



Health Watch USAsm Newsletter

www.healthwatchusa.org July 1, 2020

Member of the National Quality Forum and a designated "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

In the Month of June Health Watch USAsm has written 3 articles, 1 video podcast and has been on 15 radio shows concerning the COVID-19 virus. These plus additional resources can be accessed from: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/COVID19.htm>



Opinion: If we don't come together as a nation, the coronavirus will win the battle

Currently, society is struggling on two fronts, both for social justice and at the same time to control a raging epidemic. The epidemic of COVID-19 may be with us for a long time. And those who try to minimize it are doing so by placing front-line workers and economically disadvantaged populations at risk. We are opening our economy, but we need to do so safely, and we need to learn to live with this virus. That means wearing masks in public and in stores, social distancing and protecting, not fighting others. While we fight for social justice, it is imperative that at the same time we need to slow the spread of this virus, so our technology and vaccine development can catch up. Courier Journal. June 6, 2020. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2020/06/16/coronavirus-kentucky-we-must-come-together-lose-battle/3191282001/>



Viewpoint: Despite Happy Talk, We're Far From Out of the COVID Woods

ICT: "COVID-19 cases in many states have risen and the false narrative is that this is because of increased testing. But the rise in cases far outstrips the rise in

testing... the young are not shielded from the viruses' devastating effects. We need to take this pandemic seriously, the public needs to wear masks and practice social distancing. As stated by Avindra Nath, MD, the senior investigator at the Section of Infections of the Nervous System at National Institutes of Health: "It's quite possible some will never get their health back."

" <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/viewpoint-despite-happy-talk-we-re-far-from-out-of-the-covid-woods>

COVID-19 Experience Suggests Need for National Reporting System for Dangerous Pathogens

ICT: "It is of utmost importance to screen healthcare staff and patients for dangerous pathogens along with the establishment of a national tracking system. In addition, an economic and healthcare safety net for healthcare workers needs to be established. A dangerous pathogen is a dangerous pathogen, we should not discriminate on our approach to COVID-19. The frequency of an outbreak should not be

used to deter a policy that an outbreak of a dangerous contagious pathogen should be publicly reported in real time."

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-experience-suggests-need-national-reporting-system-dangerous-pathogens>

Other COVID-19 Resources

26,000 COVID-19 Deaths in Nursing Homes Might Spur Federal-State Blame Game

ICT: "Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of ICT®'s Editorial Advisory Board, said that the problems with nursing homes are systemic and existed long before the COVID onslaught and added that the nursing home industry needs to undergo a "significant transformation" in order to prevent a repeat of what happened in the first wave. "Infection control in nursing homes has been almost non-existent for years along with effective regulations to serve as guidance," Kavanagh said. "We are also concerned with a reactionary program of inspections based on non-specific regulations." Kavanagh would like to see a sustained program of oversight using detailed metrics designed to drive a high-quality outcome. "Specifically, there should be reporting of all acquisitions in patients and staff of all dangerous and drug resistant pathogens in nursing homes," Kavanagh said. "Ample PPE and hand washing stations need to be available, along with staff training in infectious disease by a full-time onsite IP professional. Screening of admission for these pathogens and the patient's microbiome needs to take place. And residents placed in facilities or wards with other patients having compatible microbiome.""

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/covid-19/26000-covid-19-deaths-nursing-homes-might-spur-federal-state-blame-game>

The WHO has new guidelines on face masks to fight Covid-19

Vox: "The new guidance recommends that the general public wear cloth masks made from at least three layers of fabric "on public transport, in shops, or in other confined or crowded environments." It also says people over 60 or with preexisting conditions should wear medical masks in areas where there's community transmission of the coronavirus and physical distancing is impossible, and that all workers in clinical settings should wear medical masks in area with widespread transmission."

