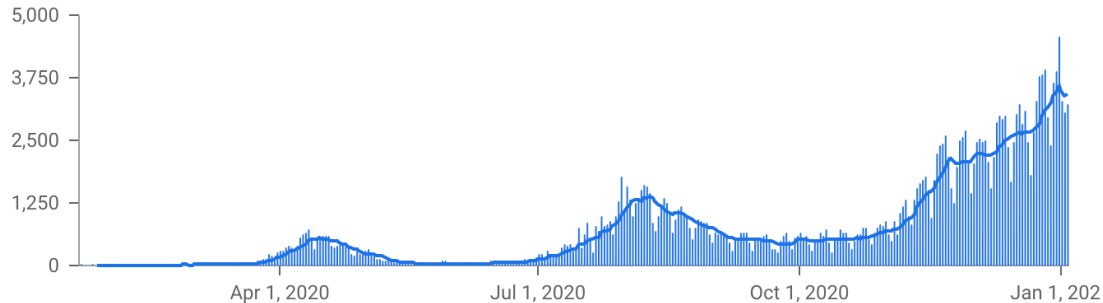


Situation report – COVID19; Japan 5th of January 2021

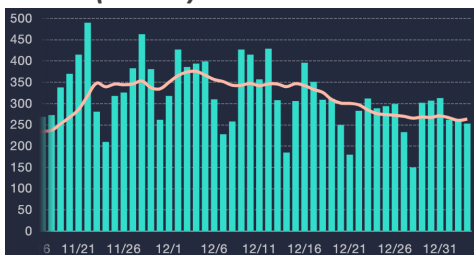
Confidential – for internal circulation only, not for release to outside parties without the prior consent of the author. This document represents the opinion of the author and does not constitute the provision of medical care. Readers with concerns over their individual health should contact their physician for advice.

Current Situation in Japan – cases are rising

National number of diagnoses per day:



Osaka (R 0.98)

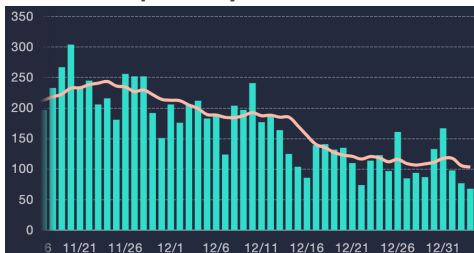


The ongoing increase in daily infections continues. An apparent dip in the reproduction rate over the past few days is more likely to represent under reporting of infections over the holiday period and a further escalation over the course of this week is probable.

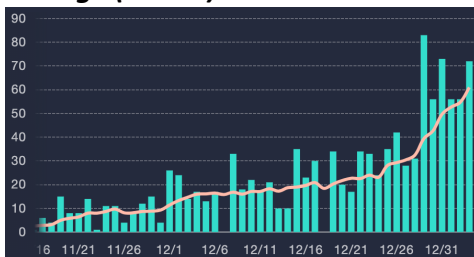
National Effective reproduction number (R 1.05)



Hokkaido (R 0.96)



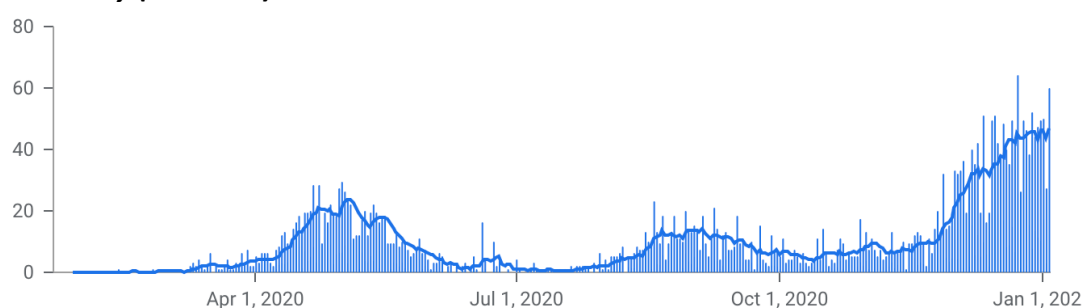
Tochigi (R 1.64)



In Hokkaido and Osaka, a gradual reduction in cases following introduction of emergency measures continues though in the latter case with very little improvement noted over the past week.

