gigawatts peak (GWp) (or 7.4GW) of rooftop solar capacity had been connected to the national power system, the state utility Electricity of Vietnam (EVN) has confirmed. There are now over 101,000 rooftop solar systems deployed over residential, commercial and industrial premises across the country.

These figures beat even the wildest expectations. Marking a 25-fold increase in installed capacity compared to just a year earlier, the massive escalation is the result of an April 2020 policy decision which awarded rooftop solar projects a feed-in-tariff of 0.084 US cent per kilowatt hour over a 20-year period. With the aim of incentivizing distributed generation assets that don't require additional land resources or transmission lines, the tariff was markedly higher than those granted for floating or ground-mounted solar farms, at 0.077 and 0.071USc per kWh, respectively. **Read more at [IEEFA](#).**

MORE GOOD NEWS

Asian Development Bank Plans Exit from Coal Finance



Credit: Modernisation work at the Talimarjan gas-fired power plant in southern Uzbekistan was financed by the ADB (Photo: [Asian Development Bank](#))

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will end all financing for coal mining and power plants and ban support for oil and gas production, under a new [draft energy policy](#).

The Philippines-based bank said there had been “profound changes in the energy landscape” since it last updated its energy policy in 2009 and that the document “is no longer adequately aligned with the global consensus on climate change”.

By supporting coal exit across Asia, ADB said it would “support new job creation in cooperation with local communities and stakeholders”. The draft policy is the latest in a series of shifts away from coal in Asia's major economies. Last month, China [committed to peaking its coal consumption by 2025](#) before gradually reducing its

coal reliance. South Korea pledged to end overseas financing for coal-fired power plants. Japan cancelled the last coal plant in its pre-construction pipeline. Read more [Climate Change News](#).

OPINION

Big Agriculture Is Best



Credit: Soybeans are harvested from a field on Hodgen Farms in Roachdale, Indiana, on Nov. 8, 2019. BRYAN WOOLSTON/REUTERS

In some ways, it is not surprising that many of the best fed, most food-secure people in the history of the human species are convinced that the food system is broken. Most have never set foot on a farm or, at least, not on the sort of farm that provides the vast majority of food that people in wealthy nations like the United States consume.

In the popular bourgeois imagination, the idealized farm looks something like the ones that sell produce at local farmers markets. But while small farms like these account for close to half of all U.S. farms, they produce [less than 10%](#) of total output. The largest farms, by contrast, account for about 50% of output, relying on simplified production systems and economies of scale to feed a nation of 330 million people, vanishingly few of whom live anywhere near a farm or want to work in agriculture. It is this central role of large, corporate and industrial-style farms that critics point to as evidence that the food system needs to be transformed.

But U.S. dependence on large farms is not a conspiracy by big corporations. Without question, the U.S. food system has many problems. But persistent misperceptions about it, most especially among affluent consumers, are a function of its spectacular success, not its failure. Any effort to address social and environmental problems associated with food production in the United States will need to first accommodate itself to the reality that, in a modern and affluent economy, the food system could not be anything other than large-scale, intensive, technological and industrialized. Read more at [Foreign Policy](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON POLICY

Oil and Gas More Expensive than Renewables – UN Secretary General



Credit: [Kaieteurnews online](#)

Between fossil fuels and renewables, Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, recently said there is no doubt now that the latter is a way more cost effective option, thereby reinforcing the soundness of calls to transition to cleaner energy sources.

Given the need to make radical changes to lower global temperature, Guterres is urging the global banking system to fund more climate resilient projects. The official made these and other statements at the recent convening of the Petersberg Climate Dialogue. There, the Secretary General said, “We need the shareholders of multilateral development banks and development financial institutions to work with the management of these banks on funding a low-carbon, climate-resilient development that is aligned with the 1.5-degree goal.”

Further to this, Guterres said he welcomes countries that have pledged to end fossil fuel finance and subsidies. He stressed nonetheless that the time has come to put a price on carbon and to shift taxation from income to carbon. The Secretary General said, “I remain deeply worried about the lack of progress on adaptation. Already people are dying in big numbers, farms are failing, millions face displacement. And there is a false dichotomy that says adaptation finance can only increase at the expense of mitigation finance. The fact is that we need both.” Read more at [Kaieteur News Online](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS WELLNESS

With a Sexual Assault Rate Four Times National Average, Labrador Advocates Seek Help



Credit: Deirdre Connolly opened the Labrador office of the Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in March 2020, where she works with survivors. (Photo via the Canadian Press.)

Rigolet is a close-knit Labrador community of about 300 people where everyone knows each other. It should be a place where people feel safe, but resident Desiree Wolfrey says she's constantly warning her three daughters to be on guard. "I'm always telling them to be wary of where you are and who you're with, and to be careful," Wolfrey said in a recent interview.

Labrador has a staggeringly high rate of sexual assault — more than four times the national average, according to data supplied to The Canadian Press by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the RCMP. And the numbers show it's rising. Women and girls in the region live with the threat every day, Wolfrey said. She runs Kirkina House, Rigolet's small women's shelter, and the figures from the police aren't surprising to her. "I know most people don't go to the police, so it's a lot higher than that," she said. Read more at [Nation Talk](#)



Quote Of The Week

Patents themselves are publicly accessible, noted James Pooley, intellectual property attorney and former deputy director general of the United Nations' World Intellectual Property Organization. But trade secrets developed by Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna and others, "cook books" of manufacturing processes such as temperature and growing conditions, have not been made public. That may ultimately be a dual problem for negotiators. Before they protect the knowledge, U.S. officials would have to ensure access to it.

Those companies would need to be [persuaded to come to the bargaining table](#) to give up such trade secrets.

"What happens when it turns out that the U.S. can't actually deliver the information that is critically important to implementing the inventions?" Pooley asked. "This will be seen as another failure by the U.S. and other rich countries to keep their promises."

For More See at Reuters: [U.S. wants COVID vaccine patent waiver to benefit world, not boost China](#)

Upcoming Events

- May 12 - June 8, 2021: [CoPEH-Canada Multisite Course and Webinar Series on Ecosystem Approaches to Health](#) (8 sessions virtually)
- May 25-26, 2021 [University of Maryland Baltimore, Center for Global Engagement Global Health Summit "Decolonizing Global Health Education"](#)
- May 31 - June 18, 2021: [The McGill Summer Institute of Infectious Diseases and Global Health](#) (100% online from McGill University, Montreal, Canada)
- June 7-9, 2021: [Executive Course: Global Health Diplomacy](#) (Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Canada)

- June 29-30, 2021: [Telemedicine International Summit on Innovation & Technology](#).
- September 16-18, 2021: [North American Refugee Health Conference \(NARHC\)](#) (Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto). This year's conference will be offered completely online.
- September 27 - October 1, 2021: [12th European Congress On Tropical Medicine And International Health: Global Challenges In Health, Migration And Equity](#).
- October 6-8, 2021: [Public Health 2021: Annual conference of the CPHA](#)
- November 1-12, 2021: [2020/2021 UN Climate Change Conference UNFCCC COP26](#) - Postponed in 2020 and now to be held November, 2021 (Glasgow, Scotland).
- November 11, 2021: [Evidenced Based Research Being Carried Out in Low and Middle Income Countries](#) ADAPT will host their second online conference by Physios in Global Health.

FYI#1 SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA

Frist Draft



The next major fake news battle will be fought over COVID-19 vaccine take-up (Credit: Getty Images)

Today, we need access to the truth more than ever before. But in this polluted information environment, it's never been harder to know what to trust, and never easier to be misled. Disinformation is targeting and damaging our communities, all around the world.

At First Draft, our mission is to protect communities from harmful misinformation. We work to empower society with the knowledge, understanding and tools needed to outsmart false and misleading information. Everything we do starts with collaboration. We bring together a global network of journalists to investigate and verify emerging stories. We work with our partners to conduct innovative research projects and develop pioneering training programs. And we share cutting-edge digital tools to help both content creators and the public make better-informed judgments about the information they encounter online.

[Read More at First Draft](#)

FYI #2

The Palm Oil Problem



A worker at a Malaysian plantation displays some palm fruit—source of the world's most popular edible oil. Credit: PASCAL MAITRE

As we approach the first International Day of Forests of the 2020s, commodity-production is continuing to drive tropical deforestation. Over the past decade,

palm oil has come under more intense and high-profile scrutiny than any other forest-risk commodity. Global Canopy's annual [Forest 500 rankings](#), which assess the policies of the most influential companies in forest risk supply chains, have consistently found more company deforestation commitments for palm oil than for beef, leather, soy, timber, and pulp and paper. However, the problem with palm oil is that despite these commitments, palm oil supply chains are incredibly opaque. With a lack of transparency on exposure to the commodity, companies struggle to commit to tracing their palm oil through the supply chain – meaning many companies cannot guarantee that their palm oil supply is deforestation-free.

Palm oil is perhaps the most well-known forest-risk commodity. Found in everything from shampoo to chocolate, consumers are increasingly aware of the presence of deforestation [in their shopping baskets](#).

Listen at Forest500

FYI #3

The Moms Who Are Battling Climate Change



"You really can't escape climate change when you're a professor of atmospheric science," Emily Fischer, a participant in the Science Moms project, says. Credit: Dr. Emily Fischer

Three years ago, I had a baby. I won't go into the details, but suffice it to say that she is extremely cute, and I enjoy being her mother. A few months after her birth, I was scrolling on my phone, and I came across news of a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It described a future world that will have experienced 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming. In this world, the oceans are acidifying, and most coral reefs have been bleached to death; hundreds of millions of people face severe drought, and even more face deadly heat waves. The kicker? This planet—the 1.5-degree-warmer one—was the best-case scenario. Scientists were using the report to [argue](#) that we should try to shoot for that. The Paris climate accord aims to limit the global-temperature increase to "below 2 degrees Celsius." At present, both goals seem like a stretch. According [to the U.N.](#), all of the world's current pledges would only cut carbon emissions by one per cent—a far cry from the nearly fifty per cent needed this decade in order to meet our goals. So, 1.5 degrees is coming. According to [some researchers](#), we could get there around 2030, when my daughter will be entering middle school.

See Also at ClimateChangeNews: [Tar Sands Executive Named as Canadian 'Climate Champion' Ahead of COP26](#)

Read More About the Moms at New Yorker

FYI #4

Earth Day 2021



Credit: Allergy Choices

Check out this website to see what you missed on April 22's Earth Day, and to learn about many activities that have been taking place to make our world a better place.

Read and See More at Earth Day

FYI #5: MAY READING - NEW BOOK

"Empire of Pain" by Patrick Radden Keefe – The Dynasty Behind An Opioid Crisis



An anti-opioid protest at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, which has received donations from members of the Sackler family. Credit: Yana Paskova/The Guardian

What a strange, uniquely illusive figure the doctor is. The art of medicine is so manifestly a higher purpose – the safeguarding of human life itself – that its practitioners enjoy a kind of immaculate moral authority. Yet these doctors are also the frontline vendors in an industrial complex, which includes hospitals, equipment-makers, insurance companies and drug firms, their eyes all fastened on their profit margins. The industry relies on the doctor's unimpeachable image, on the patient's worried willingness to accept anything that is prescribed. In the U.S.,

in particular, the gap between saviour and salesman is a chance to make money off the most captive of markets: the sick hoping to get well again.

This examination of the Sackler family, purveyors of OxyContin, lays bear its responsibility for the U.S.'s opioid epidemic

[Read More in this review at The Guardian](#)

FYI#6: SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

Five Tips For Finding a Job in a Pandemic



Credit: Fizkes

Toronto's Ryerson University students often combine their studies with many types of work experience that equip them to confidently take on the ever-changing professional world after they graduate. The job market looks especially different after the last year and finding work opportunities can seem more competitive and challenging than before.

