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News Item

# How Many Americans Really Have the Coronavirus? | The Atlantic

By Alexis C. Madrigal
March 4, 2020

> In total, fewer than 500 people have been tested across the country (although the CDC has stopped reporting that number in its summary of the outbreak). As a result, the current "official" case count inside the United States stood at 43 as of this morning (excluding cruise-ship cases). This number is wrong, yet it's still constantly printed and quoted. In other contexts, we'd call this what it is: a subtle form of misinformation.
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> This artificially low number means that for the past few weeks, we've seen massive state action abroad and only simmering unease domestically. While Chinese officials were enacting a world-historic containment effort—putting more than 700 million people under some kind of movement restriction, quarantining tens of millions of people, and placing others under new kinds of surveillance—and American public-health officials were staring at the writing on the wall that the disease was extremely likely to spread in the U.S., the public-health response was stuck in neutral. The case count in the U.S. was not increasing at all. Preparing for a sizable outbreak seemed absurd when there were fewer than 20 cases on American soil. Now we know that the disease was already spreading and that it was the U.S. *response* that was stalled.
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Source: How Many Americans Really Have the Coronavirus? – The Atlantic