

# *U.S. leads world in reported COVID-19 cases as hospitalizations surge*

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Washington, March 27 (RHC)-- The United States has become the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic, overtaking China to lead the world in cases of COVID-19.

The virus continued its exponential growth Thursday, surging to over 85,000 U.S. cases -- although the true number is certain to be far higher. Over 1,300 people across the U.S. have died from the virus, and the death rate is predicted to accelerate in the days ahead. This as President Trump continues to defy his scientific advisers and downplay the threat of the pandemic.

In New York City, the largest hot spot of the U.S. crisis, 84 COVID-19 patients died on Thursday, as wave after wave of critically ill people flooded intensive care units and threatened to overwhelm the healthcare system. Columbia and NYU medical schools said they will allow medical students to graduate early to join the fight against COVID-19, as hospitalizations surged by 40% Thursday.

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