Career education specialists Laura MacKinnon and Dr. Ketan Marballi from Ryerson's [Career and Co-op Centre](#) provide some practical and actionable advice to students looking for a job during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are their top five tips.

- Be flexible with your short-term employment goals
- Stay up-to-date on who's hiring
- Create strong, tailored job applications
- Practice virtual interviewing
- Seek opportunities to build new skills, gain experience and grow your network
- Bonus tip: Ask for help, practice self-compassion and patience

See Also at the NewYorker: [Did a University of Toronto Donor Block the Hiring of a Scholar for Her Writing on Palestine?](#)

[Read More at Ryerson](#)

ENDSHOTS

SPRING BEAUTY WHITEFISH LAKE, ONTARIO

May 17, 2021

Amid Latest World and Canadian COVID-19 Stats & Charts



COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Last updated: May 20, 2021, 20:23 GMT

[Weekly Trends](#) - [Graphs](#) - [Countries](#) - [News](#)

Coronavirus Cases:

165,988,220

[view by country](#)

Deaths:

3,439,484

Recovered:

145,184,664

ACTIVE CASES



CLOSED CASES



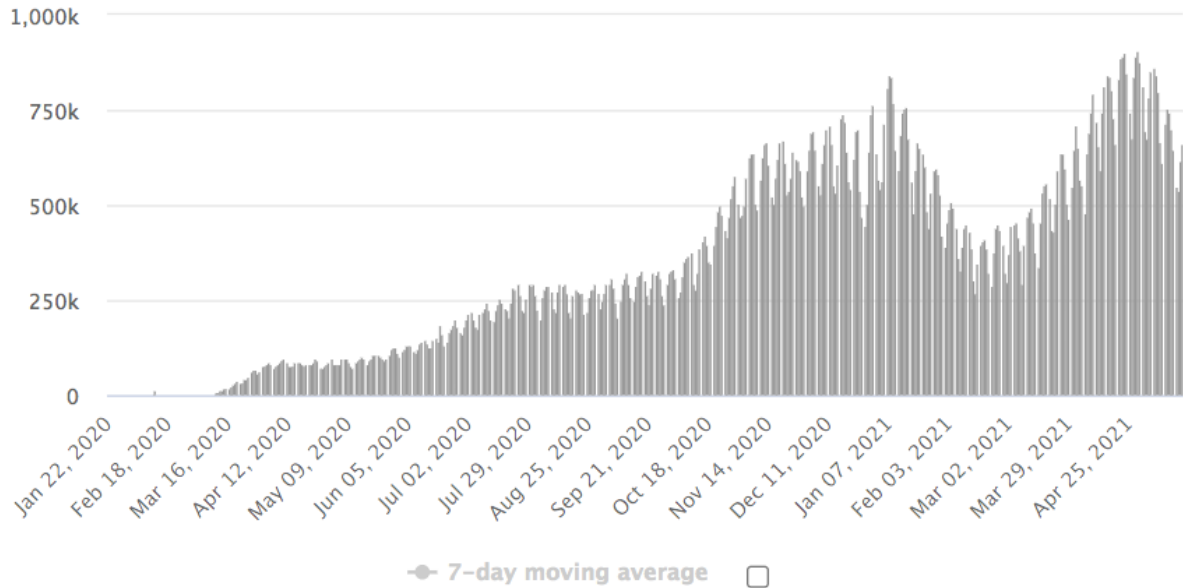
daily

linear

logarithmic

Daily New Cases

Cases per Day
Data as of 0:00 GMT+0



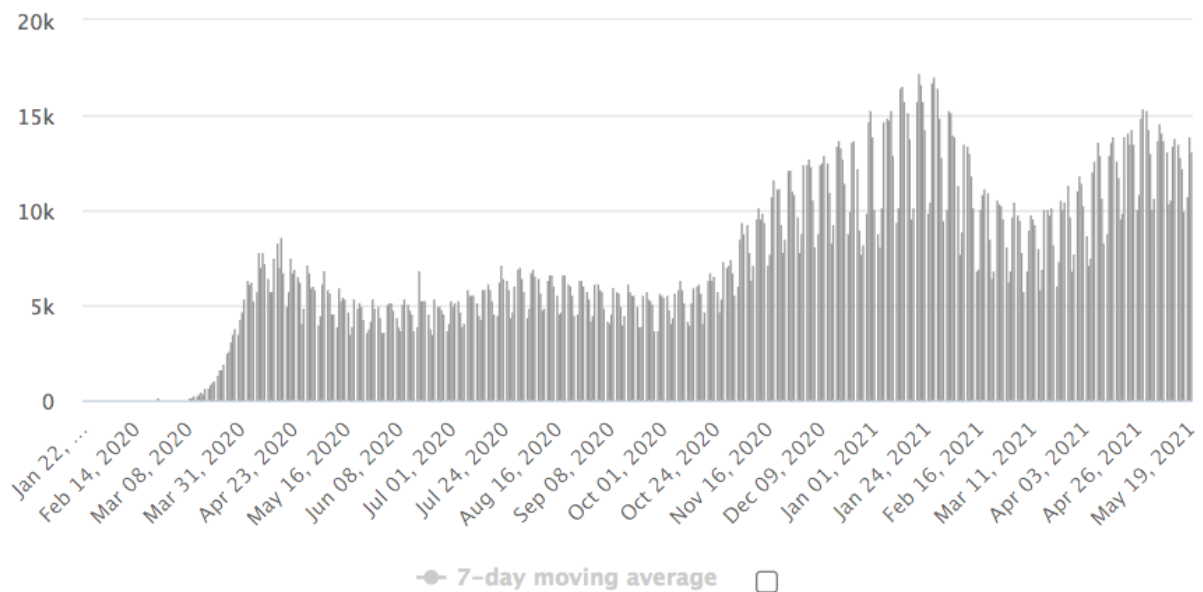
daily

linear

logarithmic

Daily Deaths

Deaths per Day
Data as of 0:00 GMT+0



Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>



COVID-19 CASES & DEATHS (May 20, 2021), as follows...

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/mapping-spread-new-coronavirus/?itid=sf_coronavirus

More than 3,424,000 people have died from the coronavirus worldwide

More than **165 million** cases have been reported.

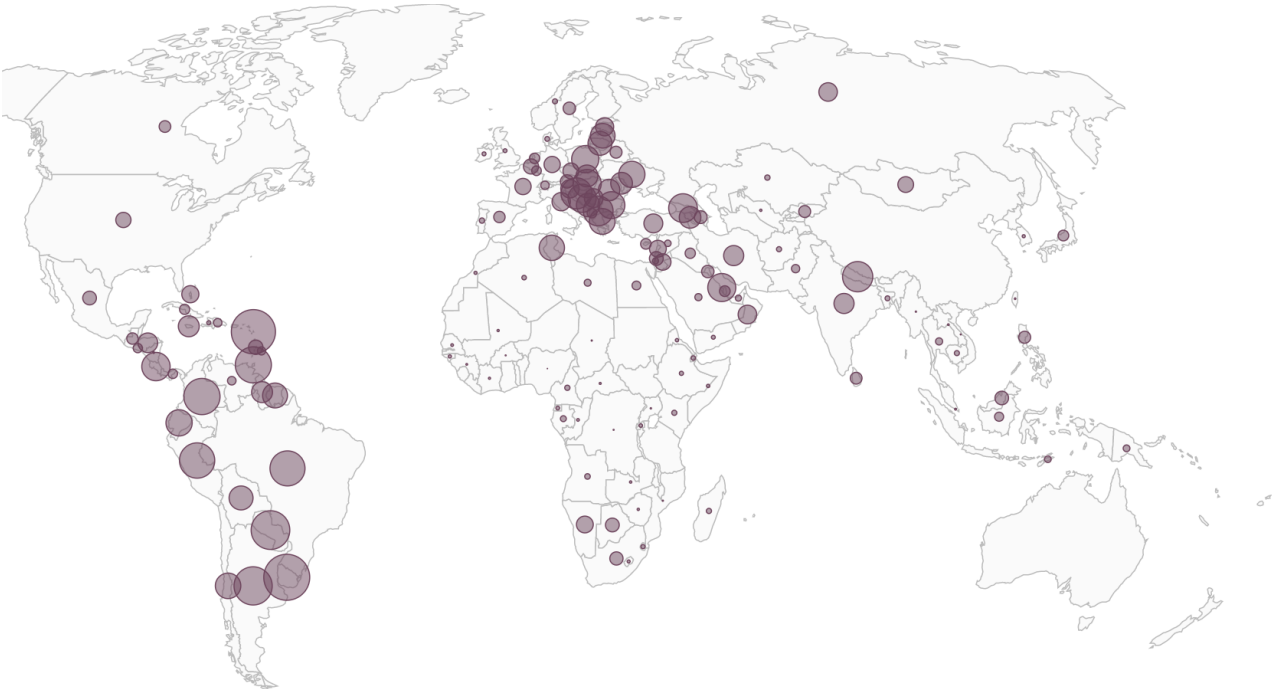
Where the virus is surging



Where the virus is surging

Deaths	Cases	Adj. for population	Totals	Since last week	Cumulative
--------	-------	---------------------	--------	-----------------	------------

0.1 1 2
REPORTED DEATHS PER 100K

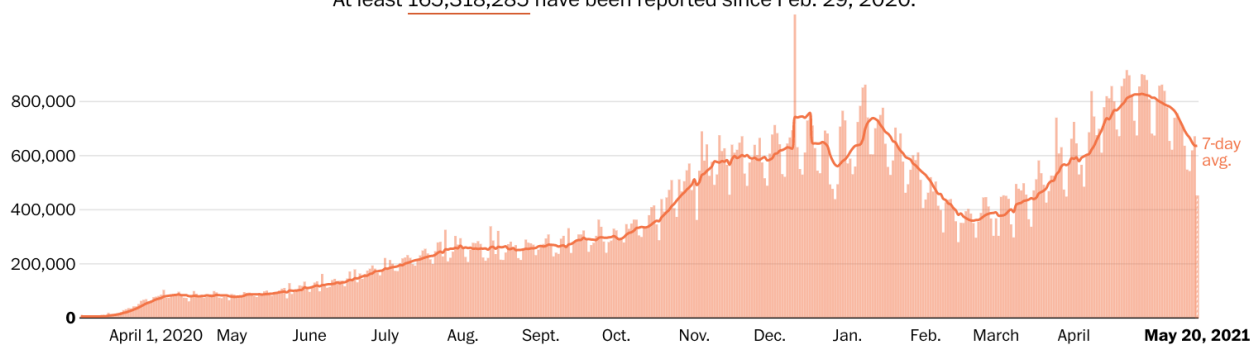




New daily reported cases across the world

Deaths Cases

At least 165,318,285 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



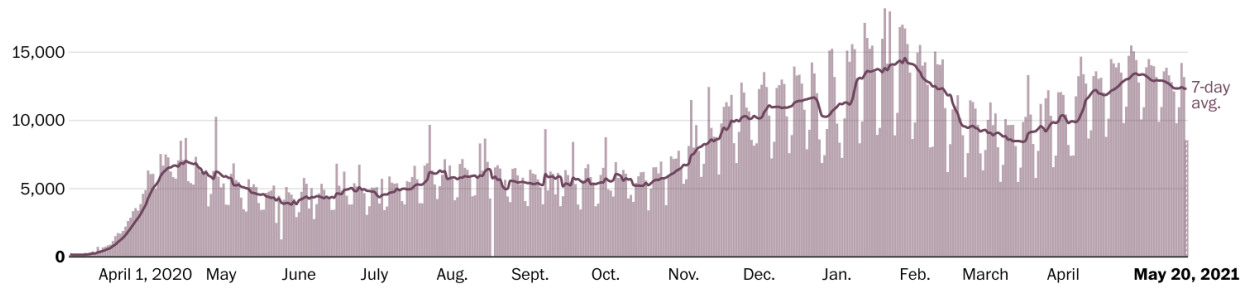
The spike in reported cases on Dec. 11 is due to a change in Turkey's reporting standards. To prevent distorting the overall daily trends, the day's full value may not be shown on this chart.

