

Japan had no COVID-19 deaths 1st time in 15 months

November 8 2021, by Mari Yamaguchi



A passenger arrives from overseas at the arrival hall of Haneda international airport in Tokyo, Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Koji Sasahara

Japan reported no daily deaths from COVID-19 on Sunday for the first time in 15 months, as infections decline rapidly in the country.

Health officials on Monday said there were no deaths the previous day, giving Japan a total of 18,310 fatalities since the pandemic began.

Japan on Monday also eased entry restrictions for [foreign students](#), workers and short-term business travelers who are fully vaccinated, have their activity plans guaranteed by sponsors and observe 10 days of self-isolation.

Self-quarantine for Japanese citizens and foreign residents was also shortened to three days from the previous 10 days.

The last time Japan reported no new coronavirus deaths was on Aug. 2, 2020, according to the ministry.

Japan was then hit by several waves of infections, including one led by the delta variant last summer, when daily cases peaked at around 25,000. Health care systems came close to collapse and tens of thousands of patients who were unable to find hospital beds had to recover at home. In Tokyo, new daily cases rose to nearly 6,000.

Nationwide cases started falling in September. Experts have attributed the decline to vaccination progress as well as widespread mask wearing and use of disinfectants, among other reasons.



Passengers arriving from overseas come through the arrival hall of Haneda international airport in Tokyo, Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Koji Sasahara



People wearing face masks to help curb the spread of the coronavirus walk at the Ginza shopping district on Tokyo Monday, Nov. 8, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Koji Sasahara

Vaccinations in Japan, despite a slow start, accelerated in June, and now nearly 74% of the population is fully immunized. The government plans to begin booster shots in December and also secure newly developed COVID-19 medicines.

Japan is gradually expanding social and [economic activities](#), though experts caution against easing restrictions too quickly.

Dr. Shigeru Omi, who heads a government coronavirus panel, stressed the need to catch early signs of any upsurge in cases and take necessary

steps without delay.

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Citation: Japan had no COVID-19 deaths 1st time in 15 months (2021, November 8) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-japan-covid-deaths-1st-months.html>

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