Covid in Context

A factual leaflet adding useful context around Covid-19

References at covid-context.com

Comparing annual death rates over the last 30 years, 2020 only ranks 19th highest for England and Wales.[1]

Office for National Statistics provisional data – January 2021

The average age of a Covid-19 death was reportedly just above average life expectancy (82.4 years vs 81.1) in England and Wales.[2]

Reported November 2020

For deaths involving Covid-19, the average number of pre-existing conditions was more than 2, between March and June 2020 in England and Wales.[3]

Office for National Statistics

The common swab test (PCR test) does not detect a living, infectious and transmissible virus, only fragments of its genetic material which can remain in the body from a past dead infection.[4]

Intense government restrictions do not significantly reduce death rates compared to relaxed approaches, according to research.[5]

Frontiers and The European Journal of Clinical Investigation

Research shows lockdown could cost more lives than Covid-19, claiming the equivalent of over 500,000 lives overall due to economic damage.[6]

Evidence submission to Parliament

Natural immunity is as effective as vaccination, and builds herd immunity, a large study suggests.[7]

Public Health England – released 2021

Epidemiologists from Oxford, Harvard and Stanford universities have proposed an alternative to lockdowns which has been supported by hundreds of experts worldwide. This alternative focuses protection on the vulnerable while allowing the majority to sustain the economy and build herd immunity.[8]

"Across the four [UK] nations 28-50% of all COVID-related deaths occurred in care home residents" - British Geriatrics Society, November 2020.[9]

Data Flaws
Data in the 2nd half of October, showing high coronavirus incidence rate and used to justify lockdown 2, was later quietly revised to roughly half the original number.[10]

The 4000 daily death prediction, used to partly justify lockdown 2, was based on outdated data and already wrong by a factor of about 4 when presented.[11]

Covid Testing
The World Health Organisation has recently advised that PCR tests are only an *aid* for diagnosis. People who do not present symptoms should now be retested as a positive result alone does not confirm infection.[12]

Labs process swab tests differently, research in the Oxford Academic shows a number of these configurations can produce nearly 100% false positives.[13]

PCR tests are not reliable enough to force people into quarantine, an appeals court in Portugal ruled in November 2020.[14]

Lockdowns
It is unlikely the first lockdown caused the decline of the first wave, according to a study. Fatal infections seem to have already been falling before lockdown came into effect, when the lag between infection and death is accounted for. [15]

"Lockdowns do not appear to reduce deaths or flatten epidemic curves in any way" - Pandata research. No correlation could be found between restriction intensity and death rate when comparing different government responses worldwide.[16]

Social distancing across the entire population, instead of only over 70s, prolongs the pandemic and therefore costs more lives in the long run, according to research in the British Medical Journal.[17]

Despite all these facts, the chief medical officer does not expect all restrictions to be lifted in 2021 and said restrictions could even be increased next winter.[18]

Asymptomatic Spread
Real world data shows that asymptomatic spread is "very rare" according to the World Health Organisation's Covid-19 technical lead. Based on this, those with no symptoms are highly unlikely to spread the virus to others. Furthermore, a study of 10 million Wuhan citizens showed no examples of asymptomatic spread.[19]