



A message from Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

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21 hours ago - Health

Congressional doctor predicts 70-150 million U.S. coronavirus cases

 Jonathan Swan, Alayna Treene



Photo: Aaron Lavinsky/Star Tribune via Getty Images

Congress' in-house doctor told Capitol Hill staffers at a close-door meeting this week that he expects 70-150 million people in the U.S. — roughly a third of the country — to contract the coronavirus, two sources briefed on the meeting tell Axios.

Why it matters: That estimate, which is in line with other projections from health experts, underscores the potential seriousness of this outbreak even as the White House has been downplaying its severity in an attempt to keep public panic at bay.

Dr. Brian Monahan, the attending physician of the U.S. Congress, told Senate chiefs of staff, staff directors, administrative managers and chief clerks from both parties on Tuesday that they should prepare for the worst, and offered advice on how to remain healthy.

Between the lines: Forecasting the spread of a virus is difficult, and the range of realistic possibilities is wide.

- But other estimates, including statistical modeling from Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch, have said that somewhere between 20% and 60% of adults worldwide might catch the virus.

Yes, but: These estimates include people who will get sick and make a full recovery, and many people will catch the virus without ever feeling seriously ill.

- Monahan told staffers that about 80% of people who contract coronavirus will ultimately be fine, one of the sources said.
- Monahan's office declined to comment.

Meanwhile, Democratic and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill have told lawmakers [they have no immediate plans to close Congress](#), despite it being a potential petri dish for the virus.

- Many lawmakers fit [high-risk profiles](#) because they're over 60, have underlying health conditions and are mixing in close quarters with visitors, staff and reporters.


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Editor's note: This story has been corrected to say that Monahan told staffers he expects 70-150 million cases, not 75-150 million.

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Alayna Treene, Jonathan Swan

Congress "last to leave" as other institutions send people home

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

While major institutions across the U.S. are sending people home and reassessing interactions amid coronavirus fears, Democratic and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill have told lawmakers they have no immediate plans to close Congress.

Why it matters: It's a potential petri dish for the virus. Many lawmakers fit [high-risk profiles](#) because they're over 60, have underlying health conditions and are mixing in close quarters with visitors, staff and reporters.

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Mar 11, 2020 - Politics & Policy

Axios

Coronavirus updates: State Department urges Americans not to travel abroad

Data: The [Center for Systems Science and Engineering](#) at Johns Hopkins, [the CDC](#), and [China's Health Ministry](#). Note: China numbers are for the mainland only and U.S. numbers include repatriated citizens and confirmed plus presumptive cases from the CDC.

The State Department issued a global level 3 health advisory late Wednesday advising Americans to "reconsider travel abroad due to the global impact" of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The big picture: [President Trump announced](#) hours earlier European travel to the U.S. will be restricted for 30 days, with some exemptions, and the [NBA suspended its season](#). There are [more than 126,000 cases](#) in over 100 countries and territories and more than 4,600 deaths. There are over 1,300 cases in the U.S.

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Updated 6 hours ago - Health

Sam Baker

Brace yourself for a coronavirus outbreak

Illustration: Aida Amer/Axios

Public-health officials' warnings about the coronavirus are sounding increasingly urgent, with one top CDC official asking the public yesterday "to prepare for the expectation that this might be bad."

Reality check: Other administration officials, including President Trump himself, were more subdued in their assessments. But underneath those tonal differences, the reality of the coronavirus is the same: It spreads quickly and has already spread to many countries, making it likely to start spreading here, too.



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