

Update on
**COVID-19 in children
and adolescents**

THE LATEST ON THE COVID-19 GLOBAL SITUATION &
HOW COVID-19 IS AFFECTING CHILDREN

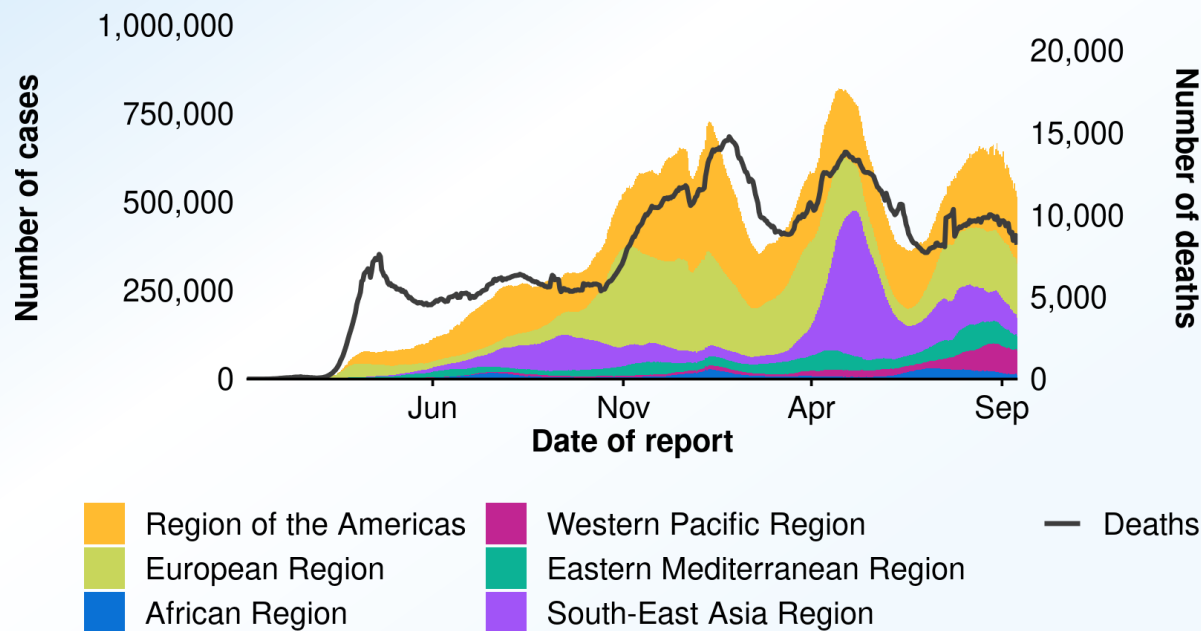
Overview

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Current global situation

CASES REPORTED TO WHO AS OF 29 SEPTEMBER 2021

- Cases: > 232 million
- Deaths: > 4.7 million



data smoothed with 7-day moving average

** Data are incomplete for the current week. Cases depicted by bars; deaths depicted by line*



CHECK OUT THE LATEST GLOBAL SITUATION

[WHO](#)
[Coronavirus](#)
[Disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
[Dashboard](#)

Reported COVID-19 cases and deaths in children and adolescents are low

- There are fewer reported cases and deaths from COVID-19 among children and adolescents as compared to adults

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases and deaths according to age



Data as reported to WHO

[Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 14 September 2021](#)

The proportion of global deaths among children, adolescents and young adults is very low

- Children under the age of five represent the smallest proportion of cases among individuals up to 24 years old
- Older adolescents and young adults represent a higher proportion of global cases
- Deaths per different age groups up to 24 years old represents **less than 0.5%** of the proportion of global deaths

Table 1. Global epidemiological overview on children, adolescents and young adults

Age group	Proportion (%) to global cases	Proportion (%) to global deaths
<5 years	1.8	0.1
5 to 14 years	6.2	0.1
15 to 24 years	14.3	0.4

Data reported to WHO from 30 December 2019 to 6 September 2021

[Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 14 September 2021](#)

Symptoms of COVID-19 in children and adolescents are usually milder than in adults

- Children and adolescents usually have fewer and milder symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 infection than adults and are less likely than adults to experience severe COVID-19
- However, children and adolescents can experience prolonged clinical symptoms (known as post COVID-19 condition)*
- Rarely, children may develop severe disease like Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) also known as Pediatric Inflammatory Multisystem syndrome (PIMS-TS) associated with SARS-CoV2
 - PIMS-TS is a rare inflammatory condition with persistent fever
 - Occurs 2-4 weeks after onset of COVID-19; most children recover with treatment

