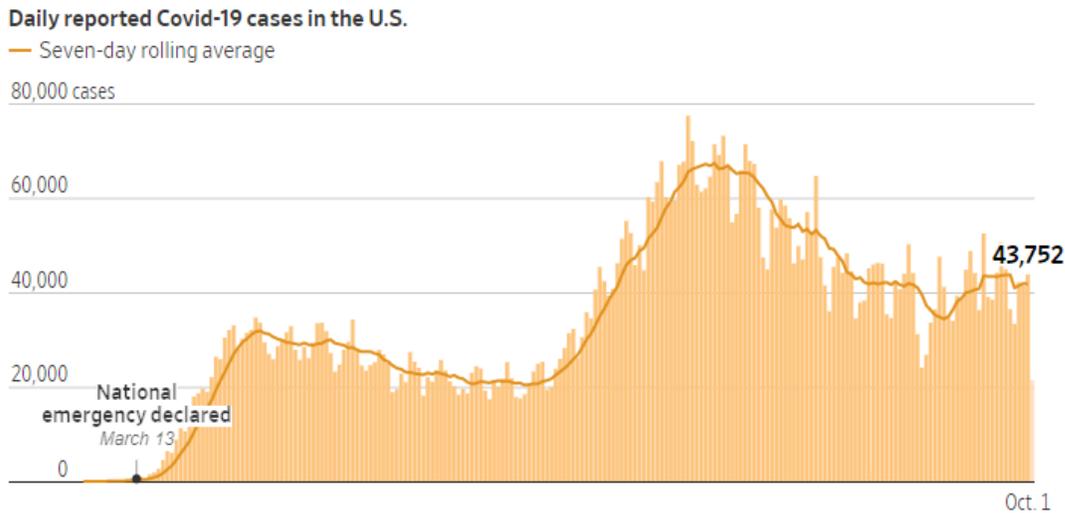


Update for Week of September 21, 2020 to the Joint Statement on COVID-19
From Lung Cancer Advocacy Groups

As of October 3, 2020, the US has had close to 7.2 million cases of COVID-19, with over 200,000 deaths. Daily reported cases of COVID-19 have been on the rise. This is not surprising due to social distancing fatigue and mask fatigue.



As the weather becomes cooler and we spend more time indoors, an upward trend in COVID-19 cases is expected. Though a lot of vaccine candidates are showing promise in clinical trials, an effective anti-SARS-CoV-2 vaccine will probably not be available for large-scale community use before the middle of 2021. Even once a vaccine becomes available, we will need close to 660 million doses over the next year or so, because the vaccine candidates furthest along in trials require two doses per person. For the near and somewhat distant future, we will continue to rely on public health measures such as washing our hands, maintaining social distancing, and wearing a mask.

As the leaves turn, the holidays begin. Different holidays present different risks – Halloween typically involves large gatherings of children and young people going door-to-door to collect candy or to party, other holidays bring loved ones together to share meals or celebrate the end of one year and the start of a new one.

Living during the pandemic does not mean we need to completely cancel our holiday celebrations. With advanced planning and maintenance of public health precautions, we can take measures to ensure a safe and COVID-19-free holiday season.

Here are some ideas for celebrating Halloween safely. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided guidelines to ensure that we have a “COVID-free” season.

1. Keep a track of community levels of COVID-19 in your area. You can find this information through your local department of health.
2. If the weather permits, try to have an outdoor gathering where ventilation is not an issue. If you are planning on having an indoor celebration, it might be a good idea to keep a door or windows open – to promote air circulation.
3. Keep the gathering as short as possible. Longer gatherings equal longer time for exposure.
4. Smaller gatherings are of course less risky than larger gatherings. Though the CDC doesn't have specific numbers to guide size of gatherings, they recommend that the size of the gathering be determined by ability to reduce or limit contact between guests (the event space), the risk of spread between guests, and state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations.
5. If your guests are attending from another state, check the COVID-19 caseload in that state. The same applies if you are planning to travel. It is always a good idea to check caseload at point of origin and destination. If you plan to drive to a holiday gathering and are able to, quarantine for 14 days before travel.
6. If you are the host, remind your guests that social distancing, hand washing, and wearing a mask are a part of the celebration .
7. The National Institutes of Health has developed a rapid COVID-19 antigen test. If you are able to access a rapid antigen test, it may be a good idea to get tested before you attend a celebration (though since these tests are less sensitive than the nasal swab PCR test and a negative test doesn't rule out an asymptomatic or presymptomatic infection).
8. Since patients with lung cancer are considered at high risk of developing complications from COVID-19, use your judgement and exercise caution when deciding whether you wish to attend a celebration – especially where you do not know a lot of the guests.

We wish everyone a safe and healthy Fall!

Resources and websites

1. [IASLC's Guide to COVID-19 and Lung Cancer](#)
2. The National Cancer Institute has a special website for COVID-19 and emergency preparedness. [COVID-19: What People with Cancer Should Know](#)
3. We are following updates provided by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and the US [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
4. Johns Hopkins [COVID-19 Resource Center](#)
5. Interactive map of [US COVID-19 cases by state](#)
6. [The One-Two Punch: Cancer And COVID-19](#) (an important perspective for cancer patients)
7. You can find information specific to your state or city or town on your health department's website.
 - Directory of state department of health [websites](#)
 - Directory of local health department [websites](#)
8. American Medical Association [resources](#) for healthcare providers.

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