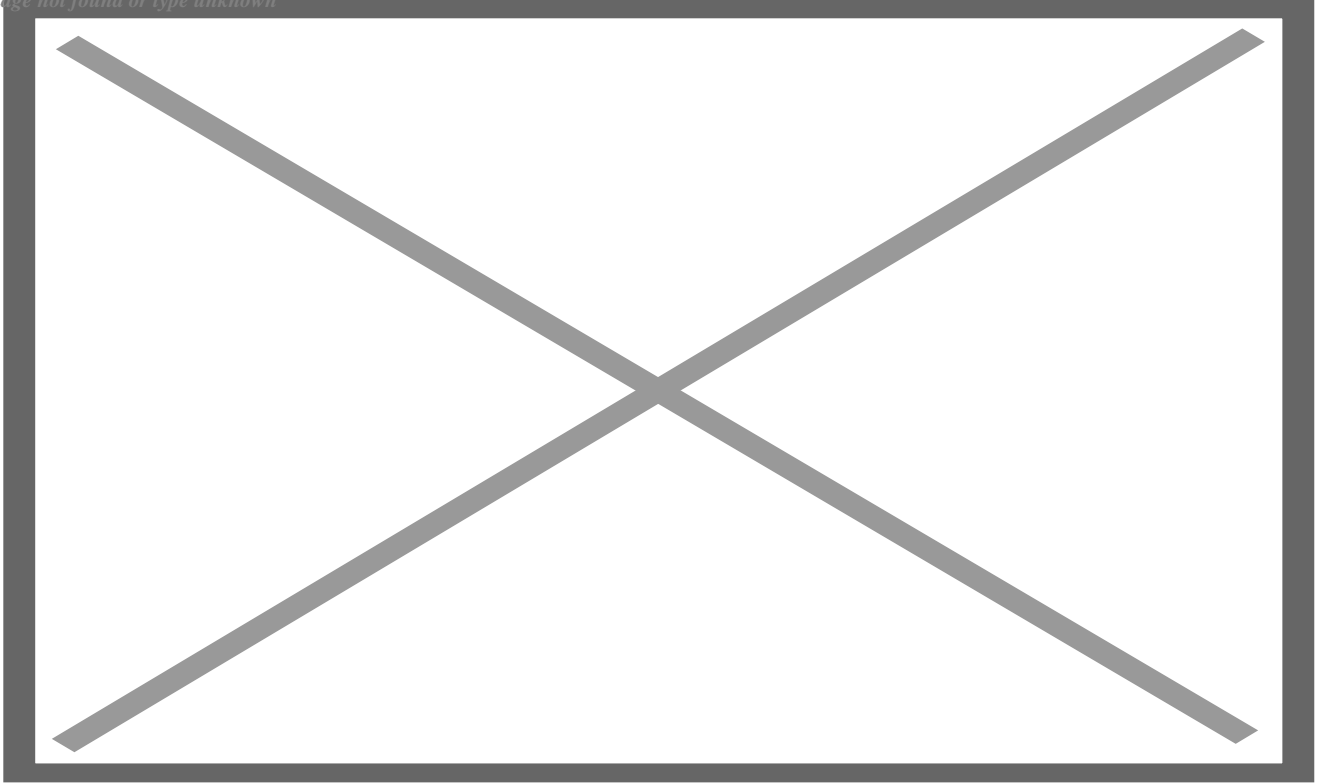


U.S. closes a terrible year

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Only few days are left until the end of 2020 -- a year that has been particularly terrible for the United States, with an increase in mortality statistics not registered since 1918, after the end of World War I.

The figures, still incomplete because December has yet to be processed, are quite grim. Since January 2020, more than 3,200,000 people have died for multiple reasons, which accounts for a 15% increase over last year.

It's kind of reasonable that the fatality records grow every year because of the population increase and its relative aging, but such a sudden spike as this has not occurred in the U.S. in more than a century.

In 1918, data collection showed a 46% over the previous year as a result of the deaths during the great universal slaughter and the influenza pandemic, the wrongly called "Spanish flu" -- which actually began in the United States.

Certainly, COVID-19 has played a major role in this situation. Until yesterday, 323,000 patients had died from the virus; in addition to those who lost their lives directly from the new coronavirus, there are others whose deaths are indirectly related.

Such is the case of diabetics or hypertensive patients who survived the virus, but their bodies were significantly weakened, which eventually led to a fatal outcome.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated that COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death in the country, behind cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

Robert Anderson, a CDC official, said that a deadly outbreak of pneumonia earlier this year could have been due to the new coronavirus, which was not yet discovered.

Overdose deaths have also increased, a problem that the country had been suffering for some years, but which has become a pressing matter throughout the current year, probably due to the closure of rehab centers for the pandemic, what prompted patients to suspended their treatments.

However, the Associated Press cited Shannon Monnat, a Syracuse University researcher who studies overdose trends. She claims that the isolation caused supply problems for drug dealers who would have mixed cheaper and more lethal products with heroin and cocaine.

2020 is a year to be forgotten, although the next one could be worse, according to U.S. president-elect Joe Biden.

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