

White House warns COVID-19 cases at dire levels, says patient care could be compromised

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Washington, December 3 (RHC)-- The White House coronavirus task force is issuing a dire warning to states, writing that given the already rampant spread of the virus across the U.S., a further surge in cases following Thanksgiving threatens to overwhelm the health care system and compromise patient care.

“We are in a very dangerous place due to the current, extremely high COVID baseline and limited hospital capacity; a further post-Thanksgiving surge will compromise COVID patient care, as well as medical care overall,” reads the White House report sent to states and obtained by The Hill.

The report includes a series of urgent warnings, a stark contrast to President Trump himself, who has been largely quiet on the coronavirus crisis recently and has focused on vaccine development when he does discuss it.

The warnings come as the United States is reporting a record-setting level of more than 150,000 new cases every day. More than 98,000 people are in hospitals with COVID-19, placing extreme stress on the facilities' capacity. Experts fear that a further surge will come soon in the wake of Thanksgiving gatherings and travel.

The report warns that state responses to mitigate the spread of the virus “remain inadequate” in “many areas.” “All states and all counties must flatten the curve now in order to sustain the health system for both COVID and non-COVID emergencies,” the report states. It calls on local health officials to take matters into their own hands and issue warnings to the public.

“If state and local policies do not reflect the seriousness of the current situation, all public health officials must alert the state population directly,” according to the report. “It must be made clear that if you are over 65 or have significant health conditions, you should not enter any indoor public spaces where anyone is unmasked due to the immediate risk to your health; you should have groceries and medications delivered,” the report adds. “If you are under 40, you need to assume you became infected during the Thanksgiving period if you gathered beyond your immediate household. Most likely, you will not have symptoms; however, you are dangerous to others and you must isolate away from anyone at increased risk for severe disease and get tested immediately.”

Administration health officials like Anthony Fauci have repeatedly pointed to bars and indoor dining as significant sources of spread, though those locations remain open in many states. The latest report says “restricting indoor dining and limiting and/or closing areas of congregation without masking” is needed and has shown success where it has been done in the U.S. and in Europe.

The report also calls for the expansion of rapid antigen tests and says it is important that asymptomatic people are tested as well, given that many people without symptoms still spread the virus. “Requiring use only in symptomatic individuals is preventing adequate testing and control of the pandemic,” the report states.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/241408-white-house-warns-covid-19-cases-at-dire-levels-says-patient-care-could-be-compromised>



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