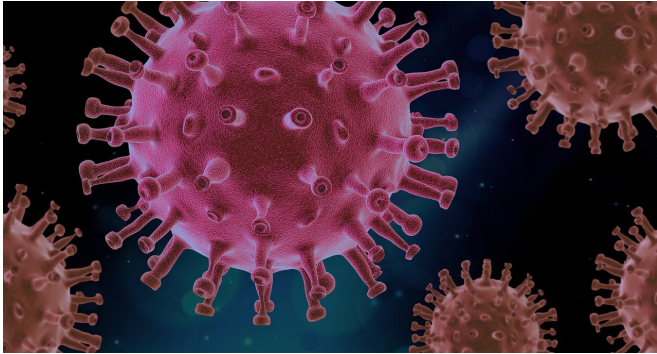


# More than 80% of intubated COVID patients die in Brazil

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More than 80 percent of COVID-19 patients who have to be intubated in Brazil have died since the start of the second wave of infections ravaging the country, according to researchers.

The mortality rate since February 15—83.5 percent—is far higher than in countries such as Mexico, Britain, Germany or Italy, highlighting how the South American country's hospitals are struggling to deal with a surge of infections that has pushed many to the brink of collapse.

"It shows the fragility of the health system, which was already suffering from years of under-investment and got overwhelmed by the large number of cases," Fernando Bozza, a researcher at leading public health institute Fiocruz, told AFP on Monday.

His research team partnered with the University of Sao Paulo to compile data from public and [private hospitals](#) on the clinical outcomes of COVID-19 patients with severe breathing difficulty who are intubated and put on ventilators.

A first study of 250,000 patients from February 15 to August 15 last year that was published in *The*

*Lancet* [medical journal](#) found the mortality rate for intubated patients in Brazil was 78.7 percent.

That figure was already well above the number for Britain (69 percent), Germany (52.8 percent), Italy (51.7 percent) or Mexico (73.7 percent).

But now the rate is even worse, amid an explosion of severe cases in Brazil, Bozza said.

"Some hospitals are so overwhelmed they have to intubate patients outside the intensive care unit. That's the case for 17 percent of hospitals in the northern region," he told AFP.

His team found big differences in patient outcomes by region and between public and private hospitals.

Impoverished regions such as the north and northeast had mortality rates for intubated patients of around 90 percent, while the figure was 79.8 percent in the wealthy southeast—and just 25 percent at prestigious Sirio-Libanês Hospital in Sao Paulo.

Brazil's average daily death toll from COVID-19 has nearly quadrupled since the start of the year, to more than 2,600.

Experts blame the surge partly on a local variant of the virus that is believed to be more contagious.

Nearly 314,000 people have died of COVID-19 in Brazil, second only to the United States.

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