<https://www.vox.com/2020/6/6/21282108/masks-for-covid-19-world-health-organization-guidelines-cloth-n95>

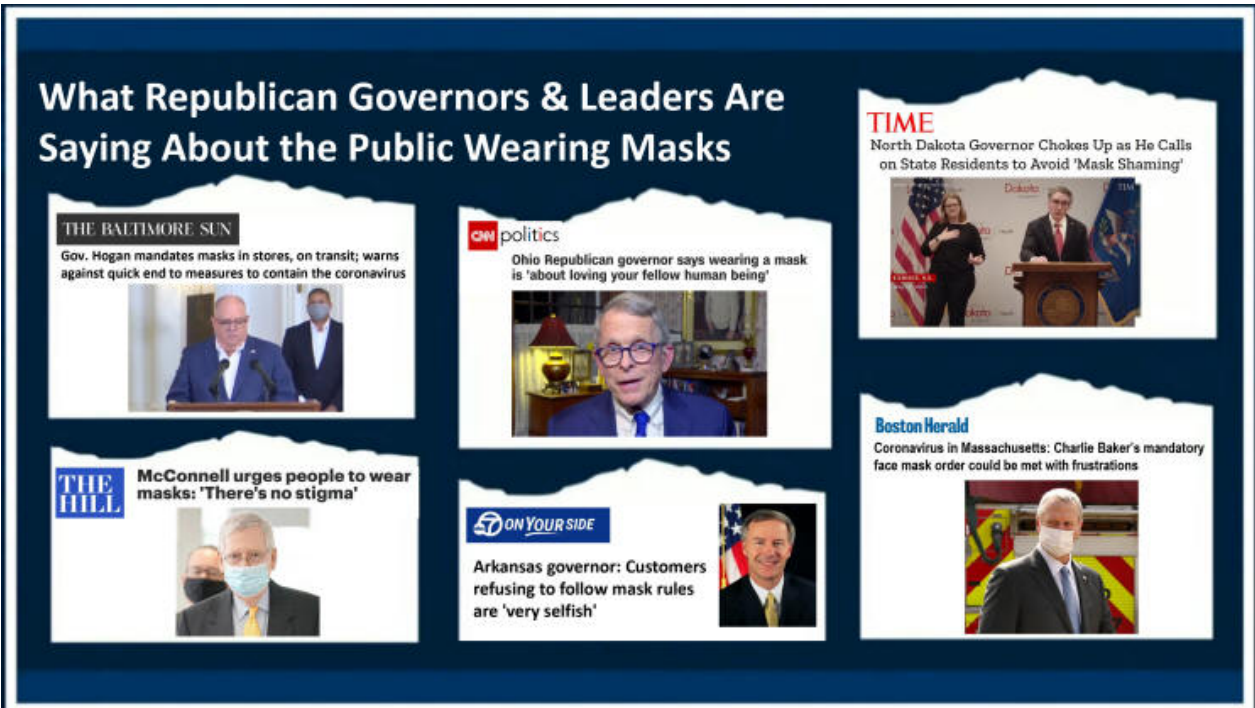
Download WHO Recommendations: http://www.healthwatchusa.org/downloads/20200605-WHO-2019-nCov-IPC_Masks-2020.4-eng.pdf

Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection for prevention of COVID-19

The Lancet: "The findings showed a reduction in risk of 82% with a physical distance of 1 m in both health-care and community settings (adjusted odds ratio [aOR] 0.18, 95% CI 0.09–0.38). Every additional 1 m of separation more than doubled the relative protection, with data available up to 3 m. The 1–2 m distance rule in most hospital guidelines is based on out-of-date findings from the 1940s, with studies from 2020 showing that large droplets can travel as far as 8 m..."

"This study supports universal face mask use, because masks were equally effective in both health-care and community settings when adjusted for type of mask use. Growing evidence for presymptomatic and asymptomatic transmission of SARS-CoV-2 further supports universal face mask use and distancing. In regions with a high incidence of COVID-19, universal face mask use combined with physical distancing could reduce the rate of infection (flatten the curve), even with modestly effective masks."