New daily deaths reported across the world

Deaths

Cases

At least 3,424,636 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



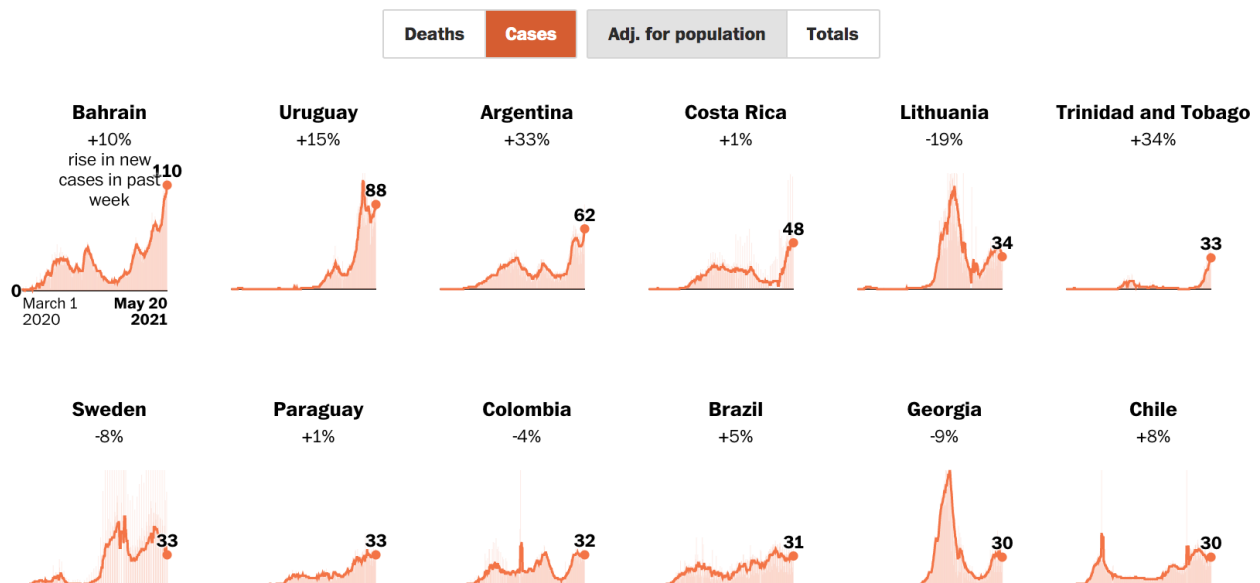
The spike in reported cases on Dec. 11 is due to a change in Turkey's reporting standards. To prevent distorting the overall daily trends, the day's full value may not be shown on this chart.





Global hot spots for reported cases per capita

— 7-day rolling average of daily new reported cases per 100,000 residents



Note: Only countries with a population of more than 1 million are shown.

Global hot spots for reported deaths per capita

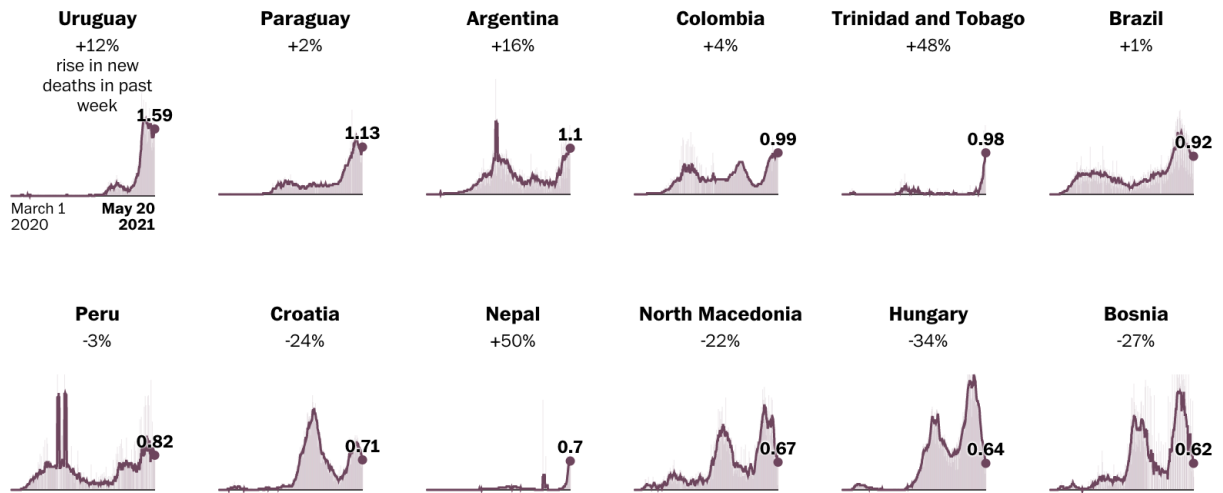
— 7-day rolling average of daily new deaths per 100,000 residents

Deaths

Cases

Adj. for population

Totals



Note: Only countries with a population of more than 1 million are shown.



Doses of covid-19 vaccines administered per 100,000 residents

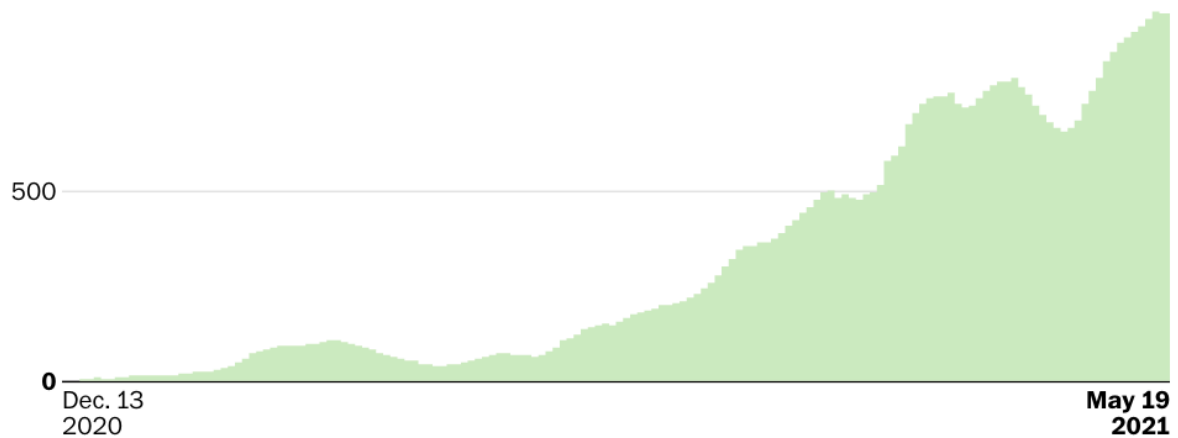
Adj. for population

Totals

Reported doses administered per day

Show by

Canada



Doses of covid-19 vaccines administered per 100,000 residents

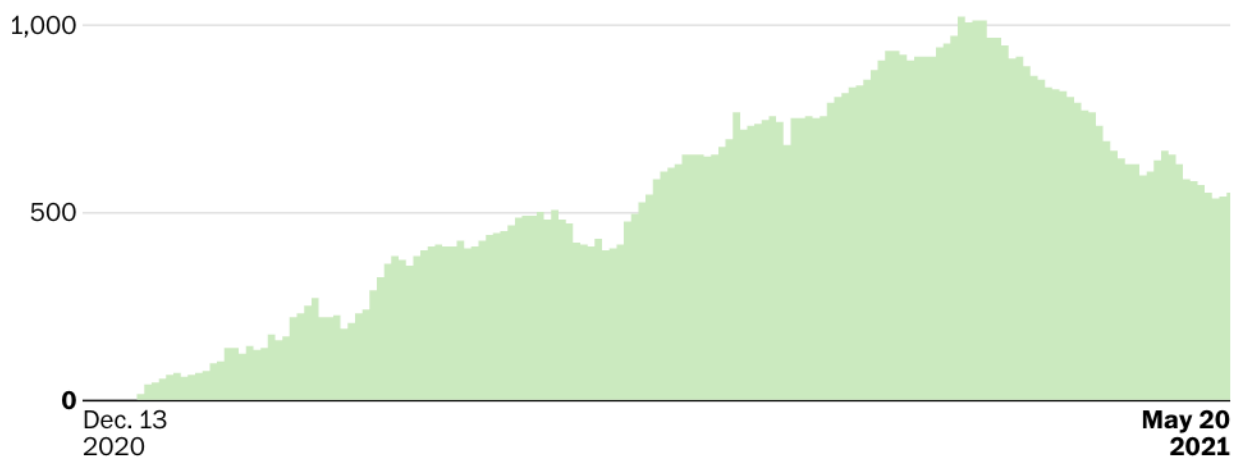
Adj. for population

Totals

Reported doses administered per day

Show by

U.S.



