

Connecting Communities for COVID19 News

5th Jul 2021

Isolation Tips

The Zoom Revolution Empowers Women to Speak Up

After 14 months working from home, I have mastered the art of digital collaboration. What began as a clumsy series of video chats from my kitchen counter—plagued by technological difficulties and unfamiliarity—quickly became the most efficient and effective way to connect with colleagues and clients across the globe. I am proficient in Bluejeans, Teams, Webex, Meet, Chime and 8X8, but I have a black belt in Zoom, my preferred videoconferencing tool. I personalize my background, admit participants, put up my hand, pull up presentations, and mute and unmute myself as needed.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-zoom-revolution-empowers-women-to-speak-up-11625260956>

Hygiene Helpers

To jab or not to jab: should we be vaccinating our children against coronavirus?

Measles, diphtheria, polio, whooping cough, mumps, flu, meningitis — the list of illnesses against which children are vaccinated goes on and on. By the time they start school aged four, a British child has been injected, nasal-sprayed or orally inoculated 16 times. But when it comes to immunising children against Covid we are surprisingly circumspect. Asked by the Office for National Statistics whether they would want their children vaccinated against Covid, nearly half of parents said they were unsure.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/to-jab-or-not-to-jab-should-we-be-vaccinating-our-children-against-coronavirus-jnr7ghxwg>

Unvaccinated people are 'variant factories,' infectious diseases expert says

Unvaccinated people do more than merely risk their own health. They're also a risk to everyone if they become infected with coronavirus, infectious disease specialists say. That's because the only source of new coronavirus variants is the body of an infected person. "Unvaccinated people are potential variant factories," Dr. William Schaffner, a professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, told CNN Friday. "The more unvaccinated people there are, the more opportunities for the virus to multiply," Schaffner said.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/07/03/health/unvaccinated-variant-factories/index.html>

The EU's 'vaccine passport' and what it means for travel

It's free - and all EU citizens, as well as non-EU nationals legally staying or living in the member states (with the right to travel to other member states) can download it or obtain a paper copy. Some countries have already been using the certificate on a voluntary basis - but it was officially introduced on 1 July with a six-week phase-in period.

https://www.bbc.com/news/explainers-57665765?at_custom1=%5Bpost+type%5D&at_custom2=twitter&at_custom4

'We want to see the tide turn': NSW enters crucial days of COVID lockdown

NSW Health authorities are begging people to stay socially distanced this weekend as the current COVID-19 outbreak gripping Sydney continues to grow. One week into full lockdown, 35 new cases of community transmission were recorded on Saturday, nine of which were infectious during their time in the community. "While, as predicted, the number of cases is going up, we are seeing a greater proportion of those cases in isolation, which is exactly what we want to see," NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-nsw-update-new-cases-july-3-bondi-cluster-exposure-sites-lockdown-latest/f34bf097-4614-4e9e-8c15-1e59134a8e2a>

Community Activities

Woman Afraid of Vaccine Side Effects Dies From Delta Variant: 'I Couldn't Convince Her'

A woman in Missouri was afraid of the side effects from COVID-19 vaccines and chose not to get the shots, but later contracted the Delta variant of the novel coronavirus and died in the hospital. Deborah Carmichael, the mother of now-deceased 45-year-old Tricia Jones, is speaking out and urging those hesitant about the vaccine to get the jab after losing her daughter in June. She spoke to Kansas City's news channel Fox 4 WDAF-TV about her daughter's death and vaccine hesitancy in an interview broadcast this week.

<https://www.newsweek.com/woman-afraid-vaccine-side-effects-dies-delta-variant-i-couldnt-convince-her-1606660>

Scenes From San Francisco Tech Companies

Silicon Valley should be one of the first places to spring back to life as the pandemic eases in the U.S. Nearly three-quarters of eligible people have been vaccinated, and more than 80% have gotten at least one shot—a milestone San Francisco reached faster than any other city, according to the mayor. And yet, many tech industry offices are sitting nearly empty. Only 19% of office workers in the San Francisco metro area had returned as of June 23, the lowest share of 10 major U.S. metro areas tracked by building security provider Kastle Systems. The region's tech giants, among the first to send their office workers home when coronavirus pandemic deepened last year, may be among the last to coax them back.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-07-02/scenes-from-san-francisco-tech-companies>

Working Remotely

Could A Ban On Out Of Hours Emails Be More Than Just A Pipe Dream?

