



Health Watch USAsm Newsletter

www.healthwatchusa.org Nov. 1, 2021

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 Oct. Health Watch USAsm has:

- 3 articles/opeds regarding COVID-19.
- 2 Radio Shows concerning the COVID-19 virus.
- 1 Presentation.

Our 2021 COVID-19 Conference Presentations and additional resources can be accessed from: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/COVID19.htm> & www.healthconference.org

Health Watch USA's June 15, 2021 Annual Conference: COVID-19: A Global Perspective

<http://www.healthconference.org>

Health Watch USA's 2020 Activities Report:

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20201231-HWUSA-Report-2020.pdf>



Dr. Kevin T. Kavanagh, MD, MS was awarded the MNA Advocate for Nurses Award by the Massachusetts Nurses Association. Dr. Kavanagh is Chairman of Health Watch USA and has worked closely with the MNA for many years. He has been a constant advocate for nursing and a sounding board and expert source on infection control and the COVID-19 pandemic. He has further disseminated information regarding worker safety and the importance of nursing through his work as Associate Editor of the Journal of Patient Safety and member of Infection Control Today's Editorial Board. In early 2020, he was one of the first to sound the alarm regarding aerosolization of the COVID-19 virus and the need to provide frontline workers with adequate protective gear, including N-

95 masks. Most recently he has worked with the MNA on two major webinars which brought together infectious disease experts from around the world to provide a global view of the pandemic. The presentations can be viewed at www.healthconference.org.

Your 'right' not to vaccinate delayed my cancer treatment

Over the past few weeks my writing was placed on hiatus, since I was finally able to obtain needed cancer surgery. The surgery had been previously delayed because a bunch of misguided souls were exercising their 'right' to not become vaccinated. And then exercised their right to receive protracted medical care by filling regional ICU's and hospitals; denying prompt medical treatment to many with serious illnesses.

And some of those so-called libertarians who advocate freedom from Government actually want to use the Government to shackle the free market by prohibiting employers from implementing worker and patron safety measures. The era of Authoritarian Libertarianism, justified by pseudoscience, has been born. In health care, exposing the most vulnerable to a dangerous pathogen is unconscionable. I would state, the health care vaccine mandate has been 100% effective, because it eliminated patient exposure to individuals, who did not care enough about those who have entrusted their lives to them, to become vaccinated. [References](https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2021/10/25/you-not-vaccinating-stole-precious-time-my-fight-against-cancer/8528842002/) Courier Journal. Oct. 23, 2021. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2021/10/25/you-not-vaccinating-stole-precious-time-my-fight-against-cancer/8528842002/>



COVID-19: Numbers Look Good, but Keep Guard Up

As of today, the outlook is very good and the pandemic is on a trajectory of burning out, but

there are valid concerns which require that we continue our vigilance and public health strategies. In the United Kingdom, cases from the Delta variant spiked early on July 17, 2021, and then rapidly fell in half. Then cases rose with the Delta plus variant on October 28, 2021, reaching another peak almost as high as the one in July. This raised concerns that under certain conditions, the Delta plus variant can successfully compete with the Delta variant and cause another surge in the US. [References](https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-numbers-look-good-but-keep-guard-up) Infection Control Today. Oct. 27, 2021. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-numbers-look-good-but-keep-guard-up>

COVID-19 Boosters Need to be Encouraged

The term "mild COVID-19" is an oxymoron. The devastating long-term effects of long COVID, along with future emergence of cardiovascular disease in those with minimal initial symptoms, reminds us that all SARS-CoV-2 infections may pose grave dangers to those who contract the virus. As of October 24, 2021, the United States has only 57% of its population fully vaccinated. It is behind 50 other countries, including Cuba, Sri Lanka, Curacao, Fiji, Mongolia, Bhutan, and Cambodia, let alone the European Nations. Thus, we

must encourage and administer boosters, but at the same time it is of utmost importance that we decisively counter the anti-vaxxer movement in the United States and increase the primary vaccination rates in our country. [References](https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-boosters-need-to-be-encouraged) Infection Control Today. Oct. 25, 2021. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-boosters-need-to-be-encouraged>

‘Son’ of Delta Variant on Scientists’ Radar

The UK Health Security Agency says that as of September 27, about 6% of sequencing tests in the UK tested positive for the Delta descendant—AY.4.2—which some scientists estimate may be 10% more infectious than original Delta.