Doses of covid-19 vaccines administered per 100,000 residents

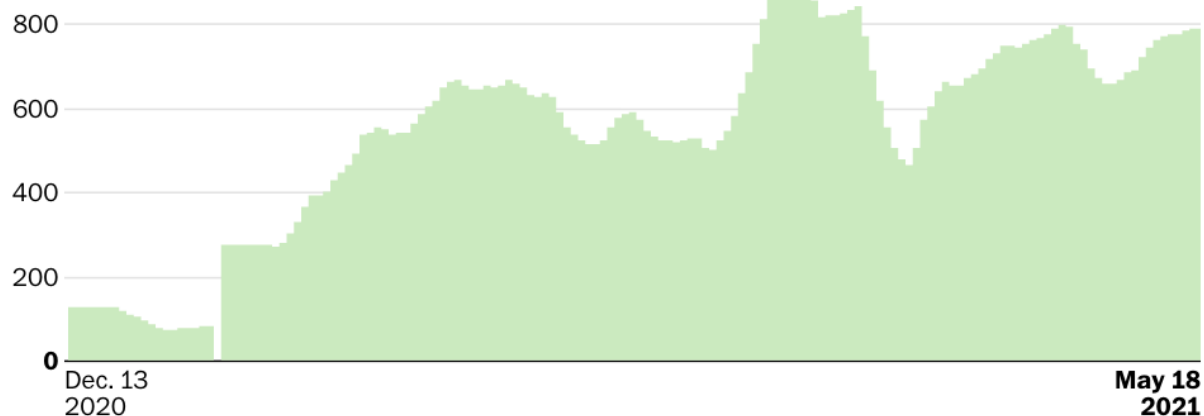
Adj. for population

Totals

Reported doses administered per day

Show by

Britain



Doses of covid-19 vaccines administered per 100,000 residents

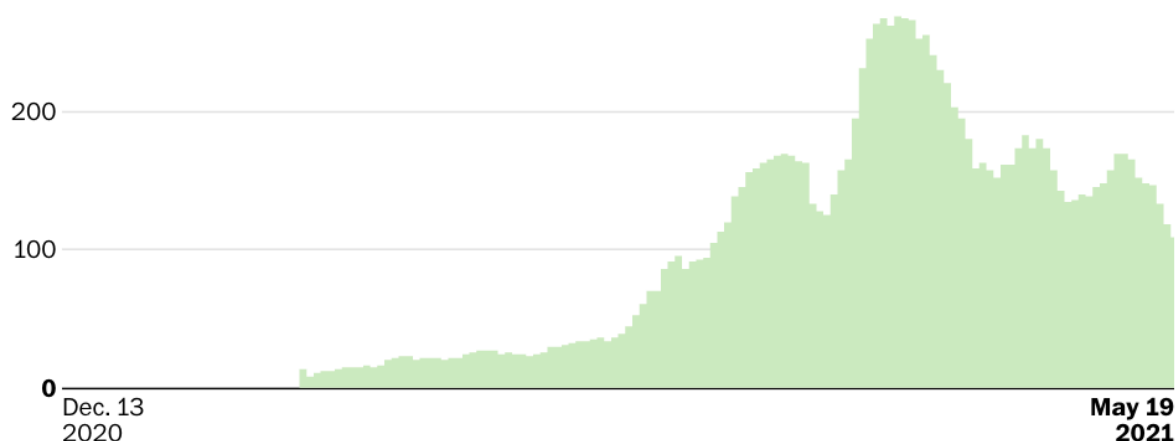
Adj. for population

Totals

Reported doses administered per day

Show by

India



Country	Total doses given per 100k	Pct. of pop. partially vaccinated	Pct. of pop. completed vaccination
Seychelles	133,767	71.1%	62.7%
UAE	119,791	—	—
Israel	116,461	60.1%	56.4%
Malta	99,120	65.6%	34.6%
Bahrain	89,292	50.6%	38.7%
Chile	89,269	49.2%	40.0%
Britain	86,566	55.3%	31.2%
U.S.	84,157	48.2%	38.1%
Maldives	83,958	56.3%	27.6%
Hungary	78,244	49.4%	28.8%
Mongolia	77,381	56.1%	21.2%
Qatar	75,943	43.8%	32.2%
Monaco	73,563	40.3%	33.3%
Uruguay	70,626	42.8%	27.8%
Bhutan	63,192	63.2%	—
Iceland	60,895	43.2%	20.3%
Serbia	60,254	33.7%	26.6%
Singapore	58,237	33.6%	24.6%
Canada	51,729	47.8%	4.0%
Germany	49,942	38.2%	11.9%
Lithuania	49,652	32.4%	17.2%
Spain	48,801	33.4%	15.9%
Denmark	48,531	29.6%	18.9%
Luxembourg	47,968	33.8%	14.2%
Italy	47,862	33.0%	15.3%
Belgium	47,622	35.4%	12.5%
Dominica	47,157	26.8%	20.4%
Austria	47,068	34.5%	12.7%
Portugal	46,831	32.7%	14.1%
Estonia	45,467	31.5%	13.9%
France	45,131	31.5%	13.9%
Finland	44,720	39.2%	5.6%
Netherlands	43,853	33.1%	11.5%
Kuwait	43,260	—	—

Poland	43,118	31.3%	12.6%
Greece	43,072	27.8%	16.0%
Liechtenstein	42,960	27.7%	15.3%
Barbados	42,863	26.5%	16.4%
Switzerland	42,841	28.4%	14.4%
Slovenia	42,779	28.1%	14.7%
Sweden	42,410	32.4%	10.0%
Czechia	41,130	30.7%	10.7%
Norway	41,017	29.6%	11.4%
Andorra	41,006	34.9%	6.1%
Slovakia	40,072	27.1%	12.9%
Ireland	38,914	28.5%	10.4%
Cyprus	38,538	28.4%	10.2%
Romania	35,811	20.7%	15.4%
Saudi Arabia	35,676	—	—
Croatia	35,653	27.3%	8.4%
Antigua and Barbuda	35,170	32.5%	2.6%
Saint Kitts and Nevis	35,146	27.4%	7.7%
Greenland	34,221	20.6%	13.6%
China	32,160	—	—
Turkey	32,149	18.4%	13.7%
Morocco	32,089	19.3%	12.8%
Dominican Republic	31,388	23.7%	7.7%
Latvia	28,887	21.7%	7.4%
Brazil	26,107	17.7%	8.4%
Costa Rica	24,802	14.3%	10.5%
Albania	24,138	16.1%	8.0%
Montenegro	23,830	18.2%	5.6%
El Salvador	23,201	16.5%	6.7%
Argentina	23,107	18.4%	4.7%
Cambodia	21,253	13.2%	8.1%
Panama	20,331	13.4%	6.9%
Guyana	19,609	19.3%	0.4%
Mexico	18,987	12.7%	8.7%
Azerbaijan	18,590	10.5%	8.1%
Mauritius	17,433	16.8%	0.7%

Canada is again in 19th place globally for vaccines given/capita (19th last week)



Compare countries by new daily reported cases per 100k

Deaths

Cases

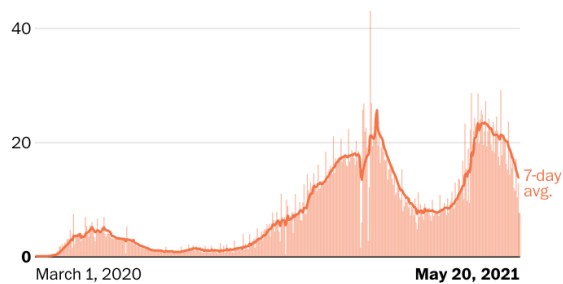
Adj. for population

Totals

Select a country:

Canada

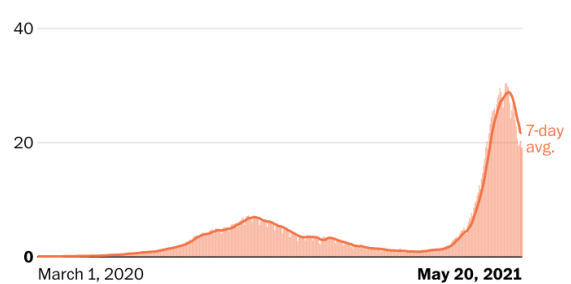
At least 1,353,703 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



Select a country:

India

At least 26,030,024 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



Compare countries by new daily deaths reported per 100k

Deaths

Cases

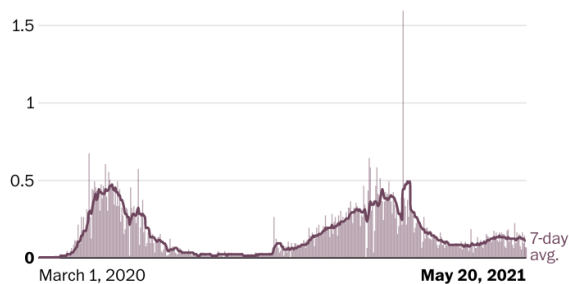
Adj. for population

Totals

Select a country:

Canada

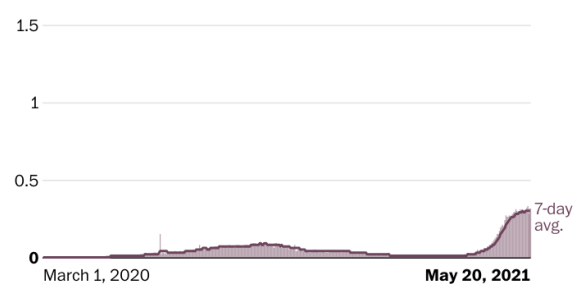
At least 25,071 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



Select a country:

India

At least 291,363 have been reported since Feb. 29, 2020.



Note: there is likely large under-reporting in India of both cases and deaths.



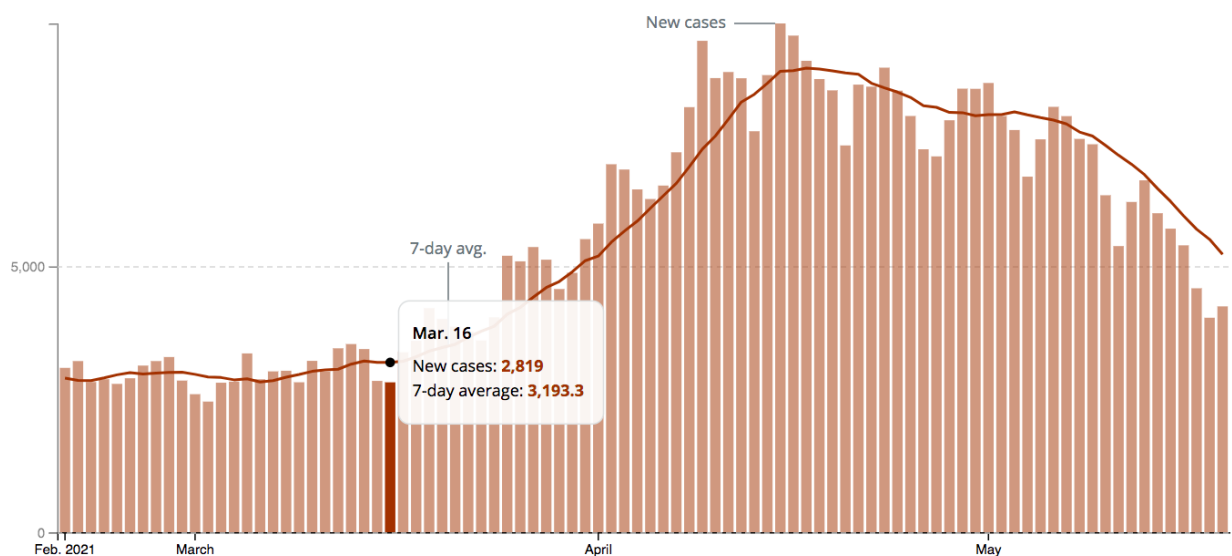
Source of Canadian Data Below (May 19, 2021):
<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/coronavirustracker/>

Cases Deaths Hospitalizations ICU

In Canada 1,342,388 cases have been reported.

90 DAYS

ALL TIME



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Cases

Deaths

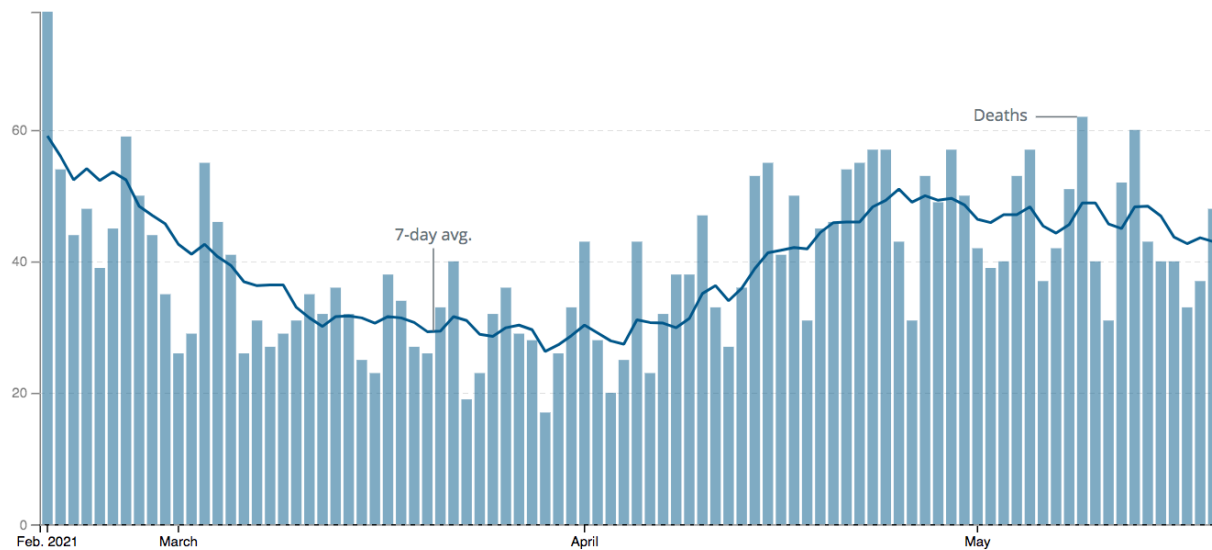
Hospitalizations

ICU

In Canada 25,065 deaths have been reported.