Many more rural areas are seeing increasing numbers of cases as COVID19 disseminates more evenly across Japan. Tochigi prefecture, largely unaffected earlier in the year, currently has one of the highest reproduction rates in the country.

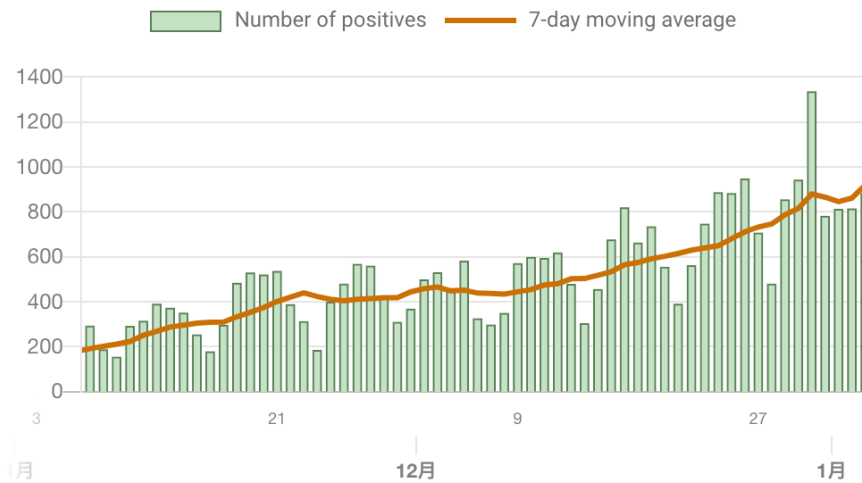
Mortality (National)



Situation report – COVID19; Japan 5th of January 2021

Current Situation in Tokyo & the Kanto Region

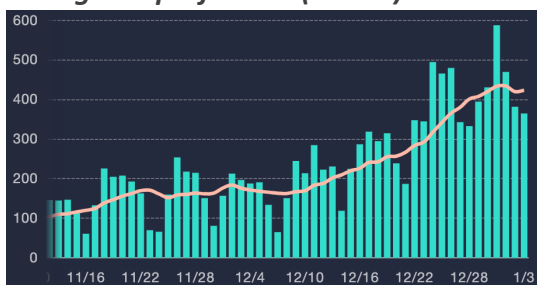
Tokyo daily cases



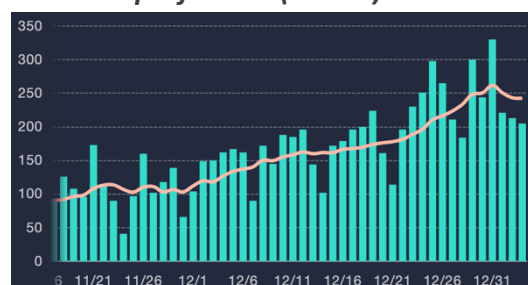
The third wave of the pandemic in Japan began in Hokkaido in October and was in evidence in Kansai (Osaka) earlier than in the Kanto region. However, Tokyo and its surrounding prefectures are currently the focus of concern with rising numbers of new cases accounting for more than half of the national daily total.

The current situation led the governors of Tokyo and the three prefectures below to jointly approach the national government on the 2nd of January, requesting that a further state of emergency be declared. In response, yesterday Prime Minister Suga announced that such a declaration was now under consideration though details have not been released. As restaurants and similar venues are thought to be one of the most common locations for the transmission of the virus, it is highly probable that shortened business hours with early closing times will be re-imposed very soon.

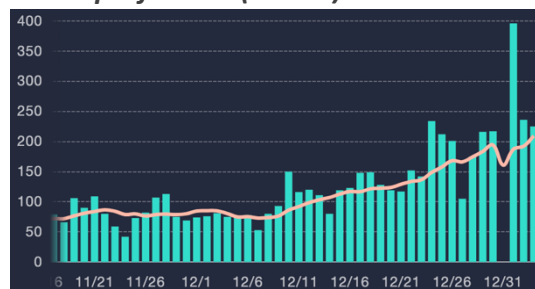
Kanagawa prefecture (R 1.08)



Saitama prefecture (R 1.06)



Chiba prefecture (R 1.18)

