

CORONAVIRUS →

# *Ultra-Vaxxed Israel's Crisis Is a Dire Warning to America*

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**“I don’t want to frighten you,” Israel’s COVID czar Dr. Salman Zarka told parliament this week. “But... unfortunately, the numbers don’t lie.”**

Noga Tarnopolsky

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**J**

ERUSALEM—The massive surge of COVID-19 infections in Israel, one of the most vaccinated countries on

complicated path ahead for America

In June, there were several days with zero new COVID infections in Israel. The country launched its national vaccination campaign in December last year and has one of the highest vaccination rates in the world, with 80 percent of citizens above the age of 12 fully inoculated. COVID, most Israelis thought, had been defeated. All restrictions were lifted and [Israelis went back to crowded partying](#) and praying in mask-free venues.

## Post-Vaccine Israel

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worst daily figure ever recorded in the country—10,000—at the peak of the third wave. More than 350 people have [died of the disease](#) in the first three weeks of August. In a Sunday press conference, the directors of seven public hospitals announced that they could no longer admit any coronavirus patients. With 670 COVID-19 patients requiring critical care, their wards are overflowing and staff are at breaking point.

“I don’t want to frighten you,” coronavirus czar Dr. Salman Zarka told the Israeli parliament this week. “But this is the data. Unfortunately, the numbers don’t lie.”



📷 Jack Guez/AFP via Getty Images

### What happened?

The complex and sobering truth is that no single policy or event brought Israel to this crisis, Hagai Levine, a Hebrew University of Jerusalem professor of epidemiology, told The Daily Beast. A

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But the principal causes of Israel's

current predicament are the dominance of the extremely infectious Delta variant, which was carried into the country by Israelis returning from foreign vacations during the weeks in which Israel dropped all restrictive measures—along with the worrisome decrease in vaccine efficacy after about six months.

Israel vaccinated its population almost exclusively with the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#), which received full FDA approval on Monday and remains the gold standard for the prevention of severe illness due to the coronavirus.

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***“ It is not an Israeli problem.  
It is everywhere. ”***

But in early July, with citizens over the age of 60 almost completely vaccinated, Israeli scientists began observing a worrisome rise in infections—if not in

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booster shots for oncology patients, transplant patients, and the hospital's own staff. A group of 70 elderly vaccinated Israelis with transplanted kidneys were the first to receive a third dose.

The success of Rahav's trials in boosting immunity at about the sixth-month mark contributed to the Centers for Disease Control decision, announced last week, to begin offering booster shots to Americans in September.

In order to keep severe illness and the number of COVID deaths down, and avoiding a fourth national lockdown, Israel has embarked on an aggressive effort to provide all adults with boosters in a matter of weeks.

As of this week, all Israelis over 30 will be eligible to receive booster shots. By the end of the month, they are expected to be universally available to anyone over the age of 12 who received their second vaccine five months or more ago.

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Israel will then reconfigure its Green Passports, granting them only to the triple-vaccinated, and limiting their validity to six months. In anticipation of this change, the number of unvaccinated Israelis getting their first shots has tripled since the beginning of August.

The World Health Organization has asked wealthy countries to halt all third vaccines for a period of two months, hoping that a moratorium will allow poorer countries, where few citizens have received even a first inoculation, to catch up. The United States rejected the call and Israel has ignored it.

Asked what has brought Israel to peak transmission even as the country has already provided third doses of vaccines to 1.5 million citizens, Rahav, who has

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saying, “I think we’re dealing with a very nasty virus. This is the main problem—and we’re learning it the hard way.”

“It is a combination of waning immunity, so that inoculated people get reinfected, and at the same time the very transmissible Delta variant,” Rahav said, adding that Israelis lacked the discipline to revert to mask usage as the numbers began rising. “But it is not an Israeli problem,” she added. “It is everywhere.”

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Her conclusion should give pause to American authorities, who face school reopenings as, at best, only 50 percent of eligible adults have been fully vaccinated.

**“ We can all learn from other countries, but you can’t copy paste other countries’ methods. ”**

Unlike New Zealand, which aims for zero community transmission of the coronavirus, and imposes lockdowns



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...continued, Israeli authorities have opted  
for a model they are calling “living with  
corona.”