90 DAYS

ALL TIME



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Cases

Deaths

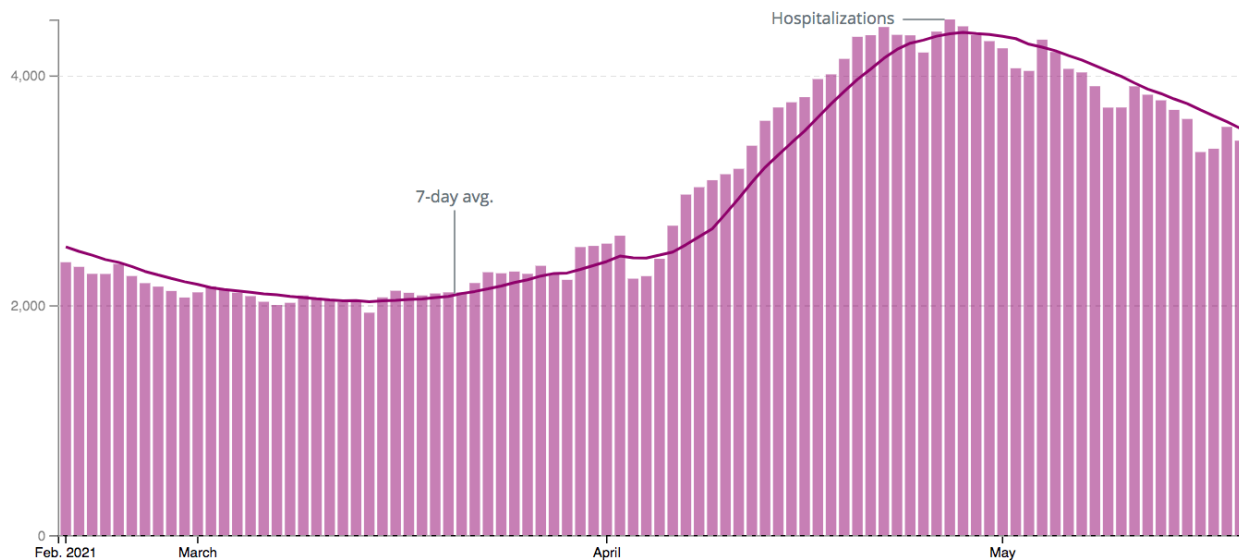
Hospitalizations

ICU

In Canada there are currently 3,432 people hospitalized.

90 DAYS

ALL TIME

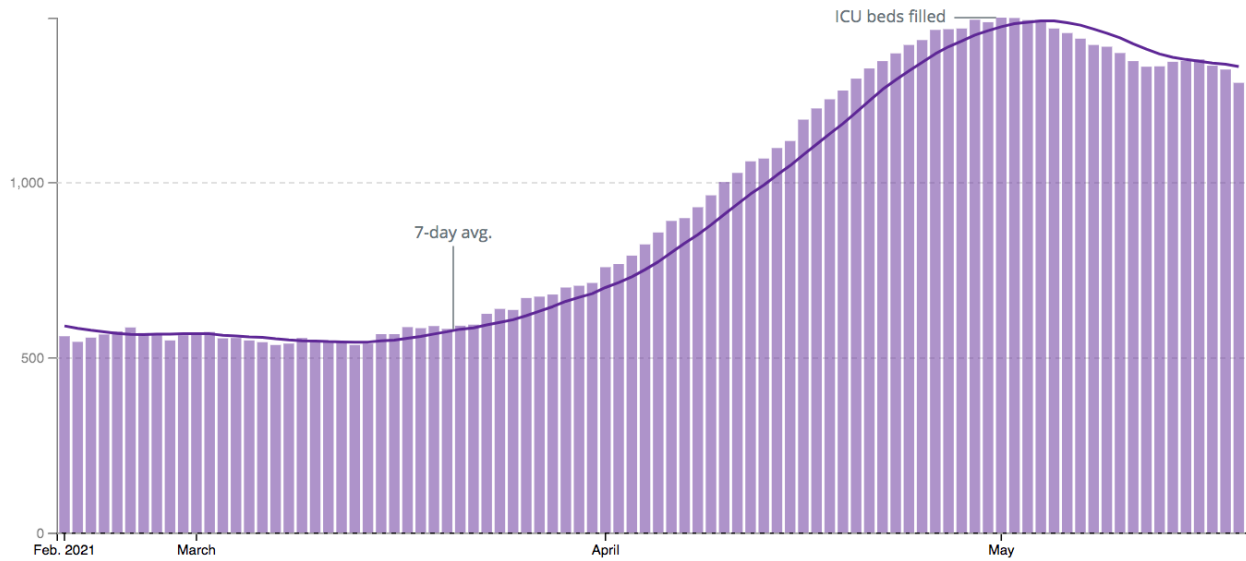


Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

In Canada there are currently 1,283 ICU beds filled.

90 DAYS

ALL TIME



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

In the past week in Canada...

New cases



There were 36,595 new cases, a decrease of 24 per cent. That's 96.2 cases per 100,000 people.

Active cases



The number of active cases declined 20 per cent.

Deaths



There were 301 deaths, or 0.8 per 100,000 people, a decrease of 4 per cent.

Hospitalizations



Hospitalizations declined 9 per cent and ICU beds filled declined 4 per cent.

View as table

View as chart

Region	New cases in the last 7-days per 100K		Change in daily cases in the last 7-days	Total cases per 100K	Total cases
Canada	96.2	↓	−24%	3,528.1	1,342,388
Alberta	176.5	↓	−38%	4,992.2	221,467
British Columbia	65.5	↓	−22%	2,728.4	140,596
Manitoba	229.8	↑	4%	3,353.4	46,308
New Brunswick	8.6	↑	22%	266.9	2,087
Newfoundland and Labrador	8.8	↓	−12%	229.8	1,196
Nova Scotia	71.8	↓	−37%	510.5	5,000
Ontario	103.5	↓	−23%	3,488.2	514,690
Prince Edward Island	7.5	↑	200%	124.5	199
Quebec	55.7	↓	−18%	4,255.9	364,980
Saskatchewan	108.5	↓	−14%	3,815.7	44,981
Northwest Territories	26.6	↓	−59%	279.2	126
Nunavut	101.5	↓	−26%	1,608.9	634
Yukon	0.0	↓	−100%	199.1	84

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

View as table















View as chart

Region	New deaths in the last 7-days per 100K		Change in daily deaths in the last 7-days	Total deaths per 100K	Total deaths
Canada	0.8	↓	−4%	65.9	25,065
Alberta	0.8	↑	67%	48.6	2,158
British Columbia	0.6	↑	6%	32.2	1,658
Manitoba	1.2	—	0%	73.6	1,016
New Brunswick	0.3	—	0%	5.5	43
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.0	—	0%	1.2	6
Nova Scotia	0.3	↑	50%	7.6	74
Ontario	1.0	↓	−19%	57.8	8,525
Prince Edward Island	0.0	—	0%	0	0
Quebec	0.5	↓	−4%	128.9	11,058
Saskatchewan	1.2	↑	100%	44.3	522
Northwest Territories	0.0	—	0%	0	0
Nunavut	0.0	—	0%	10.2	4
Yukon	0.0	—	0%	4.7	2

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Vaccines

The Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca-Oxford and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have been approved for use in Canada. Johnson & Johnson's is the first single-dose vaccine Health Canada has approved. The others require two doses for someone to be fully vaccinated.

Vaccinations		Doses distributed	
Region	Total doses given	Percentage of people given at least one dose	Percentage of people fully vaccinated
Canada	19,719,673	47.81%	4.00% 
Alberta	2,271,955	43.72%	7.49% 
British Columbia	2,632,907	48.47%	2.62% 
Manitoba	692,301	43.68%	6.09% 
New Brunswick	385,958	44.91%	4.44% 
Newfoundland and Labrador	253,790	46.83%	1.93% 
Nova Scotia	442,535	41.05%	4.13% 
Ontario	7,576,624	48.14%	3.21% 
Prince Edward Island	73,978	38.93%	7.36% 
Quebec	4,636,679	50.72%	3.35% 
Saskatchewan	620,236	48.24%	4.37% 
Northwest Territories	51,320	62.83%	50.87% 
Nunavut	30,025	42.43%	33.76% 
Yukon	51,365	64.69%	57.05% 



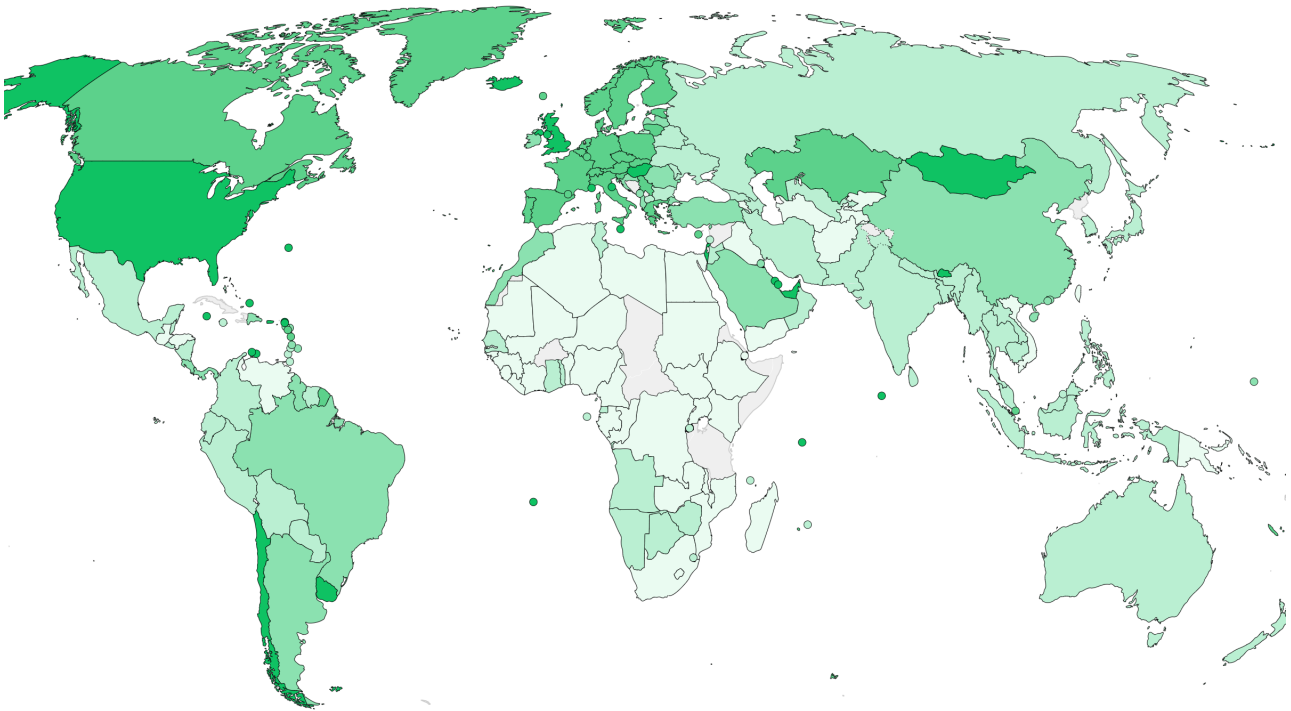
Source of Vaccination Data Below (May 20, 2021):
<https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/>

**More Than 1.57 Billion Shots
Given: Covid-19 Tracker**

World Map of Vaccinations

More than 1.57 billion doses have been administered—enough to fully vaccinate 10.3% of the global population

no data 1 10 20 30% of population covered



The biggest vaccination campaign in history is underway. More than **1.57 billion doses** have been administered across 176 countries, according to data collected by Bloomberg. The latest rate was roughly **26.8 million doses a day**.