*the frequency and characteristics of these are still under investigation

<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update-on-covid-19---14-september-2021>



Variants of concern such as Delta and children

- Delta spreads more efficiently across all age groups but there is no evidence so far that it favors certain age-groups over others
- The relative transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2 at different ages remains uncertain
- The severity of disease in children and adolescents caused by SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern, including delta is still being investigated



Photo: india.com

Young children may be less susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection

Susceptibility refers to how easily a person can become infected after being exposed by SARS-CoV-2

- The risk of becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2 depends on a combination of factors
 - biological factors of the host (age, underlying health conditions)
 - biological properties of the virus
 - environmental factors associated with exposure (going to work, to school etc.)
 - exposure intensity (level of community transmission and adherence to public health and social measures)
- Younger children (<10 years) may be less susceptible than adolescents and adults
- SARS-CoV-2 seroprevalence in adolescents may be similar to adults
- However, the relationship between age and susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection requires further investigation

[Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 14 September 2021](#)

Young children can transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others but may be less infectious

- Children and adolescents of all ages become infected and may transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others
- SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA shedding in the respiratory track appears similar in children, adolescents and adults
- However, there is some evidence that young children may be less infectious than adolescents and adults
- SARS-CoV-2 transmission in schools reflects the transmission in the surrounding community and children in school do not appear to be exposed to higher risks of infection compared to when not in school when mitigation measures are in place



Photo: UNICEF

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33542262/>

<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update-on-covid-19---14-september-2021>

Children should continue to implement public health and social measures

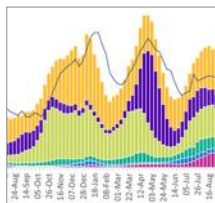
- Public health and social measures should continue to be implemented for all ages, including in schools:
 - physical distancing when appropriate
 - cleaning hands
 - coughing into a bent elbow or a tissue
 - adequate ventilation in indoor settings
 - masks where recommended (for older children and adolescents)*

* https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-IPC_Masks-Children-2020.1



Photo: UNICEF

Resources



[Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 14 September 2021](#)

In this edition: SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern (VOCs) Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta which include updates on the geographic distribution of VOCs in children and adolescents.



[Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19](#)

This Annex applies to educational settings for children under the age of 18 years and outlines key recommendations that can be tailored to schools and extracurricular activities.



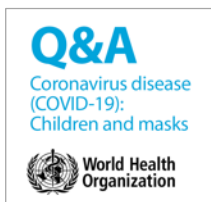
[Advice on the use of masks for children in the community in the context of COVID-19](#)

Guidance for decision makers, public and child health professionals to inform policy on the use of masks for children in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



[Checklist to support schools re-opening and preparation for COVID-19 resurgences or similar public health crises](#)

The checklist aims to comply with the public health measures outlined in the recently-updated Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19.



[Q&A: Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Children and masks](#)

Questions answered on the use of masks for children in the community in the context of COVID-19.



[New WHO website COVID-19 and education institutions](#)

The page provides a directory of guidelines and resources from WHO and other UN agencies related to COVID-19 and educational institutions..

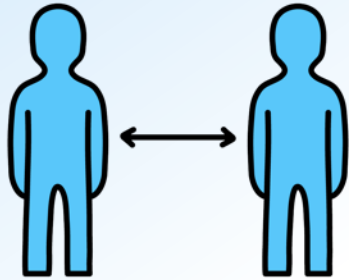


[Education: From disruption to recovery \(unesco.org\)](#)

Global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19.

COVID-19 protective measures

Protect yourself & others



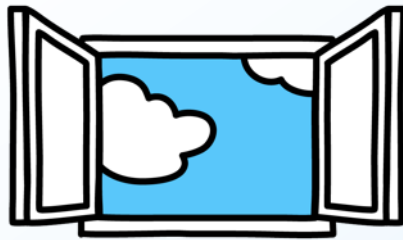
Keep your distance



Wash your hands frequently



Cough & sneeze into your elbow



Ventilate or open windows



Wear a mask

Acknowledgements

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EPI•WIN

infodemic
MANAGEMENT

www.who.int/epi-win