

New York virus deaths rise fast, but hospitalizations slow

April 10 2020, by Marina Villeneuve, Jennifer Peltz and Michael Hill



The Brooklyn Bridge walkway is empty of pedestrians and cyclists, Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

New York COVID-19-related deaths jumped yet again by more than 700 in a day, while hospitals battling the outbreak reported encouraging news. On the economic front, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said testing would have to be ramped up dramatically to put New York back in business and the state tried to improve its overwhelmed unemployment insurance website.

New York developments in the [coronavirus outbreak](#):

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THE NUMBERS

Coronavirus deaths in New York jumped by 777 in one day, as the number of people hospitalized stayed relatively flat.

The mix of encouraging and grim news from Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Friday has become familiar this week as people hospitalized in previous weeks die. More than 3,000 deaths have been recorded since Monday to bring the statewide count to 7,844.

The number of hospitalizations increased by 290, compared to daily increases of more than 1,000 last week. The number of intensive care patients was actually down slightly for the first time since mid-March.

There were 18,569 people hospitalized.

Cuomo said that if the hospitalization rate stays flat, New York might not need the overflow field hospitals they have been scrambling to construct recently.

New York state has about 170,000 confirmed cases, a number that only counts infected people who have been tested.

TENNIS CENTER HOSPITAL

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio celebrated the opening of the National Tennis Center in Queens as a hospital Friday and said the facility may be used to quarantine recovering patients to prevent a resurgence of the [coronavirus](#) once the city is past the acute crisis phase of the pandemic.



Cars are parked on an empty street during the COVID-19 outbreak in the DUMBO neighborhood of the Brooklyn borough of New York, Friday, April 10, 2020. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

"You need a lot of capacity to quarantine people and isolate people to make that work," de Blasio said. "Facilities like these, if they're not needed for medical, will be turned into quarantine and isolation facilities to help people get through their own experience with the disease while making sure we don't infect the other members of their family or other people in their life."

For now, the home of the U.S. Open has been converted into a 470-bed hospital intended to relieve the burden from the overtaxed Elmhurst Hospital.

The new temporary hospital will be staffed with doctors and nurses from around the country who have traveled to New York to help treat COVID-19 patients.

"They came here because they love New York City and they wanted to help New York City in our hour of need," de Blasio said. It was "very, very moving," he said, to meet a woman who came all the way from Alaska.



A pedestrian walks across Water Street empty of traffic, Friday, April 10, 2020, in the financial district of New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

MORE TESTING

Cuomo said restarting the outbreak-stalled economy will require a massive expansion of testing to cover millions of workers.

Public health experts hope that mass screening with antibody tests could

help identify who might have built up immunity to COVID-19. Cuomo said the state's health department is developing an antibody test.

The governor said that while the state lab will soon be able to process about 2,000 tests a day, New York has 9 million people needing to get back to work.

"It's not enough if you want to reopen on a meaningful scale and reopen quickly," Cuomo told a state Capitol news briefing. "We need an unprecedented mobilization where government can produce these tests in the millions."

Cuomo said the federal government should use its leverage to scale up testing and that New York could work in a coalition with neighboring New Jersey and Connecticut.



A man sleeps on an empty M train during to the coronavirus pandemic, Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

The governor did not provide a timeline, but described the economic restart as a "gradual, phased process."

INFECTED TIGER

A Bronx Zoo tiger that contracted the coronavirus is continuing to get better, as are six other tigers and lions that showed similar symptoms, the zoo said Friday.

The big cats "are behaving normally, eating well, and their coughing is greatly reduced," the zoo said in a statement, adding that none of its other animals have developed symptoms.

The test result, announced Sunday, marked what's believed to be the first confirmed coronavirus case in an animal in the U.S. or a tiger anywhere, according to the zoo and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Eleven days after the zoo closed to the public because of the outbreak, a 4-year-old Malayan tiger named Nadia started showing signs of illness on March 27. Three other tigers and three lions later began coughing, and in some instances wheezing or losing their appetites.



A man wears a facial mask for protection against the coronavirus as he walks over the Brooklyn Bridge, Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)



Commuters wear face masks for protection against the coronavirus as they ride the M train, Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)



A person walks on the Brooklyn Heights promenade above the Brooklyn Queens Expressway Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)



People wear facial masks for protection against the coronavirus as they walk their dogs on the Brooklyn Bridge, Friday, April 10, 2020, in New York. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)



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The zoo believes the animals were exposed by one or more keepers who had the virus but weren't showing symptoms at the time. It's not known exactly how the infection might have passed from person to cat.

UNEMPLOYMENT WOES

New York state is getting help from Google to overhaul a decades-old unemployment benefits system that has left laid-off workers frustrated and awaiting help.

Google helped New York design a revamped website that launched Thursday evening. The state also added 300 workers to its 700-person staff to process unemployment benefit applications.

Gov. Cuomo said the state Department of Labor's system has crashed because of a record-shattering surge in claims amid outbreak-related layoffs.

There have been 350,000 claims in the last week. So far, 600,000 claims over the past three weeks have been successfully processed and over 200,000 are still in partial status, according to the Cuomo administration.

"Government shuts down the private sector economy. You have millions out of work," Cuomo said Thursday. "The next shoe to drop is going to be millions of people call in for unemployment benefits, crashing the system that handles the unemployment benefits because you've had a hundredfold increase, which is what has happened."

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