In the U.S., **279 million doses** have been given so far. In the last week, an average of **1.83 million doses per day** were administered.

Enough doses have now been administered to fully vaccinate 10.3% of the global population—but the distribution has been lopsided. Countries and regions with the highest incomes are getting vaccinated more than 30 times faster than those with the lowest.

Uneven Access to Vaccines

Least wealthy Most wealthy

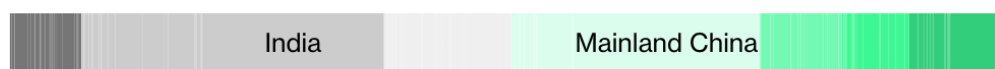
The wealthiest 27 places have **32.4%** of the vaccinations...

Vaccines



Hover for more comparisons

Population



...but **10.4%** of the world's population



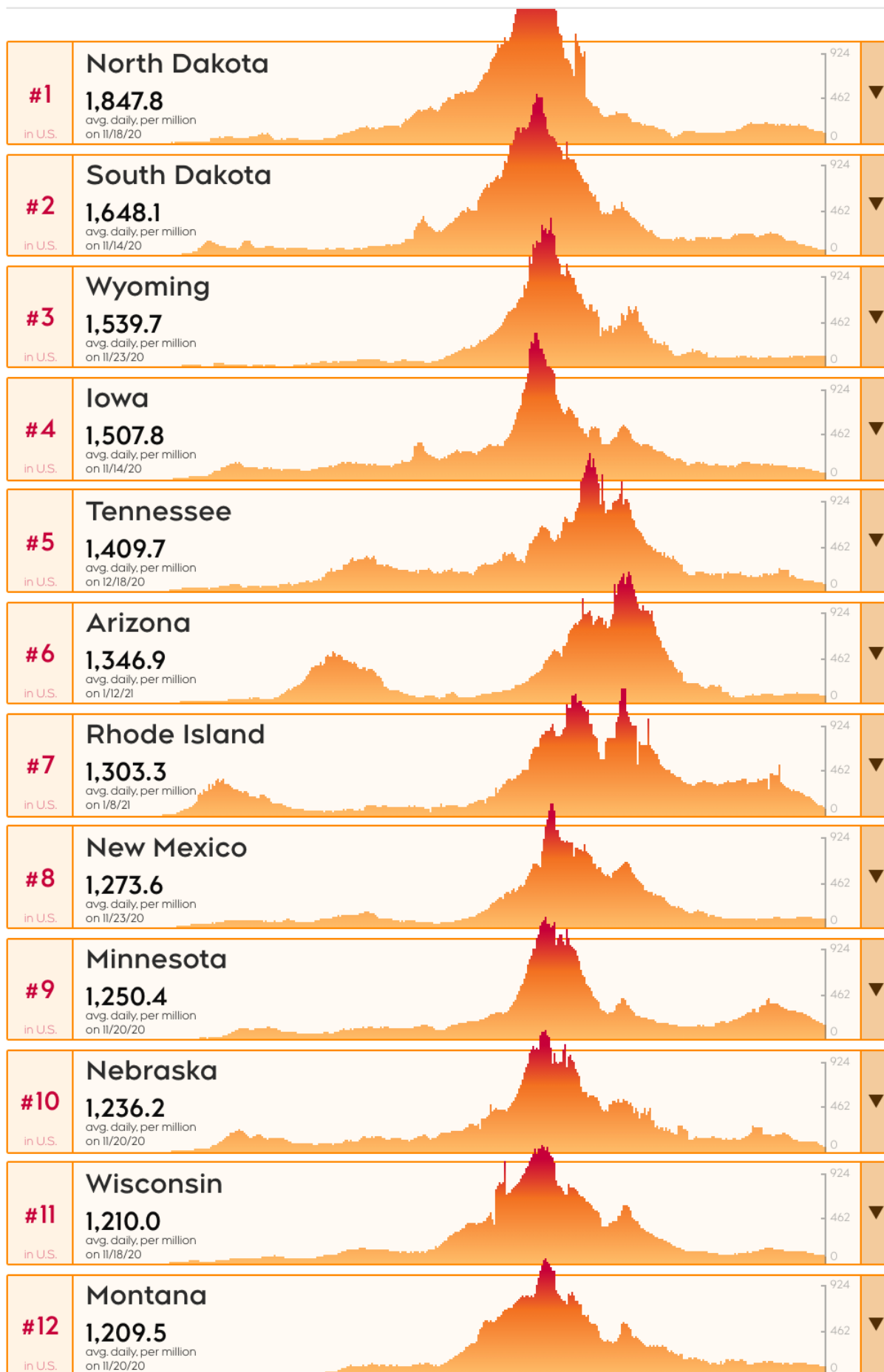
Source of U.S. and Canadian Data Below (May 20, 2021):
<https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/covid-19-curves-compare-canada-and-other-key-nations-1.4881500#link-top>

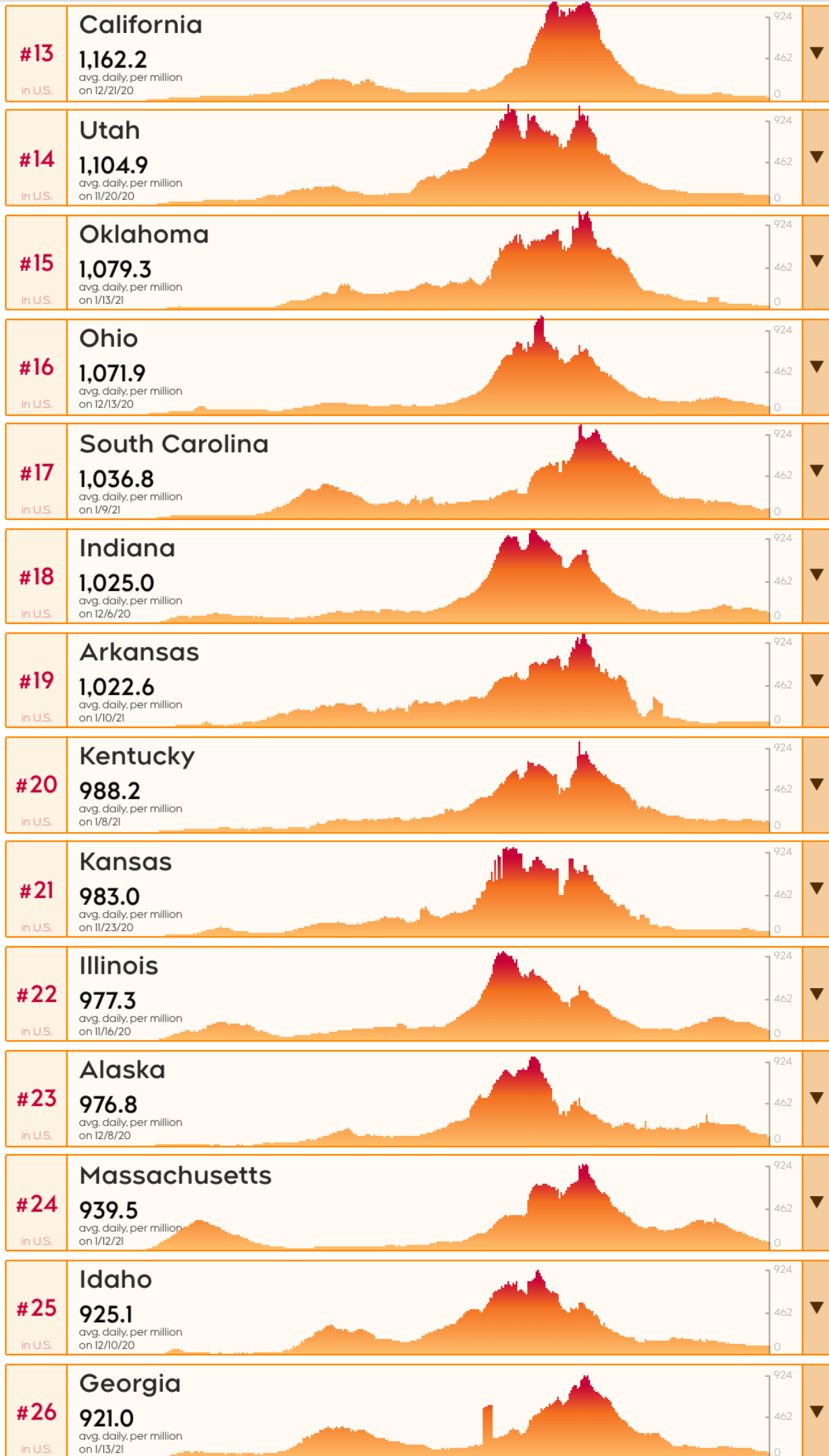
Comparing COVID-19 in states and provinces

