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Southern DAILY

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Trump barnstorms Florida while Biden heads for Michigan, early vote surges



Yvette Taylor, left, and her husband Gerald stand in line at City Hall as they wait in line to cast their ballot for the upcoming presidential election as early voting begins in New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S., October 16, 2020. REUTERS/Kathleen Flynn

FORT MYERS, Fla./SOUTHFIELD, Mich. (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday redoubled his efforts to win the critical battleground state of Florida, addressing a group of seniors before staging a rally in the central part of the state.

Yvette Taylor, left, and her husband Gerald stand in line at City Hall as they wait in line to cast their ballot for the upcoming presidential election as early voting begins in New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S., October 16, 2020. REUTERS/Kathleen Flynn
 His Democratic rival Joe Biden, meanwhile, traveled to Michigan for a pair of events. Biden's campaign said that former President Barack Obama would travel to Philadelphia next week to campaign on his former vice president's behalf.

Trump lags in opinion polls polling.reuters.com and latest figures from his campaign show he is also behind in fundraising as the campaign intensifies with 18 days to go before Election Day on Nov. 3. That comes as early voting is shattering records, with more than 22 million Americans having already cast ballots.

Trump and the Republican National Committee raised some \$247.8 million in September, his campaign manager said on Twitter, well behind the \$383 million haul of Biden and the Democratic Party.

Speaking to a crowd of seniors at an indoor event in Fort Myers, Florida, Trump said: "I will protect you, I will defend you, and I will fight for you with every ounce of energy and conviction that I have."
 He also expressed some uncharacteristic empathy for those

who had lost family members in the coronavirus pandemic.

"My heart breaks for every grieving family that has lost a precious loved one. I feel their anguish. I mourn their loss. I feel their pain," Trump said.

Biden has shown surprising strength with senior voters, many of whom have faulted Trump for his response to the health crisis.

Trump again asserted that the country was "rounding the turn" on the outbreak, now in its eighth month, even as nine states, including Michigan, Wisconsin and North Carolina, reported record one-day increases of new infections on Thursday, according to a Reuters tally.

Explainer: 'Dueling electors' pose risk of U.S. vote deadlock Biden edges Trump in TV ratings for dueling town halls

DEAD HEAT
 A new Reuters/Ipsos poll showed Trump and Biden in a statistical dead heat in Florida, which is coveted for its 29 electoral votes.

Trump will stage a rally in Ocala, Florida, later on Friday before heading to Macon, Georgia, for an evening event.

Biden will hold a healthcare-themed event in Southfield, Michigan, another swing state, before an evening get-out-the-vote rally in Detroit

The Democrat tested negative for COVID-19 on Friday, his campaign said.

A record 22 million Americans have already voted, according to the U.S. Elections Project at the University of Florida, including 2.2 million in Florida. About 136.6 million people in total voted in the 2016 election.

Early voting began in Louisiana on Friday, following record turnout this week in Georgia, North Carolina and Texas, competitive states that could decide the election outcome.

The candidates returned to the trail after dueling town hall events replaced a presidential debate that was canceled after Trump's bout with coronavirus.

A combative Trump, sparring with moderator Savannah Guthrie on NBC, refused to condemn the conspiracy theory QAnon, reiterated his unsubstantiated assertion that the 2020 election was rife with fraud and questioned whether masks help fight the spread of COVID-19.

Biden delivered policy-heavy answers and focused his attacks on Trump's handling of the pandemic, which has killed more than 217,000 people in the United States and hammered the economy.
 Biden won the TV ratings battle between the two events, according to Nielsen ratings data.[nLN2H715V]
 Biden averaged 13.9 million viewers on Walt Disney Co's DIS.N ABC on Thursday night, CNN said. Trump pulled in 13 million across Comcast Corp's CMCSA.O NBC and the company's MSNBC and CNBC cable channels.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

10/15/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Trump Begged For Women's Votes

In the final stage of the election, the candidates of both parties are putting on their best shows for the voters.

President Trump has revealed just how desperate his political future looks at this moment.

In Johnstown, Pennsylvania, he begged women voters and said, "Suburban women, will you please like me? I saved your damned neighborhoods!"

The President knows he has a major problem with suburban voters, especially with women. In the 2016 election, he won 2% over Hillary Clinton in women voters living in the suburbs.