The rise of remote working has blurred the lines between work and personal time, with a study by the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts finding that during the pandemic, the average workday has extended by 8.2 per cent – that's an extra 48.5 minutes. The same study, which collected data from 3.1 million workers across Europe, USA and the Middle East, also saw an increase in the number of internal emails sent and received. The truth is, we're working longer hours and it's having an impact on our mental health. A poll by worker's union Prospect found that 30 per cent of remote workers reported working more unpaid hours than before the pandemic, and 35 per cent of remote workers said their work-related mental health had got worse during the pandemic, with 42 per cent attributing it to their inability to switch off from work. Andrew Pakes, deputy general secretary and research director at Prospect, believes our new normal means legislation is more necessary than ever to make sure we don't work ourselves to the point of burnout

<https://www.vogue.co.uk/arts-and-lifestyle/article/remote-working-mental-health>

Looking to work remotely from another country? 5 things you should know

For American workers transitioning to or continuing to work remotely full-time, the opportunity to do so outside of the U.S. may be appealing. And countries around the world are offering workers the option to do just that, through remote work programs. Similar requirements including proof of employment, a minimum income threshold and proof of health insurance must be met in order to qualify for all of the programs, but additional fees and documents may be required, as some programs vary by length and price. CNBC Make It spoke with remote work expert Brie Reynolds, career development manager and coach at Remote.co to get their best advice for workers interested in these programs.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/07/02/looking-to-work-remotely-from-another-country-5-things-to-know-first.html>

Wall Street Wants Bankers Back in the Office. Especially Gen Zers.

The life of a 20-something Wall Street number cruncher has always been a grind, marked by marathon workweeks and menial tasks. Working from home made it worse. Now bank leaders want the newbies back in the office. While many companies are hailing the Covid work-from-home experiment as a success, top Wall Street firms such as Goldman Sachs Group and JPMorgan Chase aren't so sure. They hope that being back in the office will cure the malaise that many of their junior bankers are feeling. Remote work "does not work for younger people," JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon said at The Wall Street Journal's CEO Council Summit in May. "It doesn't work for those who want to hustle."

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/wall-street-wants-bankers-back-in-the-office-especially-gen-zers-11625304601>

Virtual Classrooms

Back to virtual school: How to develop a growth mindset for your child

The second wave of COVID-19 has hurled us into yet another year of virtual schooling. However, this time we are all geared up and well-equipped with a plan and strategies, incorporating blended learning techniques into our teaching practices. We would like to share some of our learnings that will equip parents with adequate measures for the academic year 2021-2022. This checklist will ensure children are positively motivated as they start school and will also build a growth mindset in your children.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/parenting/learning/back-to-virtual-school-how-to-develop-a-growth-mindset-for-your-child-7387178/>

Parents Plan To Use Learning Apps To Continue Kids' Education This Summer

A new survey has revealed that parents are still planning on using learning apps to continue their child's education throughout the summer. Summer is meant to be a time for fun and excitement. A chance for families to get out there and spend some time together and have fun. While school may be out for the year, a lot of parents still want their child to learn and grow and a great method to encourage this is by using electronics and technology to your advantage. Since children have now had some experience navigating online learning, they are more familiar with this method of learning.

<https://www.moms.com/parents-learning-apps-continue-kids-education-summer/>

Public Policies

Covid-19: Ireland to buy one million vaccine doses

The Irish government has announced it is to purchase one million Covid-19 vaccine doses from Romania. The agreement in principle to purchase the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, followed talks between Taoiseach (Irish PM) Micheál Martin and Romanian President Klaus Iohannis. Mr Martin said the development was "very good news for Ireland". People aged 18 to 34 can register to get a specific Covid-19 vaccine in the Republic of Ireland from next week. Earlier, Irish Health Minister Stephen Donnelly said this group can "opt-in" for Janssen or AstraZeneca for earlier vaccination.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57693563>

Brazil top court gives nod for probe into Bolsonaro over vaccine deal

Brazil's Supreme Court Justice Rosa Weber late on Friday authorized an investigation of President Jair Bolsonaro by the top prosecutor's office, or PGR, for dereliction of duty in the process of procuring an Indian COVID-19 vaccine, according to a copy of the decision seen by Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazil-top-court-gives-nod-probe-into-bolsonaro-over-vaccine-deal-2021-07-03/>

