

# COVID falls from America's #1 cause of death to #7 as of June 2021

July 1 2021

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A steep rise in vaccination rates has dropped COVID-19 from the first

to the seventh leading cause of death in the United States, a new analysis shows.

The disease was the third leading cause of [death](#) for much of 2020, but became the leading cause of death in December 2020 and early 2021, reaching a peak of 3,136 deaths per day in January 2021 and far surpassing U.S. deaths from [heart disease](#) and cancer during that time.

Heart disease is typically the number one cause of death (about 2,000 a day), while cancer claims about 1,600 lives a day, according to the Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker. The tracker provides up-to-date information on trends and issues that impact the performance of the health system.

COVID-19 dropped to the seventh leading cause of death in the United States in June 2021, with an average of 342 deaths a day.

Heart disease was again the leading cause of death (2,101 per day) in June, with the others being cancer (1,614), accidents (474), stroke (451), chronic lower respiratory disease (377) and Alzheimer's [disease](#) (351), according to the report.

COVID-19 deaths have fallen sharply as vaccination rates have surged in recent months. As of June 30, about two-thirds of U.S. adults have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose.

However, it appears that the [federal government](#) won't achieve its goal of getting at least one shot into the arms of 70% of adults by July 4 due to lagging vaccination rates, particularly among younger adults and residents of certain states.

The total number of COVID-19 deaths in the United States as of June 30 was 604,656, and nearly all deaths have been among unvaccinated

people, the researchers reported.

A recent KFF poll found that half of unvaccinated U.S. adults said the number of cases is so low there is no need for more people to get vaccinated.

But if [vaccination rates](#) plateau, COVID-19 could remain among the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States, despite the availability of safe and highly effective vaccines, according to the Peterson-KFF report.

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

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