

'Great news!' Trump hails falling coronavirus daily death counts, brushes off concerns over spike in cases

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US President Donald Trump has argued that the recent surge in coronavirus cases is explained by “massive” and ramped up screenings for the illness, while celebrating the fall in daily fatalities as “great news.”

The president took to Twitter late on Thursday night to repurpose what has been widely deemed gloomy news about the course of the pandemic, saying the case spike is, in fact, a function of expanded testing around the country.

“There is a rise in coronavirus cases because our testing is so massive and so good, far bigger and better than any other country. This is great news, but even better news is that death, and the death rate, is DOWN,” Trump said, adding: “Also, younger people, who get better much easier and faster!”

Despite the climbing daily case counts in a number of states – likely driven by a combination of reopening and weeks of crowded mass protests in hundreds of cities around the country – death figures in the US have fallen far below the peak reached in mid-April. Hospitalizations, meanwhile, have also seen a declining trend nationwide, according to CDC data, as the average age of patients also falls. For example, last week in Arizona – one of the states worst-hit by the recent spike in cases – it was reported that people aged 20 to 44 made up nearly half of the total infections, while daily hospitalizations have also seen a downward trend there.

While some data points indicate the factors driving the increase in cases are complex and multi-faceted, health experts such as Dr Anthony Fauci – a senior member of the White House coronavirus task force – have cautioned that increased testing cannot wholly account for the new wave of infections, pointing to rising positive test rates in some areas. Nonetheless, as a handful of states experience a jump in confirmed infections, some have moved to reintroduce lockdown measures in hopes of stemming the increase.

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The coronavirus has afflicted more than 2.7 million people in the US, killing just shy of 129,000, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University. Worldwide, total infections will soon surpass 11 million, with more than 521,000 fatalities.
