

“Endemic” COVID-19 may lead to 250,000 deaths each year in the US

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The silence on the number of COVID-19 deaths occurring in the US is chilling. The entire state and federal apparatus has shifted gears to declare COVID endemic and to end all mandates that had provided the population with a modicum of protection against infection and death.

It bears reviewing Tuesday’s statistics from various COVID trackers.

BNO News reported that 3,349 more Americans died from COVID, with a seven-day average of 2,488 deaths every day. The Johns Hopkins COVID tracker placed the figure of additional deaths at 2,777, with a seven-day average of just under 2,000 per day. The *New York Times*’ COVID tracker reported the fourteen-day daily average of additional deaths to be 2,454. The Worldometer COVID dashboard reported that 2,013 people had perished on Tuesday. Its seven-day average of daily deaths is now at 2,121.

Yet, there is no mention of these grim statistics by any major news outlet. Since Omicron first emerged in the US, more than 137,000 people have lost their lives. The cumulative total is approaching 950,000 deaths. At the current trajectory, one million will have died before April.

Less than 65 percent of the population has been fully vaccinated, with just over half a million vaccinations being given each day. The campaign to vaccinate has essentially stalled. This will be a significant factor as the newer variants of SARS-CoV-2 are driven by selection pressures to develop more immune-evading characteristics that will take advantage of the population’s waning immunity.

However, federal public health officials and policymakers have little stomach to discuss such prospects or consider what the so-called “new normal” will look like when the coronavirus is allowed unimpeded access to every home on every street across the country.

This is the burning question that was raised in a recent

segment of the “In the Bubble” podcast featuring Dr. Kristian Andersen, a professor in the Department of Immunology and Microbiology at Scripps Research in California. The show is hosted by Andy Slavitt, who was an interim senior adviser to the COVID-19 response coordinator in the Biden administration. The discussion centered on the implications of Denmark’s nearly complete abandonment of public health measures against the pandemic.

This is being done under conditions where, despite having very high rates of vaccination, Denmark is experiencing levels of infection and death not seen since last winter’s highs.

Andersen authored the critical “Proximal Origins of SARS-CoV-2,” which carefully reviewed the scientific evidence against the notion that the virus was constructed in a laboratory or purposefully manipulated. On this week’s podcast, he said of Denmark’s action:

The problem is again that we need to be realistic about what that means, and probably what that means is that—in a country like Denmark, for example, it probably means that we should expect if we go back to 2019 that everybody should expect to get infected probably at least twice a year... If we are looking at the number of deaths resulting as a result of this, we have to be realistic too that this is not going to be no common cold or flu.

Slavitt followed with this chilling observation:

Look, I don’t think they want to say that, but I do think that implicit in this is an acceptance that

there are going to be, at least in the US, 200,000 to 250,000 deaths a year at baseline.

Both Andersen and Slavitt agreed that such a scale of death could continue for 10 years, if not longer.

As epidemiologists such as Dr. Ellie Murray have predicted, a cyclic pattern is emerging in which there is one dominant winter wave followed by one or two smaller waves in summer and fall. The scale of death we have witnessed in the supposedly “mild” Omicron wave has been massive and informs us that even estimates of 250,000 annual deaths in the US for years to come may be low.

Moreover, the last several months have provided ample objective evidence that children suffer considerably from infection. The Omicron wave saw hospitalizations among children rise to record highs, especially among those under the age of five.

According to the CDC’s data, COVID-19 killed 539 children in the US in 2021, mostly in the second half of the year, after schools reopened. By comparison, the flu killed three children in 2021.

This only underscores the difference between these viral infections despite the limited mitigation measures in place. With little infrastructure spending to address the need for highly reliable heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, the lifting of all mask mandates and complete opening of schools and businesses will have a considerable impact on the lives of these innocents.

In response to the federal government and states’ reckless ending of the mask mandates, over 300 public health experts and professionals have signed an open letter urging elected officials to re-evaluate “the end of school mask mandates.”

The letter, written by Sonali Rajan, EdD; Katherine Keyes, PhD; Kara Rudolph, PhD; Dustin Duncan, ScD; and Charles Branas, PhD of Columbia University, notes:

Over the past several weeks there have been sustained calls by a vocal minority to actively reduce COVID-19 mitigation measures in schools. Elected officials, pundits on cable news, and national media outlets have been pushing for mask “off-ramps.” And as of this week, several states (Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, among others) are planning an end to indoor mask mandates in schools by a specific

date. These calls, however, are not guided by rigorous accumulated scientific evidence. Removing indoor mask mandates by a particular date—as opposed to tying them to a threshold of community transmission and hospitalizations—is unscientific.

According to data from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), over 12.3 million children in the US have tested positive for COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic. Almost 4.5 million of these infections occurred since New Year’s Day 2022. For 27 straight weeks, pediatric COVID cases have remained over 100,000 and COVID-19 has become the sixth leading cause of death among school-aged kids.

These figures do not include the long-term implications of heart disease and diabetes among children infected with the coronavirus. And the long-term impact of post-COVID syndrome remains unknown. Long COVID has significant impact on the mental health of children and may have a considerable negative influence on their adult lives.

As the “In the Bubble” podcast was ending, Andersen reflected on the fact that the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus is extremely fit and has been able to mutate and survive over the last two years, underscoring not just the immediate dangers it poses to the population, but its tenacity to persist.

As he has explained, SARS-CoV-2 had a natural origin. But the current strains of the coronavirus and the prospect of a pandemic in perpetuity are a product of human activity—in particular, the deadly and reckless policies, driven by the financial interests of the corporate ruling elites, which are forcing the populations of nearly every country on the globe to accept the coronavirus as a permanent threat to their lives, their health and their livelihoods.



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