

Argentina surpasses 5,000 coronavirus dead

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Argentina surpassed 5,000 deaths from the novel coronavirus on Wednesday after registering a record 325 new fatalities over the last 24 hours, the health ministry said.

The South American country of 44 million has also recorded more than 260,000 infections.

More than 90 percent of those have been in the greater Buenos Aires area, where intensive care units (ITC) are running at more than 68 percent occupancy.

Other [focal points](#) are in Jujuy in the north and Tierra del Fuego in the far south.

ITC beds throughout the country are running at 58 percent occupancy.

"No-one is in a position to handle an increase in cases," warned Nicolas Kreplak, the deputy health minister for Buenos Aires province.

"We need to reduce the number of cases and we have to take measures for this. There's been no other measure to reduce cases than a strict lockdown," Kreplak told El Destape Radio station.

President Alberto Fernandez began slowing the gradual reopening of the Buenos Aires [metropolitan area](#) in late July as cases started increasing again.

However, he has stopped short of reimposing quarantine rules as Argentina's economy has suffered badly from the pandemic.

"I understand that people are bored of being locked up but I'm relying on each one's sense of reflection," Fernandez said on Tuesday, when admitting Argentina was going through its toughest period during the pandemic.

"The longer we spend isolated and away from each other, our risk is minimized."

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