

COVID Deaths – How Does the USA Currently Compare with the Rest of the World?

5 Slide Series, Volume 86-d

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The Menges Group

Strategic Health Policy & Care Coordination Consulting

Introduction and Overview

- This edition compares USA COVID death rates (per 100,000 population) with the rest of the world. The USA does not compare favorably with other countries on this critical metric. Cumulatively through July 20, the USA rate of 42.8 COVID deaths per 100,000 population is **6.6 times higher** than the corresponding rate across the rest of the world.
- This edition represents our latest attempt to contribute sound, objective information to support effective COVID policies as well as effective individual and organizational decision-making.
- Policymakers and the public need to seek out, rely on, and disseminate accurate data and recommendations from objective scientific experts and professionals to foster optimal decision-making regarding the COVID pandemic.

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COVID Death Rate Summary as of July 20

- The USA's COVID death rate is **5.3 times higher** than the worldwide figure, and **6.6 times** higher than the rest of the world's death rate.
- Out of 160 countries' COVID death rates tracked by Johns Hopkins University, the USA ranks **10th highest** as of July 20.

Jurisdiction	COVID Deaths per 100,000 Population as of July 20	USA Death Rate as Percentage of Worldwide Death Rate
USA	42.8	
Worldwide	8.0	533%
Rest of World (non-USA)	6.5	663%

Assessment of “Remainder of USA” Without the Most Severely Impacted States

- We also assessed the USA’s COVID death rate after removing the 5 states with the highest death rates.
 - We note that in comparing countries fairly, it would be inappropriate to drop off the worst-hit regions of the USA but not exclude the worst-hit regions of the other countries. However, we nonetheless wanted to assess whether the USA compares favorably if these five states were excluded.
- The collective death rate across these 45 states (plus DC) is still **3.4 times higher** than the worldwide figure and **4.2 times higher** than the rest of the world (excluding the USA).
- The remaining 45 states’ (and DC’s) collective death rate would rank 17th highest among the 160 countries rated by Johns Hopkins. The USA’s high death rate relative to other countries is by no means attributable to the particularly adverse experience in the northeastern portion of our country.
- 8 states are below the worldwide death rate (HI, AK, MT, WY, WV, OR, ID, UT).

Jurisdiction	COVID Deaths per 100,000 Population as of July 20	Death Rate as Percentage of Worldwide Death Rate as of July 20	Death Rate as Percentage of Worldwide Death Rate Excluding USA as of July 20
USA's 5 States with Highest Death Rate (NY, NJ, CT, MA, RI)	154.9	1,929%	2,399%
Rest of USA (excluding above 5 states)	27.3	340%	423%

Data Commentary

- Worldwide figures are probably understated in several countries due to shortcomings in data collection and reporting, intentional suppression/mis-representation of data, or both.
 - However, we do not envision that such data issues could possibly “explain away” the roughly six-fold differential in the US death rate—the USA is clearly experiencing a disproportionately high level of deaths.
 - Also, data shortcomings and intentionally sharing inaccurate and/or misleading information is not issues that are limited to foreign nations. Much work is needed to identify and overcome this dynamic wherever it exists.
- More broadly, the degree to which many subgroups have high COVID death rates – **not by a handful of percentage points but by a factor of two or more** – has significant policy and human behavior implications. As many public reports and previous editions of our 5 Slide Series have documented, the elderly population, black population, and males have a much higher COVID death rate than other demographic groups (within a baseline of the USA as a whole having a devastatingly high death rate).

5 Slide Series Overview

Our 5 Slide Series is typically a monthly publication whereby we briefly discuss/address a selected topic outside the confines of our client engagements. The Menges Group has a variety of datasets that we use to support our 5 Slide Series and client projects. We have moved to weekly publications during the COVID pandemic.

The international data relied upon in this edition is obtained via the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine at this website: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality>.

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