Two years later, in the 2018 midterm

election, Republicans lost to Democrats capturing 45% of women voters in the suburbs.

Trump has made it clear that if Biden wins, he claimed, with little subtlety, that roving gangs of Antifa supporters will invade the U.S. suburban paradises. But most women don't buy that and say their neighborhoods aren't under any particular threat.

In the White House, First Lady Melania Trump detailed her experience battling COVID-19 which she tested positive for two weeks ago. She has now tested negative for the virus. She said she had body aches, cough, headaches and was extremely tired. She chose a more natural health route relying more on



vitamins and health food and did not take a cocktail of medicines.

We are also very glad that both the President and First Lady have already tested negative. The election is only less than three weeks away.

We still urge the Congress and the White House to reach agreement and approve the Stimulus Package which millions of people are waiting on for survival.



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BUSINESS

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QuickCheck Of COVID-19 Headlines

Fauci Warns U.S. Needs To 'Hunker Down' For Fall, Winter: 'It's Not Going To Be Easy'



Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert, warned Thursday that the U.S. should prepare for a difficult few months in the fight against COVID-19 as flu season approaches.

"We need to hunker down and get through this fall and winter because it's not going to be easy," Fauci said during a panel discussion with doctors from Harvard Medical School. Fauci went on to warn against underestimating the pandemic's potential to cause continued destruction. Fauci, who was one of the world's leading AIDS researchers in the 1980s, compared the coronavirus pandemic to the early days of HIV when the epidemic started with a few gay men to decades later with millions of deaths and infections.

"We've been through this before," he said. "Don't ever, ever underestimate the potential of the pandemic. And don't try and look at the rosy side of things."

His comments come after tapes released Wednesday by journalist Bob Woodward revealed that President Trump admitted in an interview to purposely downplaying the pandemic in the early months of the virus because he didn't want to "create a

panic." During Thursday's panel, Fauci added that vaccine trials are "progressing very well" and repeated his prediction that one will likely be available by the end of the year or by early 2021. Fauci also reiterated that different U.S. cities should expect to see post-Labor Day surges, with the expert saying last week that the country was heading into the fall with an "unacceptably high" level of COVID-19 cases.

"We're right around 40,000 new cases, that's an unacceptably high baseline," Fauci said at the time. "We've got to get it down, I'd like to see it 10,000 or less, hopefully less." (Courtesy thehill.com)

Related
Researchers begin clinical trials examining blood thinners as coronavirus treatment



U.S. researchers are beginning two clinical

trials examining the use of blood thinners to treat COVID-19, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced Thursday. (Courtesy Getty Images)

One study will focus on people who were hospitalized for COVID-19 and the other will focus on those who were infected, but not hospitalized. The studies are funded through President Trump's "Operation Warp Speed," which seeks to accelerate COVID-19 treatments and vaccines. A third study that will start at a later date will test blood thinners on people who have recovered and no longer test positive for the coronavirus to see if it affects their chances of developing blood clots after recovery.

NIH officials told reporters in a conference call Thursday that they anticipate the studies will be completed within "months not years," Bloomberg reported. Doctors have used anticoagulants in various ways in the past, but the studies will give them "a clear sense what is the most beneficial way" to use the drug, according to NIH. "There is currently no standard of care for anticoagulation in hospitalized COVID-19 patients, and there is a desperate need for clinical evidence to guide practice," NIH Director Francis Collins said in a statement. "Conducting trials using multiple existing networks of research sites provides the scale and speed that will get us answers faster." (Courtesy thehill.com)

China starts testing nasal spray coronavirus vaccine

The spray vaccine was co-developed by researchers at Xiamen University and Hong Kong University with the aid of vaccine maker Beijing Wantai Biological Pharmacy Enterprise, Bloomberg reported.

Previously, the intranasal spray method has been used to administer flu vaccines for people seeking an alternative to injections.

The latest vaccine marks the 10th candidate from China to enter human trials.

The announcement comes as the U.K.-headquartered company AstraZeneca was forced to pause late-stage human trials of a potential coronavirus vaccine after a spinal cord illness was detected in a

patient who received the shot.



China on Wednesday approved the first phase of human testing for a nasal spray vaccine, the first trial vaccine for the coronavirus that does not require a needle injection.