AY.4.2 certainly concerns Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®’s Editorial Advisory Board. “There is no doubt that while we celebrate and throw caution to the wind, with Delta infections rapidly decreasing in many areas of the United States, quietly and unseen SARS-CoV-2 is desperately trying to mutate in order to wreak further havoc,” says Kavanagh. “It is like watching a science fiction horror movie. I cannot tell you how it is going to end.”

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/-son-of-delta-variant-on-scientists-radar>

As COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and mortality rates head downward, pediatric SARS-CoV-2 rates rise, and nursing homes can again become disaster zones. And remember: Winter is coming.

COVID-19 will be with us always, as more and more medical experts conclude that it’s endemic, a point that Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®’s (ICT®’s) Editorial Advisory Board (EAB), has been making for well over a year. And herd immunity doesn’t seem likely either, what with a constantly mutating virus, something that Kavanagh asserted back in April 2020. Kavanagh said told ICT® in January that “one of the things that’s really frustrated me with this epidemic and pandemic is that people are totally focused on dying.... But in actuality, the disabilities are much, much more concerning because that is even affecting the young people.” Infection Control Today. Oct. 13, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/the-young-the-old-and-covid-19>

More Data Assert Vaccination Reduces COVID-19 Spread

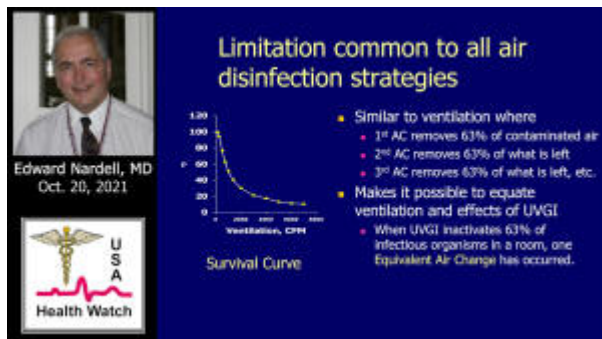
University of Oxford investigators used contact tracing to conclude that vaccinated individuals are less likely to spread COVID-19 even if they become reinfected. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®’s (ICT®’s) Editorial Advisory Board says that the study shows that boosters need to be offered to offset the waning effectiveness of vaccines. “Stopping the spread of disease is a high priority not only to

prevent severe acute illness and long COVID but also to prevent viral mutations,” says Kavanagh. “Vaccines appear to be a vital strategy in lowering the R0 of SARS-CoV-2 below 1.0 and should be used in combination with surgical or N95 masks, social distancing, testing, contact tracing and improvements in building ventilation.” Infection Control Today. Oct. 5, 2021. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/more-data-assert-vaccination-reduces-covid-19-spread>

Study Boosts Importance of COVID-19 Booster Shots

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today® 's (ICT®'s) Editorial Advisory Board says that the Pfizer/BioNtech Lancet study “confirms the need to administer boosters to all with waning immunity. Stopping the spread of disease is a high priority not only to prevent severe acute illness and long COVID but also to prevent viral mutations. Vaccines appear to be a vital strategy in lowering the R0 of SARS-CoV-2 below 1.0 and should be used in combination with surgical or N95 masks, social distancing, testing, contact tracing and improvements in building ventilation.” Infection Control Today. Oct. 5, 2021. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/how-infection-preventionists-can-battle-misinformation>

Health Watch USA - Presentations



Limitation common to all air disinfection strategies

Edward Nardell, MD
Oct. 20, 2021

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Health Watch

Survival Curve

- Similar to ventilation where
 - 1st AC removes 63% of contaminated air
 - 2nd AC removes 63% of what is left
 - 3rd AC removes 63% of what is left, etc.
- Makes it possible to equate ventilation and effects of UVGI
- When UVGI inactivates 63% of infectious organisms in a room, one Equivalent Air Change has occurred.