Australia to halve arrivals from overseas, offers COVID-19 exit roadmap

Australia to cut arrivals from overseas to 3,000 a week. NSW reports 31 new cases, biggest daily rise

for 2021. Brisbane lockdown extended for another day

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australia-national-cabinet-meet-amid-covid-19-vaccine-turmoil-2021-07-01/>

South Africa Approves Sinovac's Covid-19 Vaccine

South African regulators have approved Sinovac Biotech Ltd.'s coronavirus vaccine, the first shot developed for the disease by a Chinese company to be sanctioned locally. The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority backed the double-dose CoronaVac candidate made by Sinovac's Life Sciences unit with conditions, according to a statement on Saturday. Those include satisfactory results of ongoing studies and periodic safety updates, SAHPRA said.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-03/south-africa-approves-sinovac-s-covid-19-vaccine>

China, U.S. to send COVID-19 vaccine doses to El Salvador

China will send 1.5 million Sinovac COVID-19 vaccines to El Salvador, the Chinese Embassy there announced on Friday, hours after the White House said the U.S. would send 1.5 million Moderna vaccines to the Central American nation. El Salvador's president, Nayib Bukele, responded to China's plan by retweeting the embassy's announcement and placing the Chinese flag next to that of his country. So far, he has not commented on the White House announcement.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/us-sending-15-mln-doses-modernas-covid-19-vaccine-el-salvador-2021-07-02/>

Argentina opens door to U.S. vaccine donations with legal tweak

Argentina will tweak legislation to help the country receive U.S. donations of COVID-19 vaccinations, senior officials said on Friday, a move that could also help unlock deals that have proved tricky with drugmakers like Pfizer Inc. A government decree will soften legal clauses around negligence, remove a reference to "fraudulent maneuvers" and create a fund to compensate people harmed by a vaccine.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/argentina-opens-door-us-vaccine-donations-with-legal-tweak-2021-07-02/>

Slovakia sells most Sputnik V vaccine doses back to Russia

Slovakia has sold most Russian Sputnik V coronavirus vaccines back to the country of origin, the Slovak Health Ministry said on Friday, as public interest is low after months of government hesitation over using the product that lacks European regulatory approval. Slovakia shipped back 160,000 out of 200,000 doses imported in March, at \$9.95 per dose, the same price as the original purchase, a ministry spokeswoman said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/slovakia-sells-most-sputnik-v-vaccine-doses-back-russia-2021-07-02/>

WHO warns new COVID wave inevitable in Europe as cases rise

A third wave of infections is now inevitable unless citizens and legislators are "disciplined", the World Health Organization (WHO) warns, saying a 10-week decline in new coronavirus infections across Europe has come to an end. The number of new cases across Europe rose by 10 percent last week, the UN health agency's regional director for Europe Hans Kluge told a news briefing on Thursday in Copenhagen, Denmark.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/1/who-warns-of-third-covid-wave-in-europe-as-cases-rise>

Maintaining Services

The UK's preparing to administer COVID vaccine booster shots, and Australia is set to follow suit

The UK has become the first nation in the world to plan a third round of COVID-19 vaccinations for vulnerable Britons, with a booster program that would shore up resistance to the virus ahead of winter. Preparations to roll out the vaccine to elderly populations from September are awaiting final medical advice, but the move marks a step in the global vaccine race as the UK turns its attention

towards providing ongoing resistance to COVID-19 and new variants.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-04/booster-shots-uk-covid-vaccines-australia/100258572>

Covid wards in the D.C. area are almost empty. Doctors credit the coronavirus vaccine.

Just six months ago, the covid-19 unit at Sibley Memorial Hospital was full and doctors at the Northwest D.C. hospital were grappling with a winter surge in pandemic patients. Today, the 25-bed ward is empty, said Michael Lee, the hospitalist medical director. There have been virtually no covid-19 patients for four weeks. It's a trend that doctors say they are seeing across the D.C. region as vaccinations have led to increased immunity, sending hospitalizations and deaths plunging.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-hospitals-empty-covid/2021/07/02/cce9d414-d9bc-11eb-bb9e-70fda8c37057_story.html

Indonesia triples oxygen supplies as Covid-19 outbreak worsens

Indonesia is tripling its oxygen supplies to hospitals as data suggests the Delta variant of coronavirus is now driving the country's worsening outbreak, accounting for more than 60% of recent cases. Indonesia's health minister, Budi Gunadi Sadikin, told the Guardian that three-quarters of the national oxygen production used for industry would be redeployed to hospitals for the next two weeks. "We learned from India to make sure the supply is there," he said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/02/indonesia-triple-oxygen-supplies-covid-19-outbreak-worsen-delta-variant>