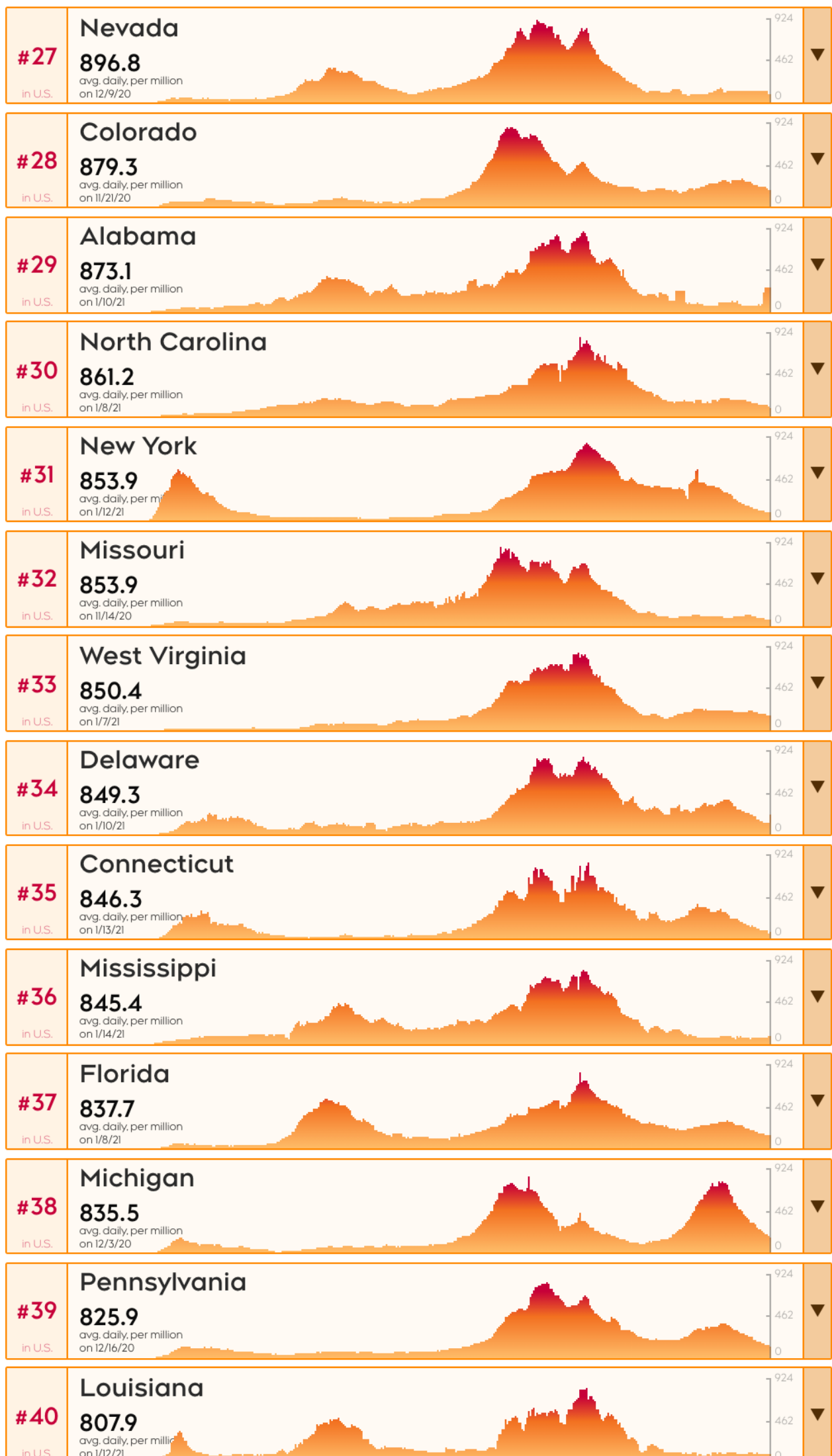
Showing 7-day avg. cases, per million

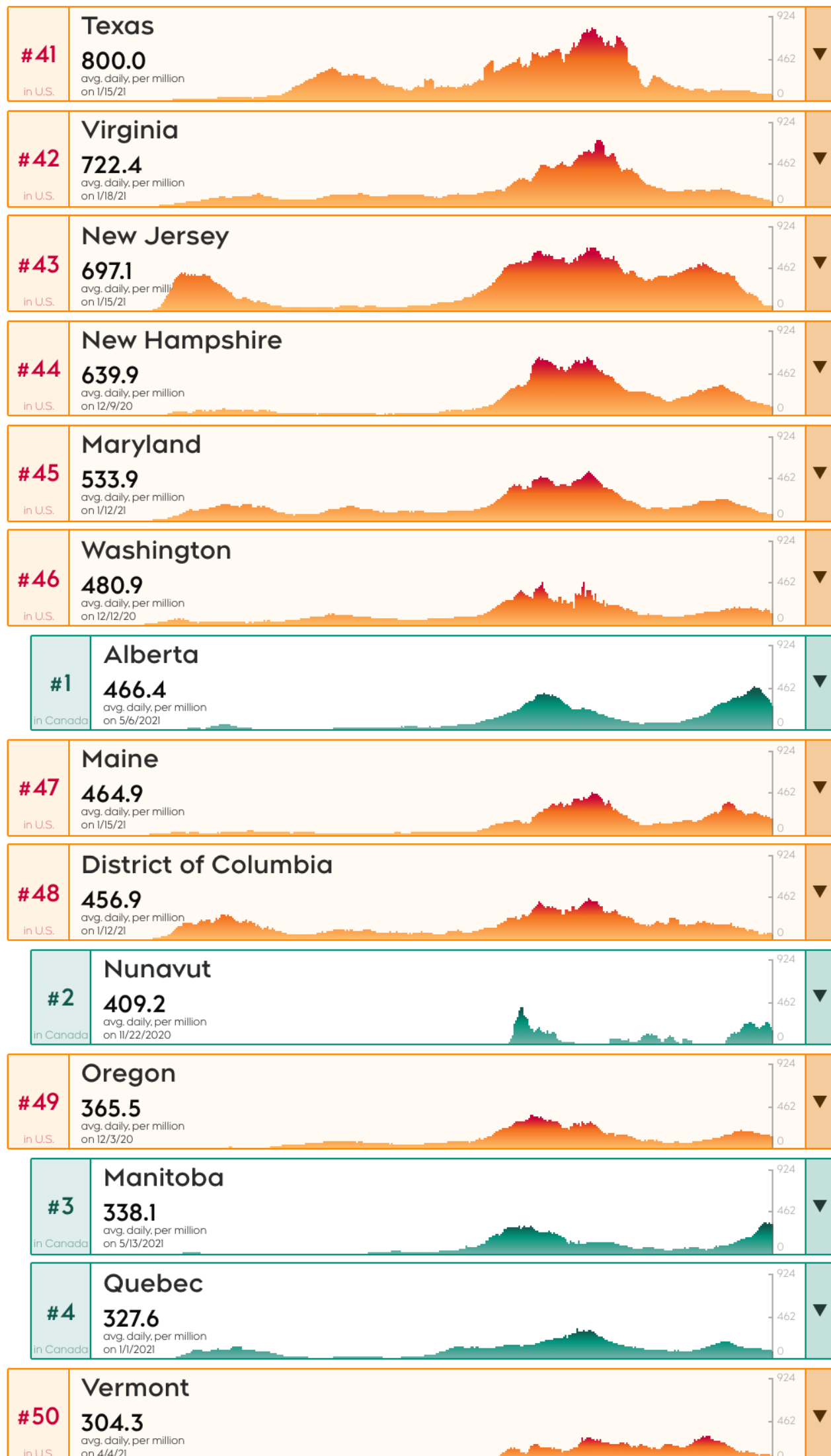
Ranked by highest peak cases

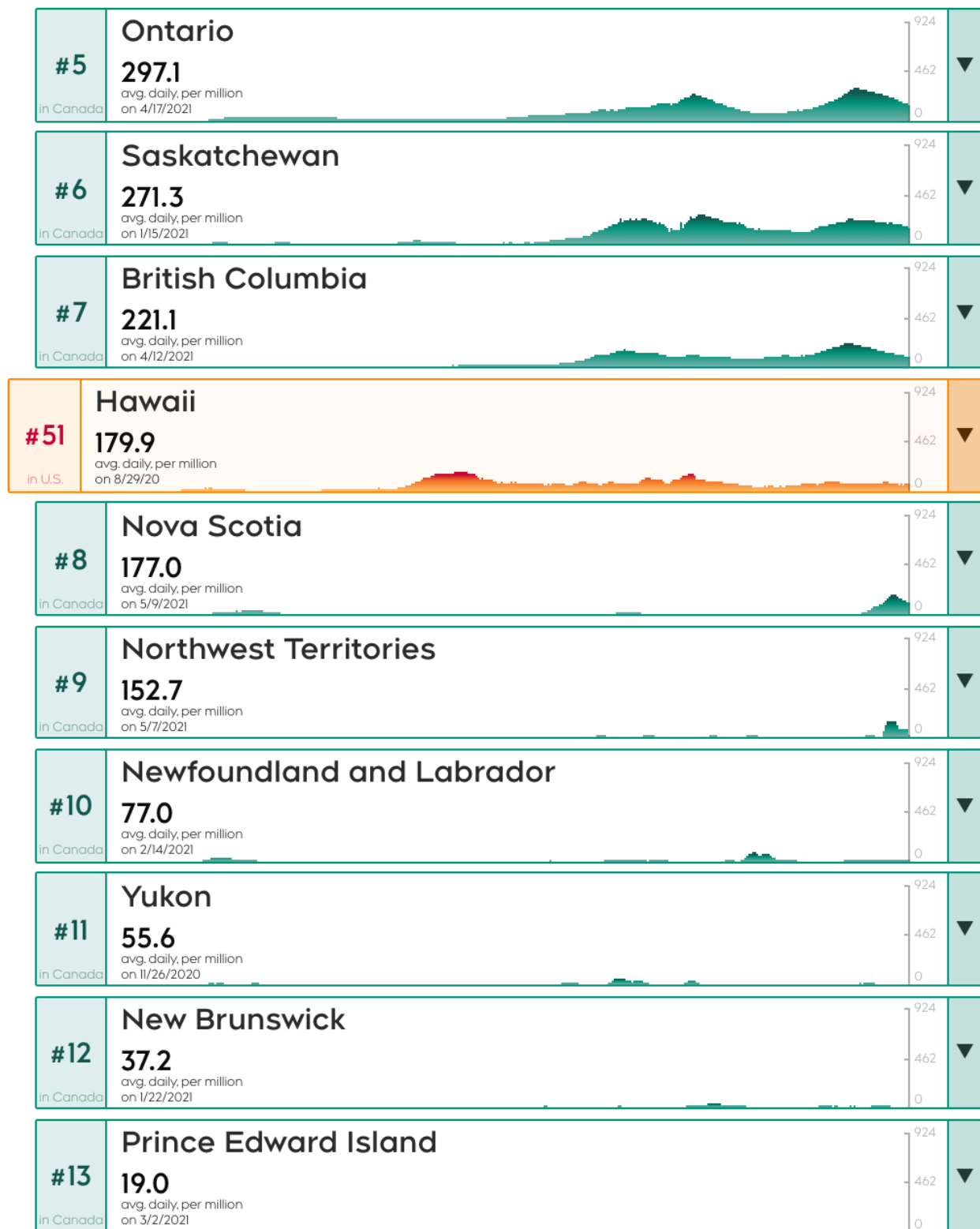
Scale: all same











U.S. data is collected daily from the [COVID-19 Data Repository by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering \(CSSE\)](#) at Johns Hopkins University. Canadian data is collected by CTV News based on daily provincial reports.



Source of Canadian Data Below (May 20, 2021):
<https://www.macleans.ca/society/health/covid-19-in-canada-how-our-battle-against-the-second-wave-is-going/>

No. of daily COVID-19 cases

Daily, starting on day Canada reported its 100th case

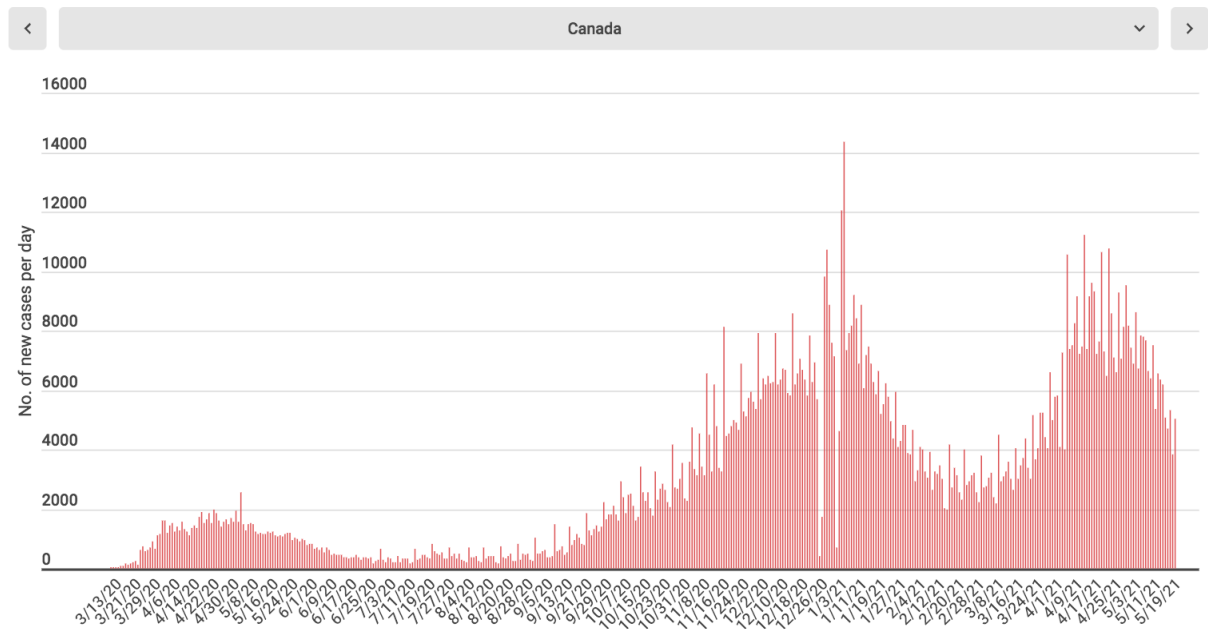


Chart by Patricia Treble. Source: Canadian federal and provincial coronavirus updates

