

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report



WHO Office - Riyadh

Weekly Report No. 254 - Saudi Arabia

2-8 September, 2021

	Global		Eastern Mediterranean Region	
	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths
Current	221,648,869	4,582,338	15,024,157	274,211
Last Week	217,558,771	4,517,240	14,669,933	267,499

Saudi Arabia

	Confirmed Cases	Recovered Cases	Deaths	Active Cases	Critical Cases	PCR Tests
Total	545,624	534,639	8,598	2,387	589	27,865,314
in 7 days						
1/9/2021	177	279	8	2,821	824	55,742
2/9/2021	174	202	5	2,788	803	59,355
3/9/2021	138	211	7	2,708	750	48,141
4/9/2021	120	219	7	2,602	723	47,732
5/9/2021	124	217	6	2,503	689	47,217
6/9/2021	138	172	6	2,463	636	52,467
7/9/2021	119	188	7	2,387	589	49,348

Vaccination in KSA

Total of Doses Administered	Total of 1 Dose	Total of 2 Doses
39 million	23 million	16 million

HIGHLIGHTS

- Regions with the highest new infections over the past 7 days: Riyadh (307), Makkah (168), Eastern (98), Jazan (72), Madinah (70), Al Qassim (63), Asir (53), and Najran (45).
- Saudi Arabia ends travel suspension from UAE, South Africa and Argentina, starting from 11 a.m. on Wednesday, September 8.
- MoH: Third dose will be given to those in high-risk groups, Switching between the approved coronavirus vaccines is a safe and effective method.
- Only fully vaccinated people will be allowed to participate in person in the Grand Mosque's lectures, after suspension for nearly a year and a half due to COVID-19.
- The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah raises the daily capacity to 70,000 pilgrims daily.
- No mosque has been closed during the last 4 days, as no case of coronavirus infection was detected.
- Ministry of Interior: 23,280 is the total number of violations of COVID-19 precautionary measures from 29/8 - 4/9/2021, Riyadh recorded the highest while Najran was the lowest.
- Immunization rates in universities increased to 96% for the first dose and 79% for the two doses.
- WHO publishes guidance for surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants: Interim guidance, 9 August 2021, see link
- WHO launches interim guidance on critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19, see link.
- WHO publishes digital documentation of COVID-19 certificates: vaccination status: technical specifications and implementation guidance, see link.
- WHO publishes holding gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO policy brief, see link.
- WHO publishes guidance on utilization of COVID-19 vaccines before the date of expiry, see link.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- **MoH COVID-19 updates:** <https://twitter.com/saudimoh>
- **WHO's COVID-19 global situation reports:** <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>
- **WHO's COVID-19 dashboard:** <https://covid19.who.int/>
- **MoH COVID-19 dashboard:** <https://covid19.my.gov.sa/ar/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Guidance for surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants:** https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO_2019-nCoV_surveillance_variants
- **Critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19:** <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/critical-preparedness-readiness-and-response-actions-for-covid-19>
- **Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates: Vaccination Status:** https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Digital_certificates-vaccination-technical_briefing-2021.1
- **Holding gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO policy brief:** <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>
- **Guidance on utilization of COVID-19 vaccines before the date of expiry** <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/guidance-on-utilization-of-covid-19-vaccines-before-the-date-of-expiry>

