



COVID-19 IN PERU

Covid-19 in Peru: from supervised walks for children to the first case of Kawasaki-like syndrome

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Godlee appraises the UK government's response to covid-19.¹ Peru is among the countries with the most covid-19 cases globally,² reaching 178 914 cases on 3 June.³ Regardless of this, on 18 May the Peruvian government started allowing supervised walks for people under 14 years old,⁴ following the Spanish measure implemented on 26 April.⁵ We have previously expressed our concern for this measure⁶ because it could lead to a rise in cases in children, who typically exhibit milder symptoms.⁷ Criticism led to the publication of an epidemiological alert prohibiting supervised walks in most of Peru because of the high risk of contagion.⁸ By that point, however, thousands of people had already been out with children, as shown in the media.

In Spain this measure caused an increase in cases in children under 10 from 0.31% of total cases on 26 April to 0.36% on 13 May and from 0.9% to 1.03% in 11-19 year olds.⁹ Similarly, in Peru the cases in children under 11 increased from 1.9% of total cases on 12 May¹⁰ to 2.6% on 26 May¹¹ and from 1.1% to 1.6% in 12-17 year olds. This happened as Kawasaki-like cases with prolonged fever, rash, and hyperinflammatory shock in young children started to be reported in Europe¹²⁻¹⁵ and the United States.¹⁶⁻¹⁷ On 14 May, this syndrome was called multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C).¹⁸ In Peru on 1 June, three children with covid-19 were reported to have Kawasaki-like symptoms,¹⁹⁻²⁰ and two days later a 3 year old girl with covid-19 became the first case of MIS-C in Peru.²¹

Even though the link between MIS-C and covid-19 needs to be determined,²² we must be cautious in Peru, where there is a precarious health system, cases keep increasing in small children, paediatric hospitals are saturated with adult patients, and public policies are not necessarily following the global epidemiological alerts.

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Full response at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m1918/rr-9>.

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