

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

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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.

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.

[...]

Source: [How Many Americans Really Have the Coronavirus? - The Atlantic](#)