

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report



WHO Office - Riyadh

Weekly Report No. 253 - Saudi Arabia

26 August - 1 September, 2021

	Global		Eastern Mediterranean Region	
	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths
Current	217,558,771	4,517,240	14,669,933	267,499
Last Week	213,050,725	4,448,352	14,243,635	259,857

Saudi Arabia

	Confirmed Cases	Recovered Cases	Deaths	Active Cases	Critical Cases	PCR Tests
Total	544,634	533,151	8,552	2,931	867	27,505,312
in 7 days						
25/8/2021	290	535	7	3,889	1,061	65,815
26/8/2021	244	407	8	3,718	1,020	63,288
27/8/2021	234	409	6	3,537	978	52,889
28/8/2021	208	393	6	3,346	952	50,374
29/8/2021	221	386	7	3,174	927	54,231
30/8/2021	224	338	6	3,054	907	61,961
31/8/2021	185	301	7	2,931	867	59,531

Vaccination in KSA

Total of Doses Administered	Total of 1 Dose	Total of 2 Doses
37 million	22 million	15 million

HIGHLIGHTS

- Regions with the highest new infections over the past 7 days: Riyadh (449), Makkah (273), Eastern (156), Jazan (136), Al Qassim (126), Asir (107), Madinah (101), and Najran (79).
- students from the intermediate and secondary levels, who are fully vaccinated, resumed the in-person education at public, private and foreign schools across the Kingdom. Attendance during the first week exceeded 87% during the first week.
- The Saudi Food and Drug Authority confirms Moderna's vaccine safety in Saudi Arabia.
- Ministry of Education allowed private school teachers who are outside Kingdom to continue teaching remotely.
- Saudi Airline increases seating capacity for domestic flights by 52%. GACA has cancelled social distancing protocol on domestic flights starting September 1st in tandem with allowing only vaccinated people with two doses to travel.
- Ministry of Hajj announces that the number of Ummra visitors allowed from abroad has now returned to pre-corona levels.
- Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development: Immunized employees in the public sector is 97% and the private sector is 96%.
- Ministry of Interior: 23,837 is the total number of violations of COVID-19 precautionary measures from 22 - 28 August, Riyadh recorded the highest while Najran was the lowest.
- Tawakkalna application allows priority booking of vaccination appointments for students and education staff.
- WHO publishes guidance for surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants: Interim guidance, 9 August 2021, see link
- WHO launches health financing for the COVID-19 response, 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
- **Health financing for the COVID-19 response:** <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240030527>
- **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>

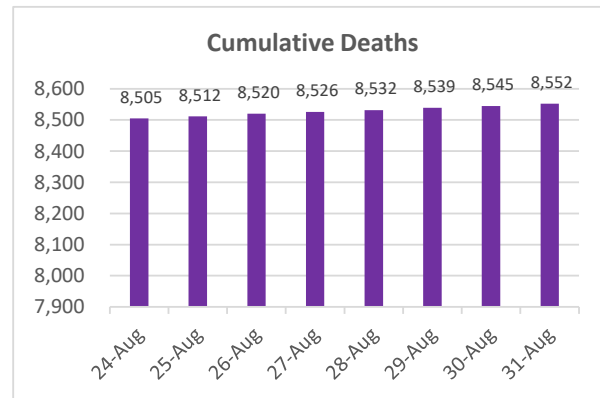
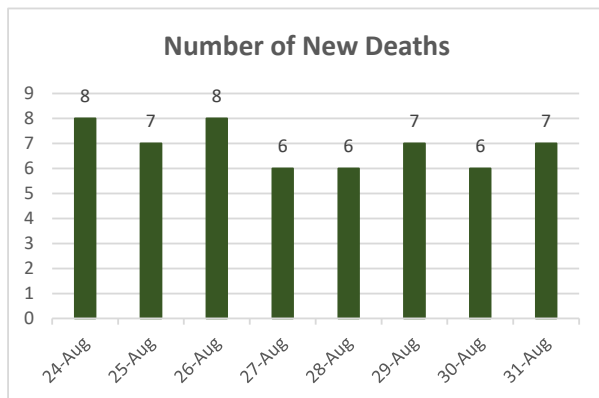
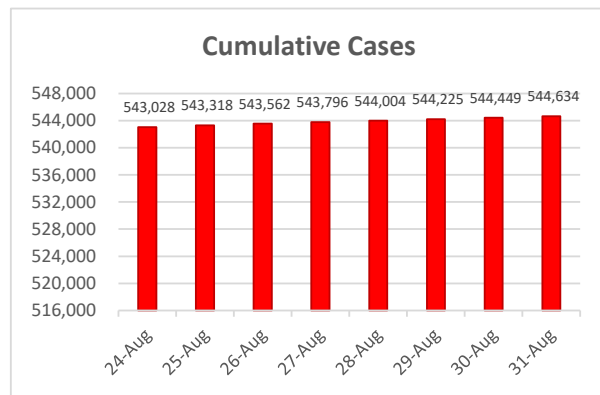
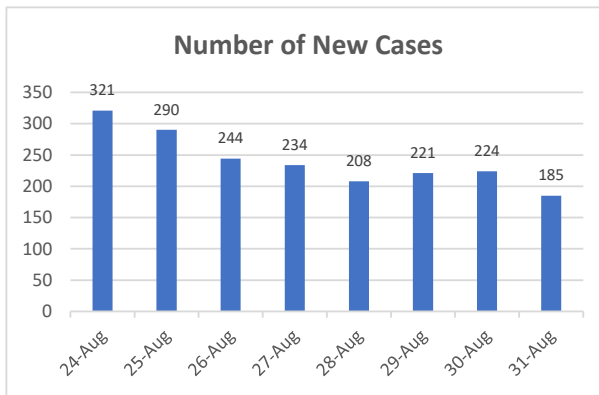
IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

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