

Afghanistan finds deadly fungal infection in COVID patients

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A deadly fungal infection known as "black fungus" that first surfaced in Indian COVID-19 patients has been detected in Afghanistan, which is in the middle of a brutal third wave of the coronavirus, Health Minister

Wahid Majroh said Saturday.

Afghanistan has recorded one death from the fungus, which has been detected in two other patients, he said.

In Afghanistan, where people rarely wear masks and there is no social distancing, the numbers of new cases have been steadily rising, with 1,272 new cases in the past 24 hours and 92 deaths. The testing rate in Afghanistan is barely 4,000 a day. Since the pandemic began last year, Afghanistan has recorded 124,757 cases and 5,199 deaths though the figures are believed to be wildly underreported.

In the capital Kabul the [health ministry](#) has added hundreds of new beds for the increase in patients, yet the capacity rate is still at nearly 100 percent. Afghanistan is also running short on oxygen and poor Afghans wait sometimes for days for oxygen cylinders to be filled at the few [production plants](#) in Kabul.

Meanwhile barely 2.5% of Afghanistan's over 36 million people have been vaccinated, as the country has struggled to receive the promised vaccines under the U.N.-sponsored COVAX scheme.

The fungal condition caught global attention in India and has surfaced in Egypt.

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