

# Chile records highest daily COVID-19 numbers yet

March 20 2021

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A healthcare worker checks on people under observation after receiving a dose of the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine at a makeshift vaccination site in the Jose Toribio Medina public school, in Santiago, Chile, Tuesday, March 16, 2021. (AP Photo/Esteban Felix)

Chile has reported its highest daily count of new coronavirus infections

since the start of the pandemic despite widespread restrictions and widely praised progress on vaccinations.

The government on Saturday reported 7,084 new cases in the South American nation of some 18 million people, topping a previous record in June. It said COVID-19 has become the country's leading cause of mortality, causing 26% of deaths so far this year.

Chile so far has given at least one vaccine shot to more than 29% of the population and both doses to 15%—far more than in other nations in the region. But Health Minister Enrique Paris said people should remain cautious since population-level immunity isn't likely until about 80% are vaccinated, probably by about the end of June.

Officials said hospital bed usage has reached 94%, with rising numbers among those 60 and below as older Chileans have been inoculated. The medical association said the system has been strained by [depression](#) or exhaustion affecting as many as 30% of medical personnel.

The government has imposed supposedly tight restrictions on three-quarters of the country's municipalities and said Saturday it is tightening limits on people entering from abroad, especially from Brazil.



A man receive a a second dose of the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination center in the Bicentenario Stadium in Santiago, Chile, Thursday, March 18, 2021. Chile has become one of the top countries in the world at vaccinating its population against the new coronavirus. (AP Photo/Esteban Felix)



City workers load food kits into a van to be delivered to residents affected economically by the disruptions of the new coronavirus pandemic, in Santiago, Chile, Thursday, March 18, 2021. Fresh outbreaks of COVID-19 have led to renewed lockdowns throughout the country. (AP Photo/Esteban Felix)





A healthcare worker injects a woman with a dose of the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine at a drive-thru vaccination site at the National Stadium in Santiago, Chile, Tuesday, March 16, 2021. (AP Photo/Esteban Felix)

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