



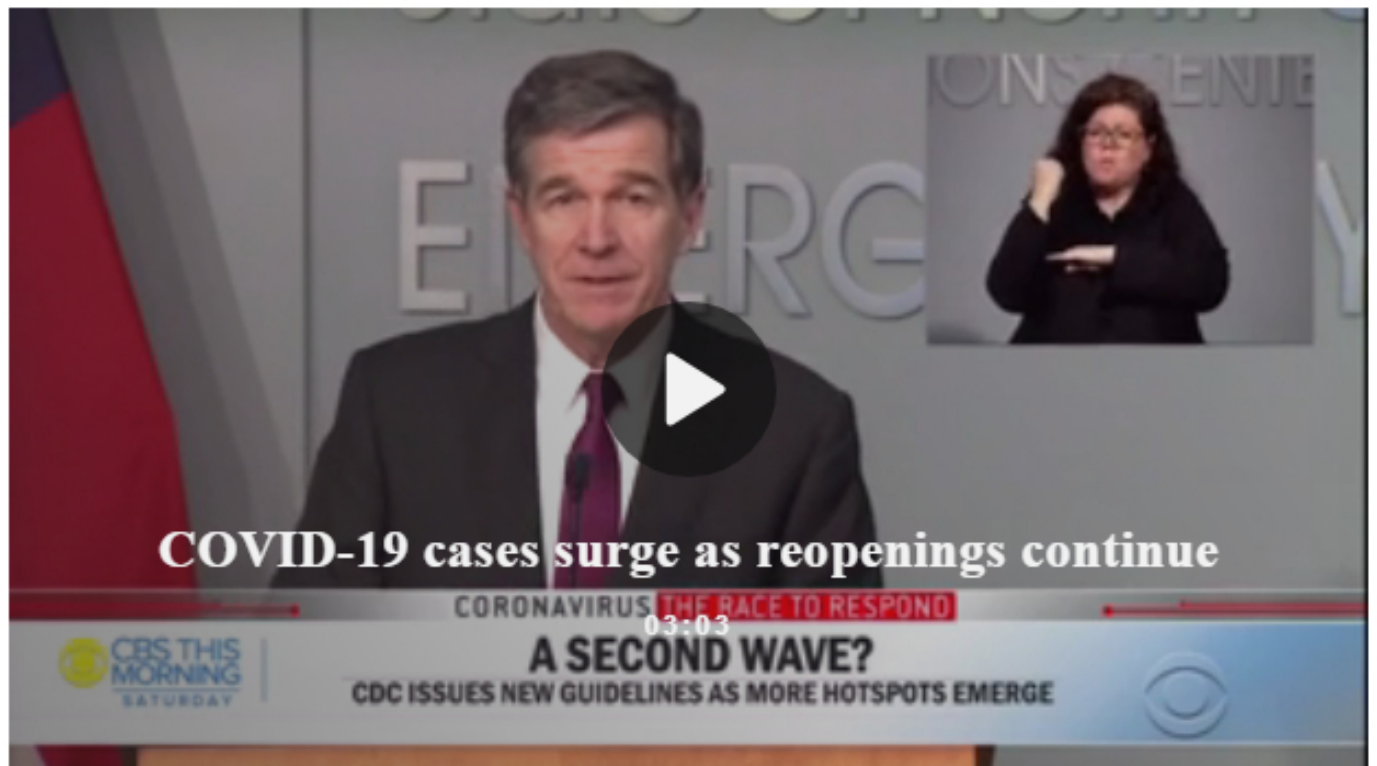


New coronavirus hotspots emerge in the South and Southwest

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There are disturbing signs that the grip of the deadly **coronavirus** pandemic is tightening in the U.S. as more than a dozen states see an uptick in COVID-19 cases. New virus hotspots are emerging in the South and Southwest, and parts of the South and West Coast are seeing their biggest spikes in cases yet, Michael George reports for "CBS This Morning: Saturday."

Some health experts say we could be seeing the impact of opening too early.

This week, South Carolina and Florida showed their highest daily number of coronavirus cases. Arizona's average daily cases nearly tripled in two weeks. And Texas had its four worst days so far for hospitalizations.

In Houston, there is a warning: "People should not take things lightly. Or assume that the virus is under control," said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner.

Texas businesses and restaurants – among the first to reopen – could become the first to shut down again.

"I want the reopening to be successful. I want the economy to be resilient," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "But I'm growing increasingly concerned that we may be approaching the precipice-- the precipice of a disaster."



Parkland Hospital employees, sitting behind windows, give verbal instructions to a man and a woman on how to self administer a COVID-19 test at a walk up facility in Dallas on June 11, 2020. / **TONY GUTIERREZ/AP**

In Arizona, there more than 1,000 new cases per day, up from fewer than 400 a day in mid-May when stay-at-home orders were eased.

"I think the question of did we open too soon is a valid one," said Frank Lovecchio, an emergency medicine doctor in the Phoenix area. He reports seeing a surge of severe cases requiring intubation.

On Friday, North Carolina's governor asked citizens of his state to help stop the

spread.

"Today is North Carolina's highest day of new cases since the pandemic started," Governor Roy Cooper said at a Friday press conference. "The numbers show that the disease is spreading and that more people need hospital care. This has to be taken seriously."

Utah and Oregon are now delaying their openings a week after cases there continue to surge.

"As I've said a zillion times: the virus makes the timelines. We don't make the timelines," said Oregon Governor Kate Brown.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention **issued new guidelines** on Friday to help people minimize everyday risk of contracting the virus. It advised people to bring their own food and drinks to cookouts, wave instead of hug, and sanitize hands after using ATMs. It also advised taking the stairs instead of hotel elevators.

The CDC projects another 26,000 deaths in the U.S. over just the next three weeks. That would bring the total to 140,000 deaths by July 4th.

There are some encouraging signs in New York, which at one point was the epicenter of the outbreak. The state now says it has the lowest transmission rate in the country. **Governor Andrew Cuomo** credits the decision to holding off on reopening.