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Fauci: Pandemic still has 'a way to go', must be 'prepared' to return to COVID-19 restrictions if cases surge

Fauci also gave insight onto whether he's considering retiring from the public eye.

By [Kristine Parks](#) | Fox News



Sunday Morning Futures w/ Maria Bartiromo - Sunday, March 20

On today's episode of 'Sunday Morning Futures', Maria discusses all the breaking news coming out of Day 25 of the brutal Russian invasion of Ukraine.

[Dr. Anthony Fauci](#) told ABC News anchor George Stephanopoulos on Sunday that Americans must be "flexible" and "prepared" to return to COVID-19 restrictions, if cases surge.

The head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical advisor to [President Biden](#) commented on a possible future surge in the United States due to Omicron variant, BA.2, that is causing COVID-19 cases to rise in Europe.

During an interview on ABC's "This Week," Stephanopoulos asked Fauci if there were "any reason to reverse" the current "relaxation of restrictions" across the country.

Fauci was reluctant to rule out returning to COVID-19 restrictions, despite acknowledging this latest strain was mild and responds to vaccines and prior infections.

FAUCI WARNS AMERICANS COULD FACE MORE LOCKDOWNS AMID SPREAD OF NEW COVID-19 VARIANT



Dr. Anthony Fauci, White House Chief Medical Advisor and Director of the NIAID, participates in the White House COVID-19 Response Team's regular call with the National Governors Association in the South Court Auditorium in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House Campus, Monday, Dec. 27, 2021, in Washington. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

"I don't think so, George, not right now. I don't see us going back into any more really very strict kinds of restrictions. But you always have to have the flexibility," he said.

Fauci suggested places which had relaxed restrictions could see them put back if their cases surged due to this new variant.

"Remember when the CDC came out with the modification of their metrics which would lead to the guidelines of what regions or counties in the country should have a masking indoor, they made it very clear that as you pull back on restrictions, if we do see a significant surge, particularly one that might result in increased hospitalizations, we have to be prepared to pivot and perhaps reinstitute some of those restrictions. But right now at this point George, I don't see that," he said.

A [Johns Hopkins University meta-analysis](#) used several studies which found lockdowns had little to no impact in reducing fatalities from COVID-19 during the Spring of 2020. The study's authors concluded that lockdowns were "ill-founded" and instead resulted in "enormous economic and social costs where they have been adopted."

10 BIGGEST COVID MISTAKES – AMERICANS DESERVE AN APOLOGY FROM THE MEDICAL EXPERTS

Near the end of the interview, Stephanopoulos asked Fauci whether he was ready to "rest" as we approach the end of the pandemic "phase."

However, Fauci said he wouldn't be leaving the public eye as we still "have a way to go" to getting out of the pandemic.

Chuckling, he told the Stephanopoulos, "I'm not so sure, George. I want to make sure we're really out of this before I really seriously consider doing anything different. We're still in this, we have a way to go, I think we're clearly going in the right direction. I hope we stay that way. "

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Critics of Fauci noted how the most recognizable public health official has been noticeably absent from media interviews this past month. Former CIA analyst and radio host [Buck Sexton argued](#) this was because Fauci's "usefulness" to Democrats as a political "weapon" was running out, as even Democrat states and cities lifted mask mandates.

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., who has publicly feuded with Fauci on multiple occasions, proposed an amendment that would eliminate the NIAID director position and divide his role into three new roles. [Paul argued his plan](#) would create more "accountability" and stop one man from having "this much unchecked power."

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