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31183-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31183-1/fulltext)



'It's one thing to survive the infection, but what's next?' Some COVID-19 patients need rehab to walk, talk and problem solve

"Some COVID-19 patients need rehab to walk, talk and swallow. Some have developed kidney problems, some have had trouble with blood clots, and others are having cognitive issues, such as being unable to solve simple problems." <https://www.chicagotribune.com/coronavirus/ct-coronavirus-covid-patients-rehabilitation-recovery-illinois-20200508-umnznrdivfc47izvizcyy5nf4u-story.html>

Gargling with bleach? Americans misusing disinfectants to prevent coronavirus, survey finds

(Reuters) - "More than a third of Americans misused cleaners and disinfectants to try to prevent infection by the coronavirus, according to a survey taken shortly after President Donald Trump publicly asked whether injecting such products could treat COVID-19. Washing food with bleach, using household cleaning or disinfectant products on bare skin, and intentionally inhaling or ingesting these products were some of the most commonly reported "high-risk" practices in a May 4 online survey of 502 U.S. adults, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-disinfectants/gargling-with-bleach-americans->

[misusing-disinfectants-to-prevent-coronavirus-survey-finds-idUSKBN23C2P2](#)

Prevalence of Asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 Infection: A Narrative Review

AIM: "The likelihood that approximately 40% to 45% of those infected with SARS-CoV-2 will remain asymptomatic suggests that the virus might have greater potential than previously estimated to spread silently and deeply through human populations." <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.7326/M20-3012>

Study: Hydroxychloroquine had no benefit for hospitalized Covid-19 patients, possibly closing door to use of drug

A Large Prospective Randomized Control Trial- STAT: "Today's preliminary results from the RECOVERY trial are quite clear – hydroxychloroquine does not reduce the risk of death among hospitalized patients with this new disease," University of Oxford epidemiologist Martin Landray, one of the study's leaders, said in a statement. "This result should change medical practice worldwide and demonstrates the importance of large, randomized trials to inform decisions about both the efficacy and the safety of treatments." <https://www.statnews.com/2020/06/05/hydroxychloroquine-had-no-benefit-for-hospitalized-covid-19-patients-possibly-closing-door-to-use-of-drug/>

This coronavirus mutation has taken over the world. Scientists are trying to understand why.

"At least four laboratory experiments suggest that the mutation makes the virus more infectious, although none of that work has been peer-reviewed. Another unpublished study led by scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory asserts that patients with the G variant actually have more virus in their bodies, making them more likely to spread it to others." <https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/2020/06/29/coronavirus-mutation-science/>

Federal Rules mandating open notes

"The program rule on [Interoperability, Information Blocking, and ONC Health IT Certification](#), which implements the [21st Century Cures Act](#) passed in 2016, requires patients be provided access to all the health information in their electronic medical records without charge by their healthcare provider beginning November 2, 2020." <https://www.opennotes.org/onc-federal-rule-interoperability-information-blocking-and-open-notes/>

News Articles

26,000 COVID-19 Deaths in Nursing Homes Might Spur Federal-State Blame Game

"Infection control in nursing homes has been almost non-existent for years along with effective regulations to serve as guidance," Kavanagh said. "We are also concerned with a reactionary program of inspections based on non-specific regulations." Kavanagh would like to see a sustained program of

oversight using detailed metrics designed to drive a high-quality outcome. Infection Control Today. June 2, 2020. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/covid-19/26000-covid-19-deaths-nursing-homes-might-spur-federal-state-blame-game>