“Israel really is a pioneer,” Levine, the  
former chairman of the nation’s  
Association of Public Health Physicians,  
said, referring to the groundbreaking  
vaccination campaign and the country’s  
efforts, currently underway, to fully  
reopen schools on Sept. 1 while keeping  
in place measures aimed at preventing  
school-driven outbreaks, such as the one  
that closed the nation down last summer.

“We’ve achieved a plan that is not

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...and sports events until the incidence of  
the coronavirus declines.

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“Each country has to assess its own  
epidemiology,” Levine said, “its culture,  
its public health, the public’s confidence  
in its health authorities.” Referring to  
New Zealand, he added that “we can all

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copy paste other countries' methods

Israel was forced to make quick decisions and in a time of great uncertainty. Levine was among the public health officials who expressed doubts about the wisdom of Israel's untested move towards nationwide booster vaccination, but he told The Daily Beast that the latest statistics, showing that only 0.2 of the first 1.1 million recipients of the third jab were infected with the coronavirus, proved it had been a "brave decision."

The last week has shown a significant reduction in morbidity among triple-

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laboratory.

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# *Texas Begins the End of Abortion as We Know It*

**DARK DAYS AHEAD**

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**Conservatives are hell-bent on reasserting control over women's bodies—and a fresh hell starts today with what women in the Lone Star State are waking up to.**

**Molly Jong-Fast**  
Contributing Editor

Updated Sep. 01, 2021 5:48AM ET  
Published Aug. 31, 2021 7:37PM ET

**W**

Whatever the Supreme Court decides to do, Texas Republicans are ready to finally overturn Roe v. Wade. As of Sept.

1, SB8, which Gov. Greg Abbott signed into law, bans abortions at six weeks, with no exception for rape or incest, while targeting anyone who “aids or abets” another person’s abortion. The

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even her Uber driver, with any citizen able to collect a bounty on abortion providers.

As of midnight Wednesday in Texas, there was no movement from SCOTUS on the ban, which means the law has officially taken effect. An emergency request to block the rule remains before the court.

The six-week gestation period comes from the crazy far-right “heartbeat bills,” which originated in Ohio with a fringe group called faith2action and have since

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pregnancy.

“About 90 percent of women who come to Whole Woman’s Health clinics are more than six weeks into their pregnancy,” Amy Hagstrom Miller, the head of Whole Woman’s Health, an abortion provider with four clinics in Texas, told the Texas Tribune. Most people don’t even *know* they’re pregnant after six weeks; that’s one missed period.

There’s a lot of legal posturing here, as Republicans have made their insane new law complicated by design in the hopes of sneaking it through—to the point that abortion providers had to turn to the Supreme Court, with its 6-3 conservative majority just itching to do away with *Roe*, as their last best hope here.

## Supreme Court Will End Abortion Rights

| THE NEW ABNORMAL |

The Daily Beast



“Whether SB8 goes into effect depends on what the Supreme Court decides to do today. If it does nothing *and* the law goes into effect *then* that ends abortion in Texas,” Imani Gandy, the senior editor of law and policy at the Rewire News group who tweets as AngryBlackLady, told me on Tuesday.

She went on to provide a little more

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deputizes anyone to enforce the law—abortion providers and ‘abettors’ are too scared to do anything abortion-related out of fear that some anti-choice zealot from God-knows-where is going to file a lawsuit against them. Texas Republicans have also made it virtually impossible for attorneys to challenge these abortion laws due to some procedural jiggy pokery that could result in bankrupting any lawyer who claims in court that these laws are unconstitutional.

“It’s a really outrageous law and it is set to go into effect on Wednesday. Whether SB8 goes into effect depends on what the Supreme Court decides to do today. If it does nothing and the law goes into effect, then that ends abortion in Texas. The court will have effectively overruled

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...society, meaning there will have been no argument or hearing at the Supreme Court. It would be a huge deal. And it's not out of the realm of possibility."

But even if the court does move to stay Texas' law, rather than using its "shadow docket" to effectively overturn *Wade*, that won't buy much time before the Supremes hear *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* in October, a case that there's every indication they agreed to hear to chip away at *Roe* or to do away with it altogether and kick the abortion question back to the states.

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...whatever path conservatives and the court take to get there, it's clear where they're headed. They are hell-bent on reasserting their power over women's bodies.

Gov. Abbott is so "pro-life" he's suing San Antonio to try to prevent its mask mandate. The same people who think wearing a mask impedes their freedom want to control what happens in women's uteruses because this was never about life in the first place, but about control.



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