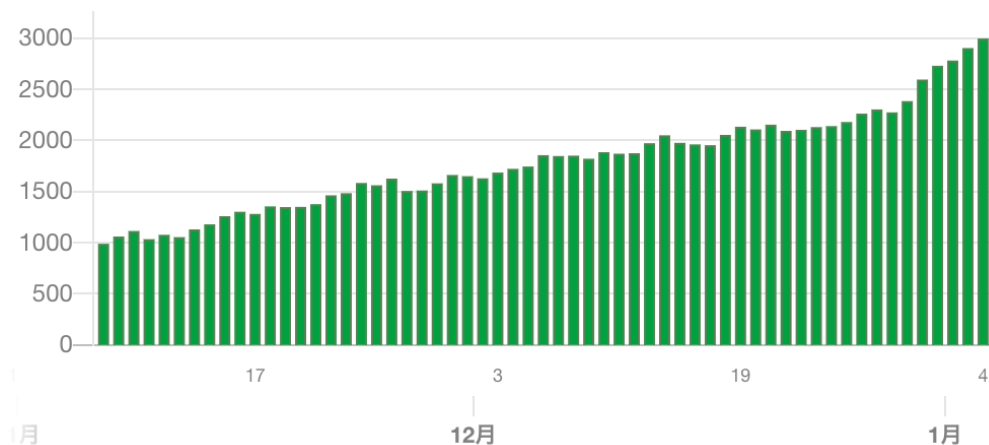


Situation report – COVID19; Japan 5th of January 2021

Hospital Care in Tokyo

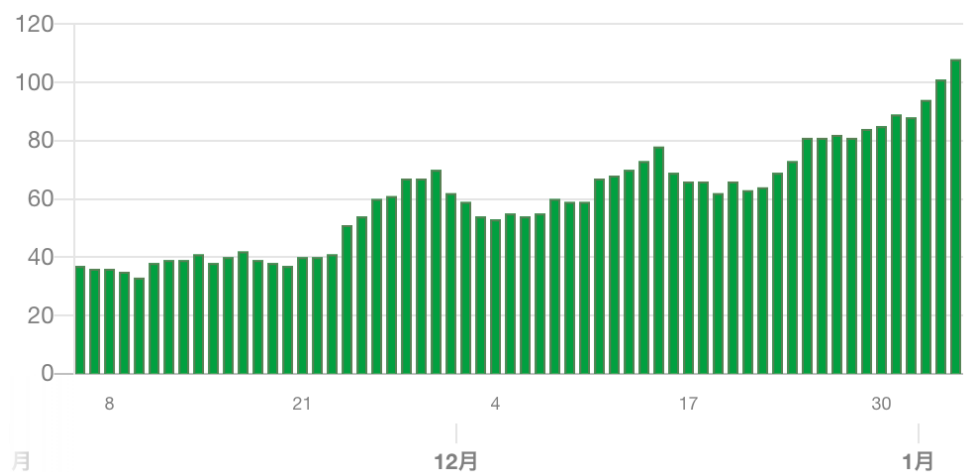
Hospital capacity has come under increasing pressure with the number of reported active cases (10,804) exceeding the total bed capacity (4000 hospital beds and 2360 beds in designated hotels). As people with milder infections continue to be managed without admission to either hospitals or hotels, there are presently enough available beds for elderly or more seriously unwell patients who require active treatment. The anticipated state of emergency may prevent the current allocation of beds for COVID19 patients from being exhausted though it is also possible that additional hospital space will need to be repurposed for the care of infected individuals.

Total in-hospital patient numbers, Tokyo (exc. Hotel stays)



