

Fewer than 1,000 virus patients in intensive care in Italy

May 11 2020



This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the

lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

Italy on Monday reported fewer than 1,000 people in intensive care treatment for the novel coronavirus for the first time since March 10 when the country went into confinement, the civil protection agency said.

The number of daily deaths rose slightly to 179 from the last report of 165, but was still the third consecutive day below 200 fatalities, it said.

On April 3 the number of COVID-19 patients in ICU units throughout the country peaked at 4,068.

At that time Italy was the epicentre of the [coronavirus](#) outbreak and the hospital system in the north of the country, the worst-hit region, was on the point of breaking down.

Italy has now registered 30,739 virus-related deaths—the third highest toll behind the United States and Britain—from a total of 219,814 cases.

The government eased the virus lockdown restrictions slightly on May 4 but a larger-scale reopening is set for next week when museums, shops, [cultural sites](#), churches and libraries will reopen.

Bars and restaurants will reopen from June 1, along with hair and beauty salons.

The authorities continue to tell people to remain careful in order to avoid a second wave of the virus.

"There are too many people outdoors, and unfortunately too many without masks or who aren't respecting social distancing," Roberto Cauda, head of the infectious diseases department at Rome's Gemeli hospital, told state broadcaster Rai3.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, in an interview with the Corriere della Sera paper on Sunday, said that "we won't have to stay on our balconies this summer, and the beauty of Italy won't be quarantined off."

However he said that summer holidays will be different this year, with some rules still in place and prudence required.

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Citation: Fewer than 1,000 virus patients in intensive care in Italy (2020, May 11) retrieved 28 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-virus-patients-intensive-italy.html>

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