



The BMJ

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2020;370:m2753<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m2753>

Published: 09 July 2020

## Covid-19: Deaths in Mexico triple since reopening began in June

Elisabeth Mahase

Covid-19 deaths in Mexico have tripled since the country started to relax lockdown measures on 1 June, rising from 10 167 deaths to 32 796 deaths by 9 July, latest figures show.

The data, compiled by John Hopkins University in Maryland, USA,<sup>1</sup> also found that the number of cases had risen by 194% over that period, from 93 435 to 275 003.

Mexico began gradually reopening businesses in June despite warnings that case numbers were still high and that easing restrictions could make the situation worse.<sup>2</sup> In May the *New York Times* revealed that the Mexican government had not been accurately reporting the number of cases and deaths despite local officials repeatedly alerting it to the true numbers, which in some cases were three times the value reported. The government had also been criticised early on for downplaying the threat from the virus.<sup>3</sup>

However, as cases are also rising in the US, residents in northern Mexican towns are asking people from the US not to cross the border, for fears that tourists will increase transmission. People in Sonoyta, a town on the Arizona border, have even used their vehicles to block the road leading to Puerto Peñasco, a popular beach town.<sup>4</sup>

The US has reported the highest rates of the virus in the world: Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, warned that he would not be surprised to see the country reach 100 000 new cases a day.<sup>5</sup> As of 9 July the US had reported more than three million cases and over 130 000 covid-19 deaths.

Mexico is just one of many countries that have seen spikes in cases after easing restrictions. In places such as Melbourne (Australia), Beijing (China), Leicester (England), and North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany) governments have been forced to implement local lockdown measures to try to bring the number of new cases back down after they began reopening.<sup>6</sup>

- 1 Johns Hopkins University of Medicine. COVID-19 dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU). <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>.
- 2 McDonald B. Mexico Is reopening after quarantine. Many worry it's too early. *New York Times* 2020 Jul 5. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/world/americas/coronavirus-mexico-reopening.html>.
- 3 Ahmed A. Hidden toll: Mexico ignores waves of coronavirus deaths in capital. *New York Times* 2020 May 8. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/08/world/americas/mexico-coronavirus-count.html>.
- 4 Agren D. Mexico border towns try to stop Americans crossing amid Covid-19 fears. *Guardian* 2020 Jul 8. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/08/mexico-border-towns-stop-americans-crossing-covid-19-coronavirus>.
- 5 Tanne JH. Covid-19: US sees record rise in cases. *BMJ* 2020;370:m2676.pmid: 32620598
- 6 Mahase E. Covid-19: How does local lockdown work, and is it effective? *BMJ* 2020;370:m2679. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m2679 pmid: 32620558

This article is made freely available for use in accordance with BMJ's website terms and conditions for the duration of the covid-19 pandemic or until otherwise determined by BMJ. You may use, download and print the article for any lawful, non-commercial purpose (including text and data mining) provided that all copyright notices and trade marks are retained.