COVID-19 cases in Canada

Cumulative total, starting with day of 100th case

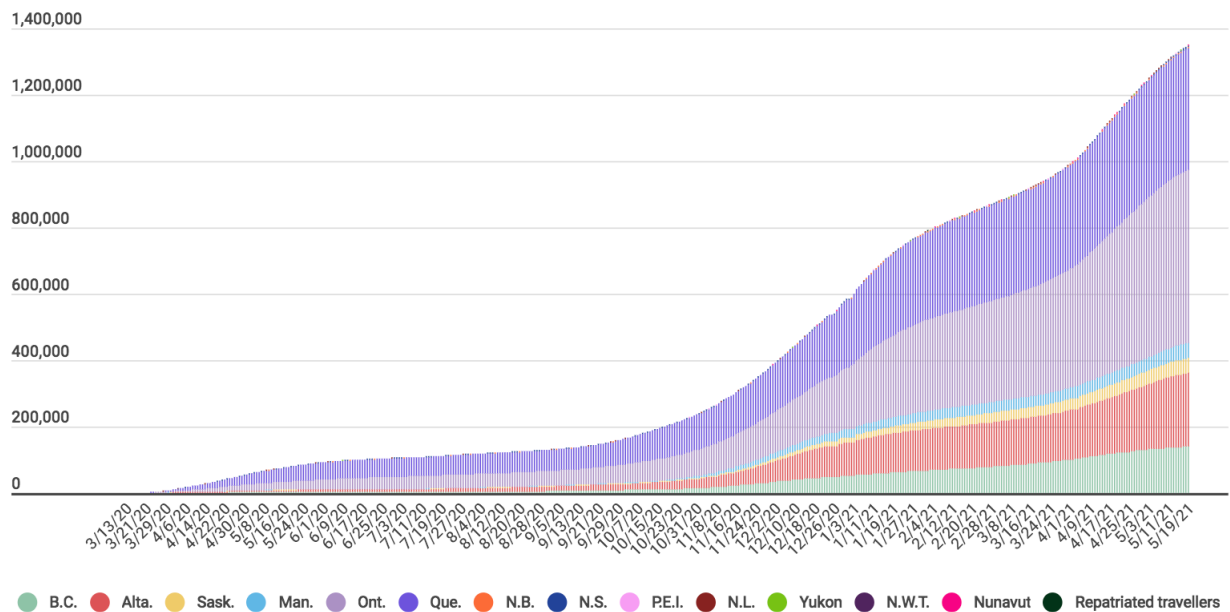
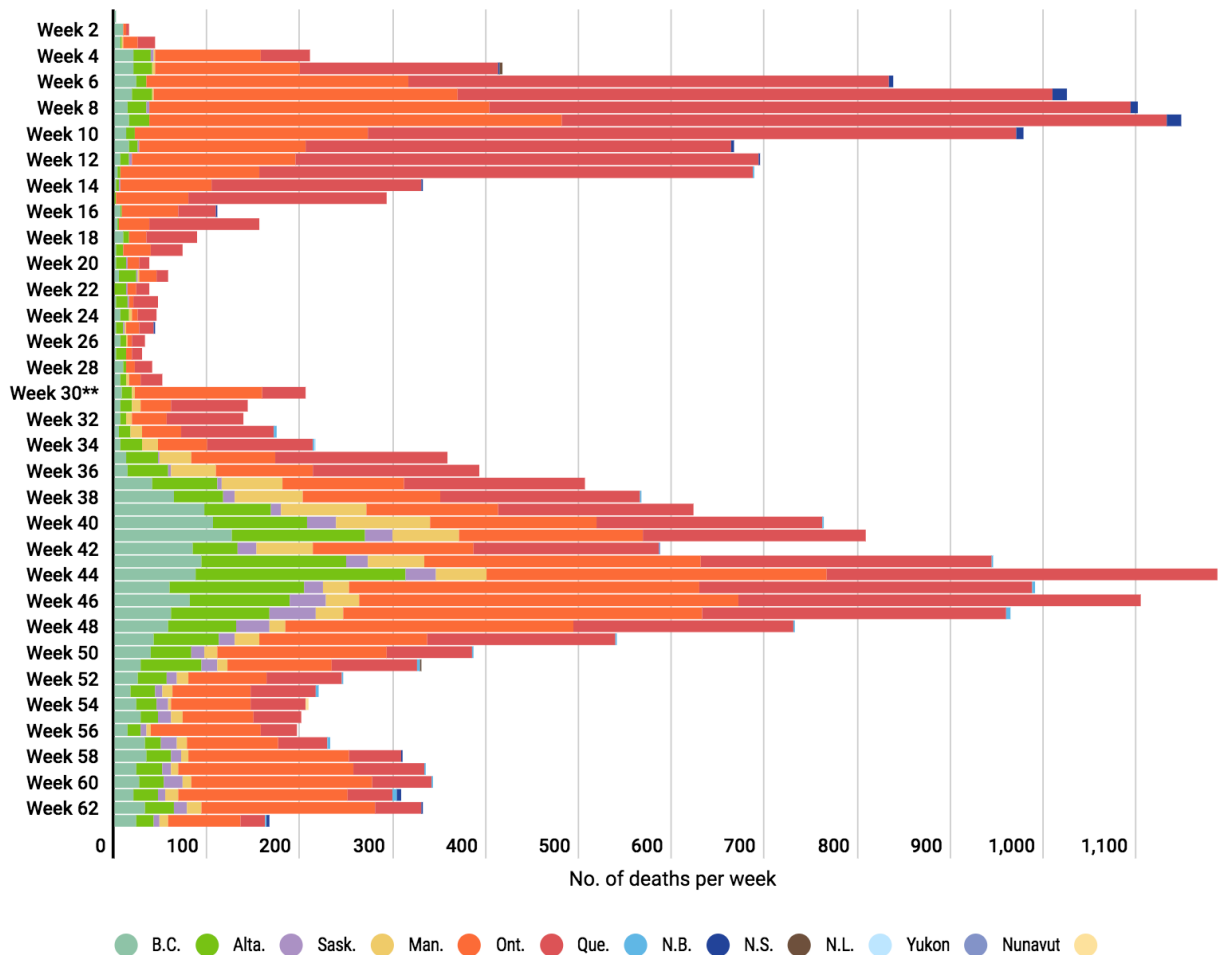


Chart by Patricia Treble and Lauren Cattermole - Source: Canadian federal and provincial coronavirus updates

COVID-19 deaths in Canada

(starting the week of the first death on March 8)



Counting the doses of COVID-19 vaccines

(past distributions and forecasted allocations of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines to the provinces and territories, as well as doses administered to date)

DATE (week of)	Moderna doses	Pfizer doses	AstraZeneca doses	WEEKLY total of doses distributed	CUMULATIVE total of doses distributed	WEEKLY total of doses administered	CUMULATIVE total of doses administered
Mar. 15		444,600		444,600	4,795,670	927,620	3,954,285
Mar. 22	846,000	1,194,570		2,040,570	6,836,240	1,159,472	5,113,757
Mar. 29		1,195,740	1,504,200	2,699,940	9,536,180	1,119,776	6,233,533
Apr. 5	855,600	1,019,070	316,800	2,191,470	11,727,650	1,758,194	7,991,727
Apr. 12		1,019,070		1,019,070	12,746,720	1,981,916	9,973,643
Apr. 19		1,019,070		1,019,070	13,765,790	2,071,098	12,044,741
Apr. 26	650,000	1,019,070		1,669,070	15,434,860	1,780,735	13,825,476
May 3		2,022,930		2,022,930	17,457,790	2,092,079	15,917,555
May 10	1,046,400	2,025,270		3,071,670	20,529,460		
May 17	1,046,400	2,025,270		3,071,670	23,601,130		

Note as of May 20: As of May 19, 54.2 per cent of **eligible Canadians 12 and older** have received at least one dose of vaccine as 355,000 doses were administered across the country.

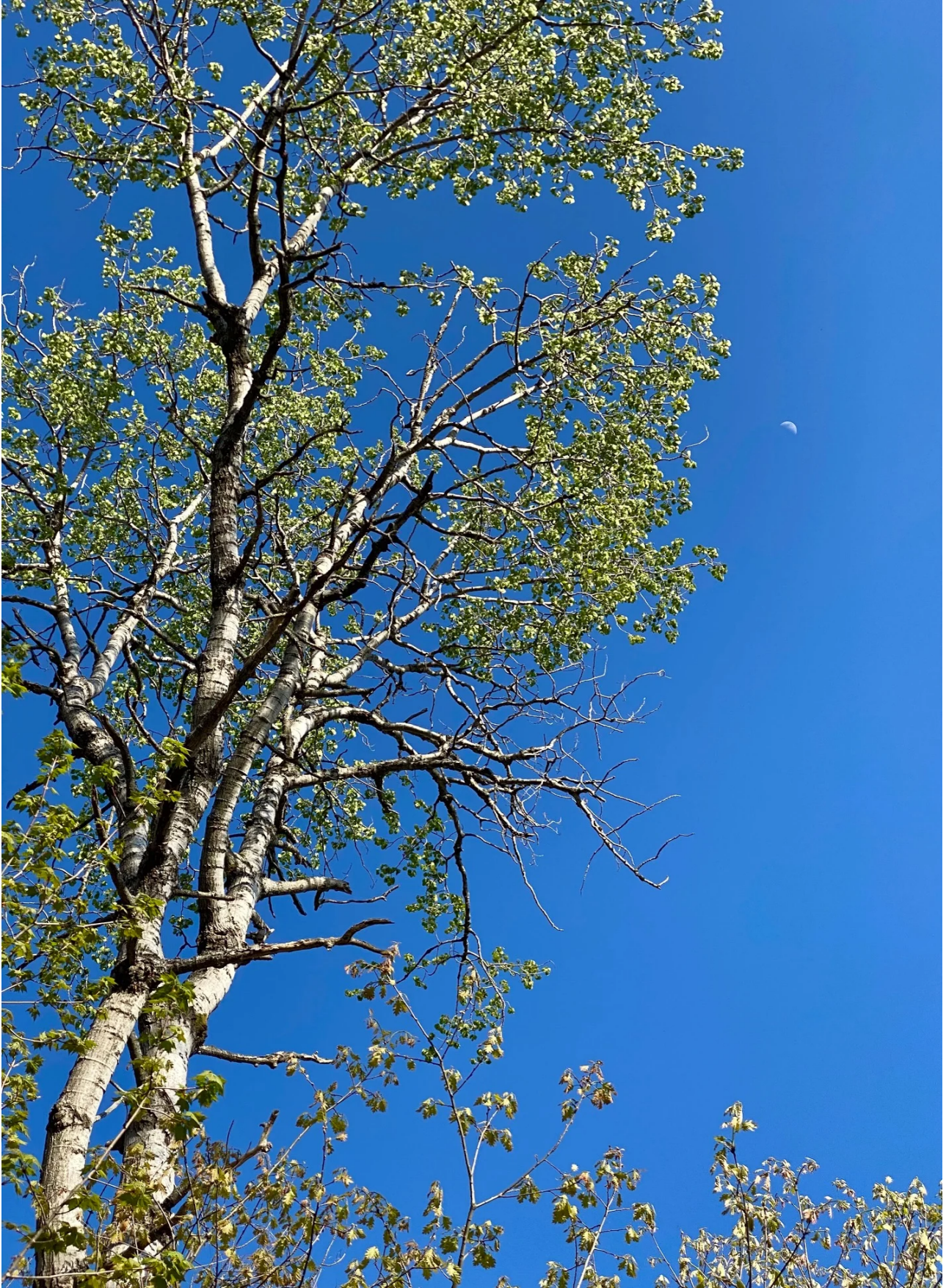


Photo Credits: David Zakus



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