

U.S. now averaging 100,000 daily COVID infections as Delta surges

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New York, August 8 (RHC)-- The United States is now averaging 100,000 new COVID-19 infections per day, returning to a milestone last seen during the winter surge as health officials urge people to get

vaccinated to stem a surging spread of the Delta variant.

Across the country, 70.6 percent of adults have received at least one dose of vaccines, while 60.9 percent are considered fully inoculated, according to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data.

But millions remain unvaccinated and a surge in infections has been recorded in states with low vaccination rates, such as Florida and Texas. "Our models show that if we don't [vaccinate people], we could be up to several hundred thousand cases a day, similar to our surge in early January," CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said on CNN this week.

It took the U.S. about nine months to cross the 100,000 average case number in November before peaking at about 250,000 in early January. Cases bottomed out in June, averaging about 11,000 per day, but six weeks later the number is 107,143.

Hospitalisations and deaths are also increasing rapidly, though all are still below peaks seen early this year before vaccines became widely available across the country. "The correlation between vaccination and hospitalisation is very stark. Health officials have weighted out that those who are vaccinated may still contract the virus, but the consequences are far less severe than they are for those who are not vaccinated," Al Jazeera's Mike Hanna reported from Washington, DC.

Hanna said the recent surge in infections has prompted some state governors who previously had not come out in support of vaccinations to change their minds, but major differences remain on mask mandates.

"The southern states, completely opposed to the wearing of masks. Other states, particularly in the east, now masks have become mandated again. So there's a different way in dealing with this virus," he said.

More than 44,000 Americans are currently hospitalised with COVID-19, according to the CDC, up 30 percent in a week and nearly four times the number who were hospitalised in June. More than 120,000 were hospitalized in January.

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