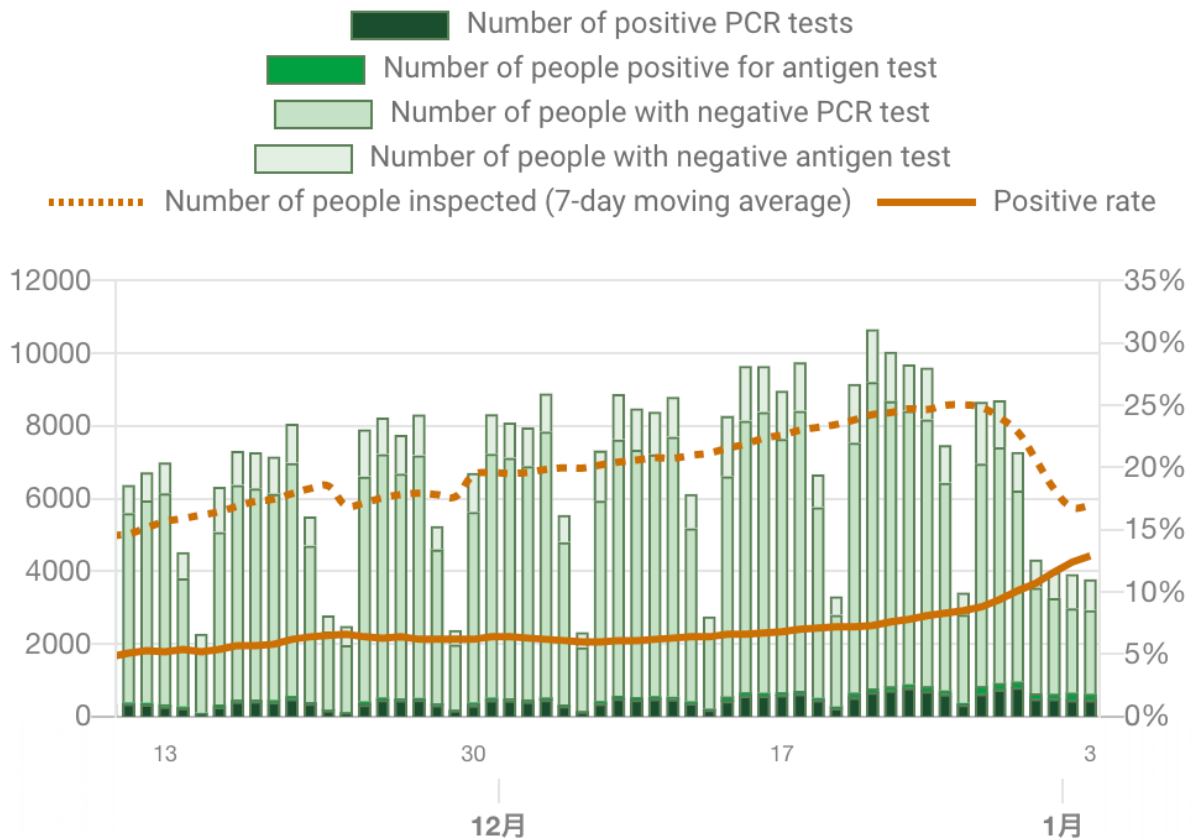
Numbers of more severely unwell patients remain within the available capacity with 200 ICU beds currently designated for COVID-19 cases though with a noticeable increase in more seriously unwell patients over the past week.

Patients Requiring Intensive Care, Tokyo



Situation report – COVID19; Japan 5th of January 2021

Testing in Tokyo



The rate of testing fell significantly over the end of year holiday period as many medical facilities closed. Positive tests increased from a little over 8% to 12.9% of the total reported on the 3rd of January – this may be an artefact of selective testing of more acutely unwell patients, though.

COVID-19 Vaccination in Japan

MHLW (the ministry of health, labour and welfare) has yet to approve any vaccines for use in Japan and as such is it currently not possible to give a definite timeline on availability.

Although MHLW has been relatively silent on the matter, Prime Minister Suga is reported as having taken the unusual step of negotiating directly with Pfizer to secure vaccine supplies at an early date due to concerns that MHLW would take too long to reach an agreement. Based on Suga's announcement yesterday, there is currently an expectation that medical workers might be vaccinated in February with elderly people following in March and potentially the general population as soon as April. However, levels of anxiety over vaccination in the general population are high and the vaccine's potential to curtail the pandemic will depend not only on availability but also on timely uptake.

Situation report – COVID19; Japan 5th of January 2021

References

Reported Caseload Graphs and data sourced from MHLW as reported by Toyo Keizai and the Tokyo metropolitan government –

<https://toyokeizai.net/sp/visual/tko/covid19/en.html>

<https://stopcovid19.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/>

Resources

How to get help if you suspect that you have COVID19 (Tokyo residents)

<https://stopcovid19.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/flow>