

## CORONAVIRUS NEWS

# SOUTH KOREA: “YOU CAN’T CATCH IT TWICE”



**SOUTH Korean scientists say that they do not believe that you can catch the new coronavirus more than once.**

In the first few weeks of the outbreak, several countries, including China, Japan and South Korea, reportedly saw COVID-19 patients who tested positive for the illness again after they had recovered.

Now, new research from South Korean scientists says that they think this is unlikely, and that cases where people had caught the disease more than once were most likely due to “testing failures”.

Apparently, tests had detected “dead virus traces”, rather than the actual virus. If it’s confirmed that you really can’t catch



**There are two types of tests: one that can tell whether you have COVID-19 now, and another that can tell whether you have the antibodies that fought off the virus**

COVID-19 more than once, you might begin to hear more about ‘immunity passports’.

These will be government-issued documents that would mean you were less restricted by the lockdown if you have antibodies that can fight off the virus.

However, the World Health Organization (WHO) says that “the use of [immunity passports] may increase the risks of transmission,” but that “guidance is constantly kept under review and could be updated.”

## UK LOCKDOWN LATEST

**AS First News went to press, the Government hadn’t said too much about the end of lockdown.**

According to reports earlier this week, the prime minister Boris Johnson will reveal on Sunday 10 May how we’ll be leaving lockdown.

The news came after the PM announced that we had “passed the peak,” and that cases had begun to fall.

Until now, Government officials have decided not to explain their ‘exit strategy’, as they say that doing so would make the message to stay at home less effective.

Labour leader Keir Starmer said that his party agreed the lockdown “needs to remain in place, but to maintain morale and hope, people need a sense of what comes next”.



## THE TWO Rs



**The coronavirus can spread rapidly if its R value is not kept very low**

**YOU might have heard a lot in the past week about the ‘R’ number and a drug called remdesivir. So what’s all the fuss about?**

The R number has been talked about a lot lately in relation to relaxing the lockdown. Also known simply as R or the “effective reproduction number”, it’s a way for scientists to monitor a disease’s ability to spread.

R is the average number of people who one infected person will pass the virus on to. It’s vital that R stays below one, because if it rises above that, the virus will spread faster and faster. The closer to zero it is, the slower the virus is spreading. As First News went to press, the Government’s scientific advisers say that R is between 0.6 and 0.9.

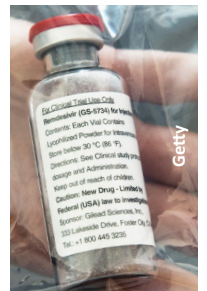
If R stays below one, the epidemic should eventually die down – though it takes time, and without social distancing and other measures, R can quickly rise again.

When the COVID-19 epidemic started, scientists think R was between 2 and 3. To give you an idea how that compares with other diseases, measles’ R number is thought to be 12-18. That’s why it’s so important that people are vaccinated against

measles – it spreads really quickly and easily.

Another ‘r’ has been in the news a lot lately, and that’s the drug remdesivir (below, right). It was originally developed to treat Ebola, and works by stopping a virus from multiplying inside the body. In the US, the agency that controls the medicines doctors are allowed to use has issued an emergency approval so that it can be used to treat people with COVID-19. President Trump has been hyping it up, but is it all it’s cracked up to be?

Perhaps not. A study of 237 adults in Wuhan, China, found it “did not provide significant benefits” over a placebo (a substance given to a patient in a trial that has no physical effect on them). The study may also not be as accurate as was hoped. That’s because it was stopped early after scientists were unable to recruit enough patients due to the steep fall in COVID-19 cases in China.



## Questions on – Coronavirus News



## GLOSSARY

**immunity** – The ability to resist a particular infection or toxin  
**antibodies** – Proteins produced by the immune system to fight disease

**transmission** – Transfer of a disease from one individual to another

## Questions on ‘South Korea: “You can’t catch it twice”’

## Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** What has new research from South Korean scientists said about COVID-19?

**A2.** What are ‘immunity passports’?

## Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** The World Health Organization is concerned that “the use of [immunity passports] may increase the risks of transmission”. How might that be the case?

## Part C

**C1.** Explain the use of quotation marks in the headline.

## Questions on ‘UK lockdown latest’

## Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** Look at the quotations and identify the person being quoted.

We have “passed the peak” of the pandemic.	
The lockdown “needs to remain in place, but to maintain morale and hope, people need a sense of what comes next”.	

## Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** Why have Government officials been reluctant to say much about how lockdown will end?

**B2.** Why has Keir Starmer criticised the lack of information about the end of lockdown?

## Part C: Discussion task

**“The peak of the pandemic has passed, so schools should now reopen.”**

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your view.

## Questions on ‘The two Rs’

## Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** What is the R number?

**A2.** What is remdesivir?

## Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** Suggest why President Trump has been “hyping [remdesivir] up” in the US.

**B2.** Why might remdesivir not be the answer?

## Part C

**C1.** Define the following phrases and comment on the effect of their use.

Phrase	Meaning
“what’s all the fuss about?”	
“hyping it up”	
“is it all it’s cracked up to be?”	

Effect of their use:

## Questions on – Coronavirus News

## GLOSSARY

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## Questions on 'South Korea: "You can't catch it twice"'

### Part A: Find and explain the facts

#### A1. What has new research from South Korean scientists said about COVID-19?

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## A2. What are 'immunity passports'?

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## Part B: Deduce and infer information

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Part C

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Questions on ‘UK lockdown latest’

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Part B: Deduce and infer information

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