

Top U.S. health official warns of rising COVID infections



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Washington, July 18 (RHC)-- The U.S. surgeon general says he is concerned about what lies ahead as COVID-19 infections are rising in every state, millions of people remain unvaccinated despite widely available jabs, and a contagious new variant of the virus is spreading. In an interview on CNN's State of the Union news program on Sunday, Dr Vivek Murthy said nearly all coronavirus-related deaths in the US are among the tens of millions of people who have not been vaccinated.

"I am worried about what is to come because we are seeing increasing cases among the unvaccinated, in particular. And while, if you are vaccinated, you are very well protected against hospitalisation and death,

unfortunately, that is not true if you are not vaccinated,” Murthy said.

His comments come as new U.S. COVID-19 cases surged 70 percent this week compared with the prior seven days to an average of 30,000 new infections a day, fuelled by the Delta variant. Deaths also rose 26 percent week-over-week to an average of 250 a day, mostly among unvaccinated patients.

The head of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) last week urged countries to continue to embrace public health curbs amid a rise in coronavirus cases in several nations across the Americas, including the United States.

Carissa Etienne said on Wednesday that the region reported nearly 74 million cases and 1.9 million deaths from COVID-19 over the previous week, making up for more than a third of COVID cases worldwide and more than 40 percent of reported deaths.

“Cases rise when complacency sets in,” Etienne said. “We are all tired, but after experiencing successive peaks of infections in the same locations, we must break this cycle by embracing public health measures early and consistently.”

While US case numbers and hospitalisations are still far below levels from the worst of the pandemic early this year, Murthy said the worsening situation shows the need to convince more people to get inoculations.

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