Radio / Podcasts

COVID-19: Top Republicans Now Saying -- Wear Masks

Dr. Kavanagh from Health Watch USA(sm) discusses the alarming projections of new cases for COVID-19 and the new N1H1 virus circulating in China. The recent Senate Hearing (June 30) was discussed with the Committee Chairman, Lamar Alexander, asking the President to wear a mask, creating hopes of uniform messaging from our leaders. Cases are too high for contact tracing to be effective and maybe Kentucky should preemptively, similar to New Jersey, dial back their openings. Jack Pattie Show. July 1, 2020. (9:02)

https://youtu.be/ZnT_yRJR9gc

COVID-19: Immunity May Be Low in Asymptomatic Carriers

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA(sm) discusses spiking rates in Texas, Arizona, Florida and California along with the CDC projections of a large number of asymptomatic carriers. Two new studies have found disturbingly low neutralizing antibodies in asymptomatic carriers which raises concerns of lasting immunity. In addition, there are concerns regarding lasting disabling conditions persisting in those who are hospitalized or in the ICU. All of this underscores the need for wearing masks, social distancing, and hand washing. Jack Pattie Show. WVLK AM 590. June 26, 2020.

(13:55) <https://youtu.be/2EfMEvAKAKw>

COVID-19: Increased Testing is NOT the Cause of Spiking Coronavirus Cases

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA(sm) discusses the spiking COVID-19 virus infection rates in the Southern United States and how this is not related to increase testing. Increase testing should lower rates through case identification and isolation. This spike is being driven by younger individuals who although they may not be as likely to die of the infection can become very sick with lasting disability. In addition, they can spread this infection to their parents and grandparents. Jack Pattie Show. WVLK 590 AM. June 22, 2020. (4:42)

<https://youtu.be/aF0XihAkQs8>

COVID-19: Bad Research & False Information on The Internet

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA(sm) discusses the recent retraction of a hydroxychloroquine article and the internet bots which spread false information to the public. Jack Pattie Show with Scott Johnson. WVLK 590. June 5, 2020. (16:04).

<https://youtu.be/NbKtRUveamo>

COVID-19 Articles of Interest

Wealthiest Hospitals Got Billions in Bailout for Struggling Health Providers

NYT: "Twenty large chains received more than \$5 billion in federal grants even while sitting on more

than \$100 billion in cash.

It is the Providence Health System, one of the country's largest and richest hospital chains. It is sitting on nearly \$12 billion in cash, which it invests, Wall Street-style, in a good year generating more than \$1 billion in profits. And this spring, Providence received at least \$509 million in government funds ... from capsizing during the coronavirus pandemic."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/25/business/coronavirus-hospitals-bailout.html>

Pandemic's overall death toll in U.S. likely surpassed 100,000 weeks ago

WaPo: "Between March 1 and May 9, the nation recorded an estimated 101,600 excess deaths, or deaths beyond the number that would normally be expected for that time of year, according to an analysis conducted for The Washington Post by a research team led by the Yale School of Public Health. That figure reflects about 26,000 more fatalities than were attributed to covid-19 on death certificates during that period, according to federal data. "

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/investigations/coronavirus-excess-deaths-may/>

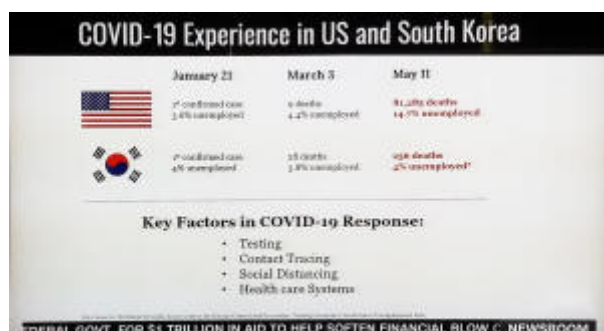
FDA revokes emergency use ruling for hydroxychloroquine, the drug touted by Trump as a Covid-19 therapy

State: "The FDA's withdrawal of the emergency use order, which Politico first reported, appears to formally close the door on U.S. officials' willingness to use the drug to prevent or treat Covid-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus."

