

LEARNING FROM COVID-19 RESPONSES IN THE U.S. vs CHINA

FACT #1: The US has more cases than anywhere in the world.

On July 4, 2020, there were 2.8 million confirmed US cases, over 25% of the world's total (11.1 million). Brazil, which has the next most, has only about half the cases of the U.S. (1.5 million). China has only 84 thousand, Iran 240 thousand, and the entire European Union and the United Kingdom about 1.5 million (ecdc.europa.eu)

FACT #2: The US outbreak is growing faster than anywhere in the world.

The U.S. has had the most daily new cases anywhere in the world since early March, other than a brief period from when Brazil matched the U.S., and the growth rate continues to increase. As of July 4, the U.S. has had 132 thousand deaths, 661 in the past 24 hours. China has had only 4634 deaths, with the most recent on May 16.

FACT #3: The US for-profit healthcare system makes treatment inaccessible.

The U.S. spends 17% of its GDP on healthcare, over half again over the next highest, 11% in Switzerland. Yet only 84% of adults see doctors each year and drugs cost more than the rest of the world. The U.S. has fewer hospital beds per person than most (80%) nations, and closes hospitals faster than most nations as its population grows.

FACT #4: The US has refused international aid.

Within 12 days of discovering the virus, Chinese researchers isolated its genetic material and shared it with the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop diagnostic tests that were available weeks before the first US deaths. The U.S. did not collaborate with Chinese or other WHO researchers, leading to the outbreak.

FACT #5: The US failed to deploy disease control measures.

The U.S. response never slowed viral spread to half its highest rate, and the U.S. reopened while having the most cases in the world and the fastest spread. In contrast, the Chinese response in Wuhan sustained a lockdown of 57 million people until there were no new daily cases.

IMG: Chinese (red) v U.S. (blue) daily new cases, 7 day average, first 120 days after first confirmed death. Lines represent 10000 cases.



FACT #6: In the US, responses focused on economic profits rather than human lives.

The U.S. has spent trillions on Wall Street and the Pentagon, instead of providing healthcare, housing, or food, and has offered only a single one time cash payment to the people. The U.S. has no universal healthcare, housing, food security, or higher education programs despite massive national wealth.

FACT #7: Effective responses center human needs.

By contrast, China, a developing nation, has safely implemented ambitious containment programs based on collective healthcare, food stability, and educational programs won by the 1949 Communist Revolution.

FACT #8: The US turned to militarism over health.

Since the outbreak, the U.S. has stoked sinophobic attacks against Chinese people, and falsely blamed China for spreading the virus (many U.S. cases are from Italy.) The U.S. has aggressively placed aircraft carriers near China, leaked false reports claiming the virus was a biological weapon, and postured in general for war rather than peace and health.

