

COVID-19 death risk twice as high in New York City as some countries

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(HealthDay)—New York City's COVID-19 death rate was more than

double that of some countries, and the city's oldest people had the highest risk of death, researchers report.

They used a computer model to analyze over 191,000 lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases along with more than 20,000 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths in New York City from March 1 to May 16.

During that time, the city's [death](#) rate was 1.45%—meaning between 1% and 2% of New Yorkers infected with COVID-19 died.

That's more than twice the rate already reported elsewhere. For example, COVID-19 death rates in both China and France, where most estimates have come from, were about 0.7%, according to the researchers.

So far, the U.S. death rate is unclear, researchers from Columbia University and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene said.

They found that New York City's COVID-19 death rate was highest among those 75 and older (13.83%) and those between 65 and 74 (4.67%).

"These dire estimates highlight the severity of COVID-19 in elderly populations and the importance of infection prevention in congregate settings," wrote the authors led by Wan Yang, an assistant professor of epidemiology at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health, in New York City.

"Thus, early detection and adherence to infection control guidance in [long-term care](#) and adult care facilities should be a priority for COVID-19 response as the pandemic continues to unfold," they said in a Columbia news release.

Infection death rates were 0.011% among those under 25 and 0.12% in 25- to 44-year-olds.

But the researchers warned that the risk to young people should not be taken lightly. Some children have developed post-infection Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome.

Yang and her colleagues noted that public and private health systems in New York City are stronger than many other places in the United States, so COVID-19 death rates may be even higher in other parts of the country and other nations.

"It is thus crucial that officials account for and closely monitor the infection rate and population [health](#) outcomes and enact prompt [public health](#) responses accordingly as the pandemic unfolds," the authors wrote.

"As the pandemic continues to unfold and populations in many places worldwide largely remain susceptible, understanding the severity, in particular, the IFR [[infection](#) fatality rate], is crucial for gauging the full impact of COVID-19 in the coming months or years," they concluded.

The study was published July 1 on the preprint server medRxiv.org, ahead of peer review.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [COVID-19](#).

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