<https://www.statnews.com/2020/06/15/fda-revokes-hydroxychloroquine/>

Over 91,267 Healthcare Workers Have Contracted COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>



Slide Presented at U.S. Senate HELP Committee on May 12, 2020.

Compares U.S. to S. Korea on COVID-19 Experience. Sort of says it all. On May 11, 2020, the population of the United States is 328 million of Korea is 51.6 million. The USA has 6.4 times the population of Korea, but has 317.5 times the deaths.

As Florida re-opens, COVID-19 data chief gets sidelined and researchers cry foul

Late last Friday, the architect and manager of Florida's COVID-19 dashboard — praised by White House officials for its accessibility — announced that she had been removed from her post, causing outcry from independent researchers now worried about government censorship.

But over the last few weeks it had "crashed" and gone offline; data has gone missing without explanation and access to the underlying data sheets has become increasingly difficult.

<https://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/2020/05/18/censorship-covid-19-data-researcher->

[removed-florida-moves-re-open-state/5212398002/](#)

By order of Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp: The day after Thursday is now Sunday

"But as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution noted, it was the third such "error" in as many weeks involving sloppy counting of cases, deaths and other measures tracking covid-19."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/05/18/only-america-is-sunday-day-after-thursday/>

'Confused and scared': Georgians frustrated over shifting virus data

<https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/confused-and-scared-georgians-frustrated-over-shifting-virus-data/k9oUbZDE3z6iyuWQBF7gJ/>

The airborne lifetime of small speech droplets and their potential importance in SARS-CoV-2 transmission

"Highly sensitive laser light scattering observations have revealed that loud speech can emit thousands of oral fluid droplets per second. In a closed, stagnant air environment, they disappear from the window of view with time constants in the range of 8 to 14 min, which corresponds to droplet nuclei of ca. 4 μm diameter, or 12- to 21- μm droplets prior to dehydration. These observations confirm that there is a substantial probability that normal speaking causes airborne virus transmission in confined environments."

<https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/05/12/2006874117>

Widely Used Surgical Masks Are Putting Health Care Workers At Serious Risk

"With medical supplies in high demand, federal authorities say health workers can wear surgical masks for protection while treating COVID-19 patients — but growing evidence suggests the practice is putting workers in jeopardy."

<https://khn.org/news/widely-used-surgical-masks-are-putting-health-care-workers-at-serious-risk/>

Cloth masks can stop up to 90% of the droplets which spread the virus.

<https://www.preprints.org/manuscript/202004.0203/v2>

New modeling shows that if over 80% of the public wears a mask, the epidemic will markedly decrease and possibly stop.

<https://mashable.com/article/coronavirus-study-80-percent-of-americans-wear-masks/>

<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2020/05/masks-covid-19-infections-would-plummet-new-study-says>

Through the Eyes of the Frontline: COVID 19



*Health Watch USAsm & Massachusetts
Nurses Association COVID-19 Worker
Safety Conference*

Register: https://webinar-portal.net/webinars/mna/registration_200715.php

KeyNote Speakers:

- Dr. Christina Vandenbroucke-Grauls, Editor Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control and Professor of Medical Microbiology, VU University medical center, Netherlands.
- Dr. Matthias Maiwald Adj Assoc Prof Matthias Maiwald is a Senior Consultant and the Head of Service, Microbiology, at KK Women's and Children's Hospital, and an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Microbiology Service & Senior Consultant (Microbiology), Singapore.
- Dr. Rodriguez-Baño is the immediate past president of the ESCMID (European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases) and Associated Editor of Associate-Editor of Clinical Microbiology and Infection, Spain.
- Dr. Elaine Bernard served as Executive Director of the Labor and Worklife Program from 1989-2017 at Harvard University. Harvard University, United States.

More information at: www.healthconference.org

Preliminary Agenda: http://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2020Conference_downloads/Draft-Schedule-July-15th-Conference.pdf

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