Advanced Chinese vaccine developers such as CanSino Biologics and state-operated China National Biotec Group have reassured their product's efficacy amid setbacks experienced by AstraZeneca.

CanSino said its shot has been safe in trials and has not caused severe side effects. An obstacle CanSino faces, however, is getting other nations to allow trials abroad. Critics are skeptical about the Chinese-made vaccine because it allegedly triggers fewer antibodies than other products currently under trial analysis, Reuters reported.

Zhu Tao, CanSino's co-founder and chief scientific officer, defended the company's vaccine against criticism, saying last week that the variation in antibody readings was due to different measuring methods. (Courtesy thehill.com)

Study: We're numbing to the coronavirus

Social media interactions on stories about coronavirus



Data: Newswhip; Chart: Axios Visuals
We're over COVID even if it isn't over us.

Why it matters: Six months into the pandemic, online engagement around coronavirus stories has dropped off markedly and continues to reach new lows even as

the pandemic continues, according to data from NewsWhip provided exclusively to Axios.



Dr. Pratik Doshi, emergency medicine physician affiliated with Memorial Hermann - Texas Medical Center and attending doctor in the hospital's intensive-care unit takes a look at a COVID-19 patient through a clear sliding door on Thursday, July 2, 2020, in Houston. (Photo/Marie D. De Jesús, Houston Chronicle / Staff Photographer)

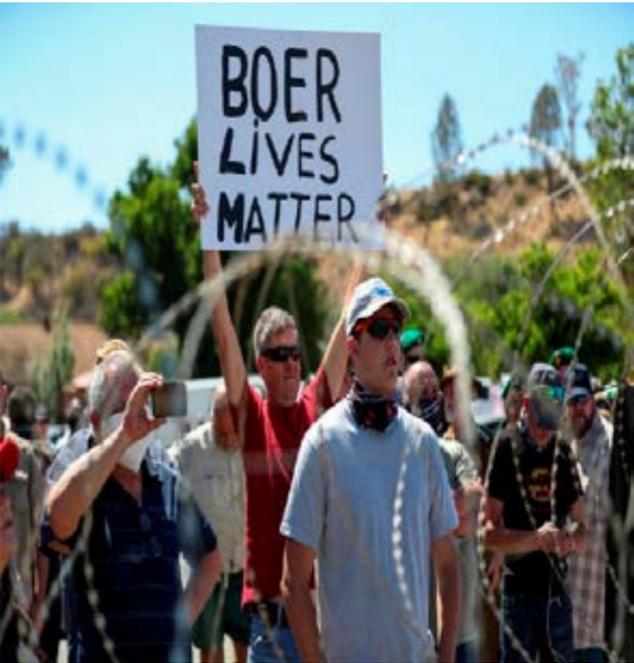
Houston region: In the Houston region, cases increased by 1,132 to 163,701 in total while deaths increased by 34 to 3,171 in total. Harris County reported it now has 113,504 cases total, an increase of 742. The state's positive test rate increased from 7.58 percent to 7.77 percent, while the rolling average of viral tests stands at 42,536 per day.

By the numbers: Interactions (likes, comments, shares) on stories about the coronavirus have fallen 88% since March, 62% since July and 36% even from the August average.

• Google searches for the coronavirus have descended from a peak in mid-March and are now roughly where they were on Feb. 25 — well before the virus upended life the the U.S. — according to Google Trends data.

Between the lines: Even as the virus itself began to spread largely unchecked across almost the entire country in late June, the uptick in engagement was modest — another sign that Americans had gotten used to the virus. (Courtesy axios.com)

Editor's Choice



A man holds a sign as he stands behind a barbed wire, near the Senekal magistrate's court where two suspects in the murder of Brendin Horner are to make an appearance, in Free State province, South Africa. REUTERS/Siphiwe Sibeko



Detained Filipino activist Reina Mae Nasino holds a flower during the burial of her three-month-old baby River, who died while she was in jail, in Manila North Cemetery, Philippines. REUTERS/Eloisa Lopez



Passengers wearing protective face masks travel on a bus, as Italy adopts new restrictions aimed at curbing a surge in coronavirus infections, in Rome, October 15. REUTERS/Yara Nardi