Putin's 'Lockdown Lite' as Moscow Stops Millions From Dining Out

As the Covid-19 pandemic rears up again in Russia, President Vladimir Putin is following Israel's example as Moscow stops millions of residents from entering bars and restaurants without proof of vaccination or recovery from the illness. But mindful of hostility to the vaccines in Russia ahead of key elections, he's steering away from making the shots mandatory nationwide. "Damn!" swore a 26-year-old who gave his name as Nikolai, as staff refused him entry to a bar in downtown Moscow, on a recent evening. In the end he got a beer and sat sullenly in the rain at the venue's outside tables. City authorities have allowed summer terraces to accept all customers, but only until July 12.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-03/putin-s-lockdown-lite-as-moscow-stops-millions-from-dining-out>

Moscow Tightens the Clamp on Russia's Millions of Covid-19 Vaccine Holdouts

Russia is adopting increasingly coercive measures to convince Russians to be vaccinated, as authorities try to reboot a flailing vaccination campaign and race to beat back a surge in Covid-19 cases caused by the more infectious Delta variant. Local authorities in some areas of Russia have made vaccination compulsory for service-sector employees, meaning that millions of workers, ranging from hairdressers to bank tellers, face the threat of unpaid leave if they don't get inoculated. Restaurants and shops could be closed for months if they don't have 60% vaccinated staff by mid-July. And as of late June, only the inoculated, those who have recovered in the past six months or who have a negative test can enter Moscow restaurants and coffee shops.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/moscow-tightens-the-clamp-on-russias-millions-of-covid-19-vaccine-holdouts-1162531000>

15 million people in the U.S. have missed their second dose of the coronavirus vaccine, CDC says

Nearly 15 million people — or more than one in 10 of those eligible in the United States — have missed their second dose of the coronavirus vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC data shows that as of June 16, nearly 11 percent of people who had sufficient time to get the second dose missed their ideal window. The number has increased from 8 percent earlier in the year, but CDC spokesperson Kate Fowlie said the rise was "not unexpected."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/07/02/missed-second-dose-covid19-vaccine/>

Long Covid: More than two million in England may have suffered, study suggests

A survey of half a million adults in England suggests around two million people may have had some long-lasting symptoms after having coronavirus - sometimes known as "long Covid". The React study shows about a third of people who report they have coronavirus symptoms have one or more symptoms that persist for at least 12 weeks. Researchers say managing the long-term consequences are a "major challenge". The government has provided £50m for research into long Covid.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-57584295>

India's Bharat Biotech says vaccine 93.4% effective against severe COVID-19

Phase-III trials of a vaccine made by India's Bharat Biotech showed it was 93.4% effective against severe symptomatic COVID-19, the firm said on Saturday, a finding that could boost people's acceptance of Covaxin. The data demonstrated 65.2% protection against the Delta variant, first identified in India, that led to a surge in infections in April and May, and the world's highest daily death tolls.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indias-bharat-biotech-says-vaccine-934-effective-against-severe-covid-19-2021-07-03/>

Vaccines 'outpaced by variants', WHO warns, as Delta now in 98 countries

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director general of the WHO, said the sharing of vaccines was "only a trickle, which is being outpaced by variants", after it emerged that the Delta variant is now present in at least 98 countries. His warning came as Dame Sarah Gilbert, the Oxford professor who led the team behind the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, called for caution over proposals to vaccinate children in the UK. "We have to balance what we think about vaccinating children in high-income countries with vaccinating the rest of the world because we need to stop transmission of this virus globally," she told the Observer.

https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jul/03/vaccines-outpaced-by-variants-who-warns-as-delta-now-in-98-countries?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

Germany issues world's strongest recommendation for mixing Covid-19 vaccines

Germany has issued what appears to be the strongest recommendation anywhere for the mixing of Covid-19 vaccines on efficacy grounds. The German Standing Committee on Vaccination (STIKO) said Thursday that people who receive a first dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine "should get an mRNA vaccine as their second dose, regardless of their age." This makes Germany one of the first countries to strongly recommend that people who have received a first dose of AstraZeneca receive either a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine as their second dose.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/07/02/health/germany-covid-vaccines-mixing-intl/index.html?via=webuproar>