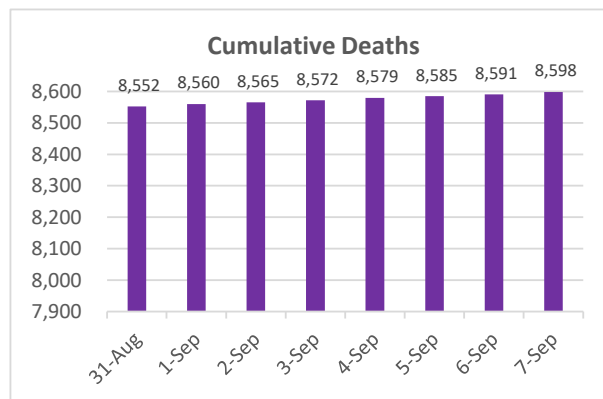
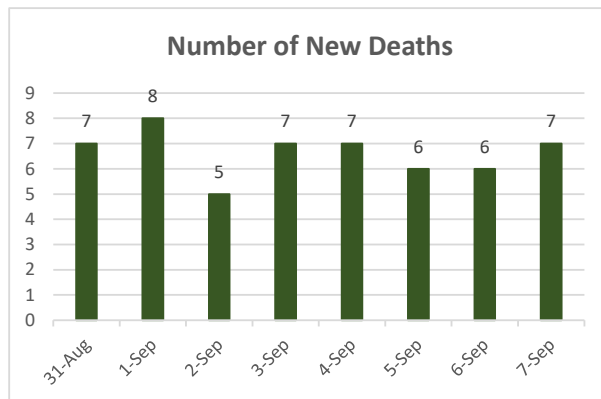
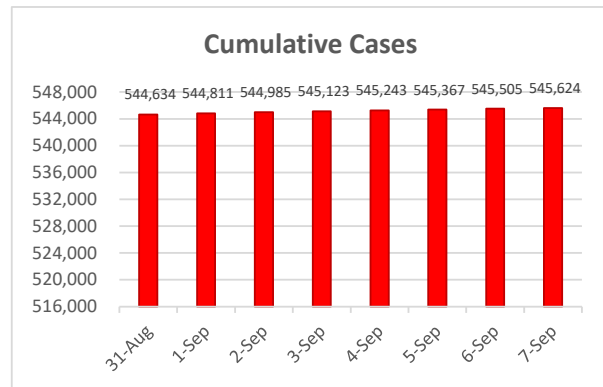
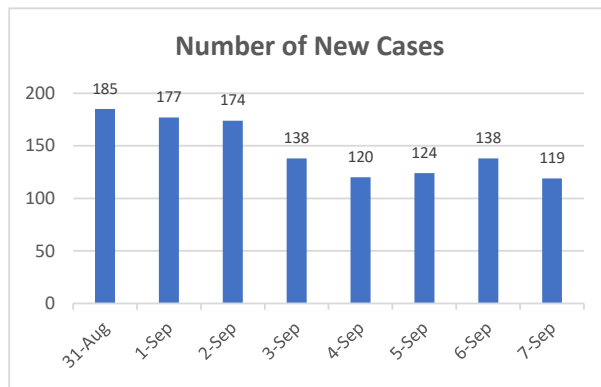
IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

Update on COVID-19 Variants of Interest and Variants of Concern

WHO, in collaboration with national authorities routinely assesses if variants of SARS-CoV-2 alter transmission or disease characteristics, or impact vaccine, therapeutics, diagnostics or effectiveness of public health and social measures applied by national authorities to control disease spread. "Signals" of potential Variants of Concern (VOCs) or Variants of Interest (VOIs) are detected and assessed based on the risk posed to global public health.

As surveillance activities to detect SARS-CoV-2 variants are strengthened at national and subnational levels, including through the expansion of genomic sequencing capacities, the number of countries reporting VOCs continues to increase.

Based on the latest round of assessments, variant B.1.621 was classified as a VOI on 30 August 2021 and given the WHO label "Mu". The Mu variant has a constellation of mutations that indicate potential properties of immune escape. Preliminary data show a reduction in neutralization capacity of convalescent and vaccinee sera similar to that seen for the Beta variant, but this needs to be confirmed by further studies. Since its first identification in Colombia in January 2021, there have been a few sporadic reports of cases of the Mu variant and some larger outbreaks have been reported from other countries in South America and in Europe. Although the global prevalence of the Mu variant among sequenced cases has declined and is currently below 0.1%, the prevalence in Colombia (39%) and Ecuador (13%) has consistently increased. More studies are required to understand the characteristics of this variant.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

- The National Focal Person for COVID-19 is Dr Abdullah Asiri, Assistant Deputy for Preventive Health, MoH, email: AbdullahM.Asiri@moh.gov.sa