President Trump touches his nose part during a live one-hour NBC News town hall forum with a group of Florida voters in Miami, Florida. REUTERS/Carlos Barria



A French Bulldog named Nord Boss stands with his skateboard at a skatepark in the Sokolniki Park in Moscow, Russia. REUTERS/Evgenia Novozhenina



Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden looks down from his seat while wearing a protective face mask, ahead of an ABC Town Hall event at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. REUTERS/Tom Brenner



Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel coughs into her elbow during a post-EU summit news conference at the European Council building in Brussels, Belgium. Kenzo Tribouillard/Pool via REUTERS



Anti-eviction protesters scuffle with police to prevent eviction of a family from their home at Las Ramblas in Barcelona, Spain. REUTERS/Nacho Doce

Herd Immunity To Coronavirus May Have Been Reached In New York And California, Scientist Claims



Herd immunity to the virus may now be a reality for some Americans, per scientist in Israel.

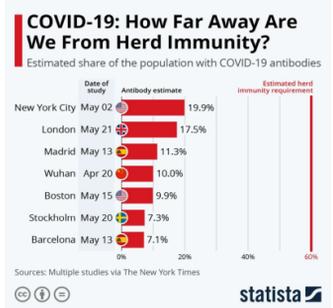
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

NEW YORK — While the wait for a coronavirus vaccine continues across the globe, one scientist believes that herd immunity to the virus is now a reality for some Americans.

One recent study shows that number may actually be even lower at just 43%. Professor Last is using what's known as the SIR Model of Infection Dynamics for his analysis of the coronavirus.

Herd immunity, or the idea that if enough people become infected with COVID-19 it will lead to immunity on a wide scale, is seen as a possible solution to the pandemic.

Herd immunity by the numbers It's believed that 60% of a population must have been infected to reach herd immunity.



If his numbers hold up, the state's reproduction rate at the time would be 1.14. Since then, the state continues to report a consistent decrease in coronavirus cases.

"In California, it appears that herd immunity was reached around July 15 with slightly more than 10% of their population (4.05 million) being infected," he says in a media release.

"We cannot know the actual number of cases of infection unless we test the entire population every day. Initial serological tests conducted in Israel indicate the ratio of confirmed cases to actual cases is about 1:10.

Still, Last doesn't want officials to ease up yet on restrictions, including social distancing and mask mandates. "We are heading in the right direction, but it is important not to relax our restrictions or get overconfident," he warns.



International Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Medicine (AIME) on August 26.

Related High Blood Pressure Meds May Create 'Much Lower Risk' Of COVID-19 Complications

NORWICH, United Kingdom — The coronavirus pandemic is causing extra concern for many people with high blood pressure and heart disease. Though these patients are at higher risk, a new study reveals their medications may be doing more good than realized.

zyme inhibitors (ACEi) and Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARB) both reduce the chances of a severe COVID-19 illness in patients with high blood pressure.

"We know that patients with cardiovascular diseases are at particular risk of severe Covid-19 infection. But at the start of the pandemic, there was concern that specific medications for high blood pressure could be linked with worse outcomes for Covid-19 patients," Dr. Vassilios Vassiliou says in a university release.

"On the contrary, we found that there was a significantly lower risk of death and critical outcomes, so they might in fact have a protective role — particularly in patients with hypertension."

Good news for high blood pressure patients during pandemic

The study compares COVID-19 patients taking ACEi and ARB medications to those not taking them. Researchers focus on those taken to intensive care units, placed on ventilators, and fatalities during the pandemic.

Vassiliou reveals that a third of coronavirus patients with high blood pressure and a quarter of all patients are on ACEi or ARBs. These patients suffer from a number of conditions including cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes. Their risk of COVID-19 infection is high.

"The really important thing that we showed was that there is no evidence that these medications might increase the severity of COVID-19 or risk of death," the lead researcher explains. "COVID-19 patients with high blood pressure who were taking ACEi/ARB medications were 0.67 times less likely to have a critical or fatal outcome than those not taking these medications."

Study authors say this is a major revelation that could provide good news for high blood pressure patients if there is a second wave in the pandemic.

"Our research provides substantial evidence to recommend continued use of these medications if the patients were taking them already," Vassiliou adds. "However, we are not able to address whether starting such tablets acutely in patients with Covid-19 might improve their prognosis, as the mechanism of action might be different."



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