

Three Minute Read™

Insights from the Healing American Healthcare Coalition™

July 2021-1



From the Editor: The Biden Administration's vaccination drive appears to be working with Covid-19 deaths averaging less than 300/day, primarily among the unvaccinated. The articles summarized in this issue discuss the threat posed by the Delta variant, Covid long-haulers and the alarming pandemic-provoked decline in American life expectancy. To access each article, just click on the headline.



[Delta COVID-19 variant doubles risk of hospitalization compared to Alpha strain, Scottish study finds](#), by

Alexandria Hein, Fox News, 6/14/21

TMR Topline™ - The study published 6/14 in [The Lancet](#). Reported that the Delta variant (B.1.617.2) had become the dominant strain in Scotland and was about twice as likely to result in hospitalization than the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7). Conducted from 4/1-6/6/21, the study found that the Delta variant was found mainly in younger, more affluent groups. Fortunately, both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines cut risk of infection and hospitalization due to the Delta variant, but protection against infection fell as compared with the Alpha variant.



[WHO says delta is the fastest and fittest Covid variant and will 'pick off' most vulnerable](#), by Berkeley

Lovelace, Jr., CNBC, 6/22/21

TMR Topline™ - First identified in India, the Delta variant

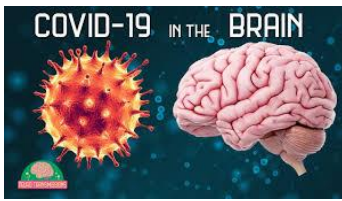
of the coronavirus has spread to 92 countries, replacing the highly contagious Alpha variant that swept across Europe and later the U.S. earlier this year. According to Dr. Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO's health emergencies program, *"This particular delta variant is faster, it is fitter, it will pick off the more vulnerable more efficiently than previous variants."* Ryan said world leaders and public health officials can help defend the most vulnerable through the donation and distribution of Covid vaccines. He described the fact that we haven't as *"a catastrophic moral failure at a global level."* The Biden administration is donating 55 million vaccine doses. Most will be distributed through COVAX, the WHO-backed immunization program.



[Nearly all COVID deaths in US are now among unvaccinated](#), by Carla K. Johnson and Mike Stobbe, Associated Press, 6/24/21

TMR Topline™ - AP's analysis of available government data from May shows that *"breakthrough"* infections in fully vaccinated people accounted for fewer than 1,200 of more than 853,000 Covid-19 hospitalizations (0.14%). About 150 of May's more than 18,000 Covid-19 deaths were in fully vaccinated people. Deaths in the U.S. have plummeted from a peak of more than 3,400/day on average in mid-January, to less than 300/day now. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said during Tuesday's White House coronavirus briefing that the vaccine is so effective that *"nearly every death, especially among adults, due to Covid-19, is, at this point, entirely preventable."* She called such deaths *"particularly tragic."* Experts predict that preventable deaths will continue with unvaccinated pockets of the nation having outbreaks next fall and winter. The University of Washington's modeling suggests the US will hit 1,000 deaths per day next year.

TMR Take – Heed the doctors lifesaving advice! If you haven't already done so, **get vaccinated!** The life you save may be your own.



[New Covid study hints at long-term loss of brain tissue, Dr. Scott Gottlieb warns](#), by Emily DiCiccio, CNBC, 6/17/21

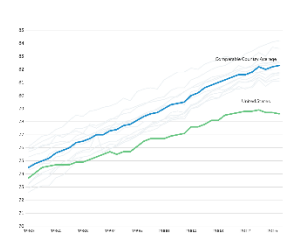
TMR Topline™ - Citing a [new study from the United Kingdom](#), former FDA Director Dr. Scott Gottlieb warned about the potential for long-term brain loss post-Covid, stating *"the study suggests that there could be some long-term loss of brain tissue from Covid, and that would have some long-term consequences."* The U.K. study examined brain imaging before and after a coronavirus infection and looked specifically at the potential effect on the nervous system. Gottlieb said that the destruction of brain tissue could explain why Covid patients lost their sense of smell.



[CDC's new guidance for treating COVID-19 long-haulers warns against relying on labs, imaging results](#)

[alone](#), by Dave Muoio, Fierce Healthcare, 6/17/21
TMR Topline™ - The CDC released interim guidance for healthcare providers treating patients with post-Covid conditions. Often referred to as *"long Covid,"* these are a wide range of physical and mental health issues that sometimes persist four or more weeks after a Covid-19 infection. These include heart palpitations, cognitive impairment, insomnia, diarrhea and post-exertional malaise, a worsening of symptoms following physical or mental exertion. According to the CDC, many patients' post-COVID conditions can be managed by primary care providers. A study by [FAIR Health](#) found that more than 23% of patients who had Covid-19 experienced one or more post-Covid conditions 30 days after their initial diagnosis. Pain, breathing difficulties, hyperlipidemia, malaise and fatigue and hypertension were the five most common post-COVID conditions, and were more common among females than males. The study also found a higher risk of mortality after acute treatment.

TMR Take – For nearly one of four Covid survivors, beating the infection is not the end of the battle. For some, the symptoms continue to persist and may last for years. Preventing the next pandemic should be the #1 priority on America's public health agenda.



[The Pandemic Led To The Biggest Drop In U.S. Life Expectancy Since WWII, Study Finds](#), by Allison Aubrey, NPR, 6/23/21

TMR Topline™ - According to [a new study](#) published in the *British Medical Journal*, life expectancy in the U.S. has declined from 78.9 years in 2014 to 76.9 years at 2020 year end. African Americans and Hispanic Americans were especially hard hit with declines of 3.3 and 3.9 years, respectively. Study author Stephen Woolf of the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine stated *"We have not seen a decrease like this since World War II. It's a horrific decrease in life expectancy,"* further noting that disruptions in behavioral health and chronic disease management contributed to the decline. [Lesley Curtis](#), chair of the Department of Population Health Sciences at Duke University School of Medicine said *"It is impossible to look at these findings and not see a reflection of the systemic racism in the U.S."* Dr. Richard Besser, president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation said *"This study further destroys the myth that the United States is the healthiest place in the world to live. For example, life expectancy in Princeton, NJ—a predominantly White community—is 14 years higher than Trenton, NJ, a predominantly Black and Latino city only 14 miles away."*

The U.S. has been losing ground compared with other wealthy countries, said [Magali Barbieri](#) of the University of California, Berkeley, in an editorial published alongside the new study. The decline in life expectancy was only 0.22 years in a peer group of 16 high income countries. Woolf concluded *"The U.S. has some of the best hospitals and some of the greatest scientists. But other countries do far better in getting quality medical care to their population. We have big gaps in getting care to people who need it most, when they need it most."*

TMR Take – For vaccinated Americans, the Covid-19 pandemic appears under control, but what a toll it has taken, especially among communities of color. At 12/31/20, 343,818 Americans had perished; more than 260,000 have died since then so U.S. life expectancy will continue to plummet. Your Editor has often stated that America has the most thoroughly trained physicians and best-equipped hospitals in the world but does not deliver health to its population. That has to change!