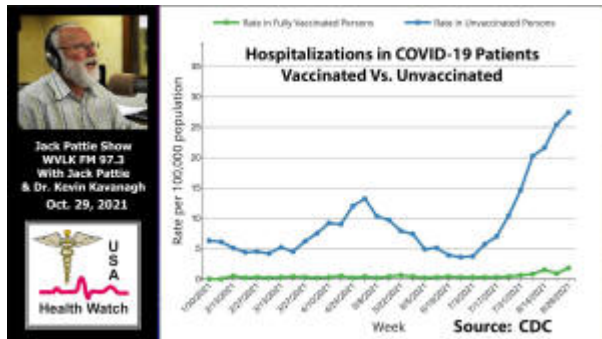
COVID-19: Dr. Ed Nardell Discusses Advantages of UV-C Air Disinfection Using Upper Room Fixtures.

Dr. Nardell is professor of medicine, Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health, discusses germicidal UV is the essential

technology for disinfecting air in rooms where transmission is occurring. Dr. Nardell provides information on the efficacy and safety of UV-C along with comparing the efficacy of upper room disinfection units to free standing inbox units and UV-C in central air conditioning and heating systems. In a pandemic a goal of 20 complete air exchanges per hour is ideal and upper room UV-C is a cost efficient and safe way of achieving this goal. In addition, the use of carbon dioxide monitors to determine rebreathed air fraction and infection risk is also discussed. Health Watch USA Meeting. Oct. 21, 2021

<https://youtu.be/HAt9b-lxW38>

Radio / Podcasts



COVID-19: Childhood Vaccinations, School Air Quality and Parental Use of CO2 Monitors.

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is causing collateral damage by preventing needed treatment and surgery for many patients with

life-threatening diseases. In addition, the FDA has recently voted to authorize the Pfizer Vaccine for children. Children make up 40% of COVID-19 cases and once infected they have a 2% chance of being hospitalized and can also develop Long COVID. Ventilation in schools is of utmost importance and some parents are using CO2 monitors to measure the ventilation freshness of indoor air. Finally, the threat that the Delta Plus Variant poses to our country and the need for boosters, especially for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is also discussed. Jack Pattie Show. Oct. 29, 2021. (15:13) <https://youtu.be/qEZz2lq7Xg0>

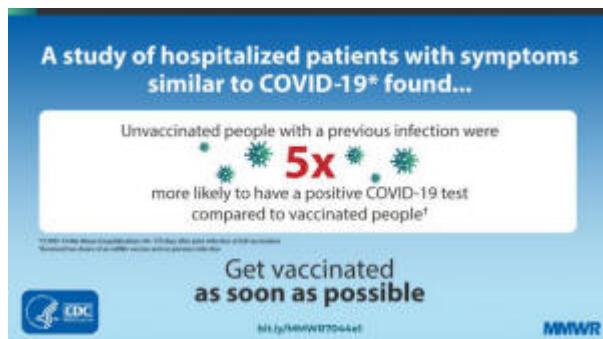
COVID-19: KY Cases Falling, Deaths are Up. We Need To All be Vaccinated Similar to Portugal.

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the August & September Delta surge in Kentucky which was worse than the Winter surge. The Delta surge has more daily cases and 40% more cases, 463 patients, were on the ventilator, compared to 253 on the ventilator over the winter surge (daily rates, 7 day moving average). Slightly less deaths, which is why we are getting better at treating respiratory distress from COVID-19. Some predict COVID-19 may be all but gone in a year, but in the USA it may take longer with only 56% of our population fully vaccinated. In Portugal, 84% of individuals in the country (including children) are vaccinated and they are opening the country. In the USA, we have far too many unvaccinated, and at the same time we are worrying about our supply chain. And, there are many individuals, such as myself who have had to put off needed surgery because of filled hospitals. A new study out of Oxford found 1 in 3 patients with COVID-19 had symptoms 3 to 6 months after diagnosis. And 40% of the Long COVID-19 patients initially developed their symptoms after 3 months. Questions were answered regarding the need for those with previous infections to get vaccinated because natural sterilizing immunity cannot be measured. In addition, there are two studies which showed that if you are vaccinated your chances of developing COVID-19 is reduced. The risks of ventilators and oxygen usage is explained. They are used when only necessary and will help some individuals but are not a cure-all and at high levels can also cause damage. Knowledge of

how to best use these interventions is one of the reasons the COVID-19 death rate has fallen. Finally, the good news. Results of a new drug, molnupiravir, from MERCK to fight COVID-19 is also discussed. Jack Pattie Show. Oct. 1, 2021.

(17:05) <https://youtu.be/nkBeZZUDIUw>

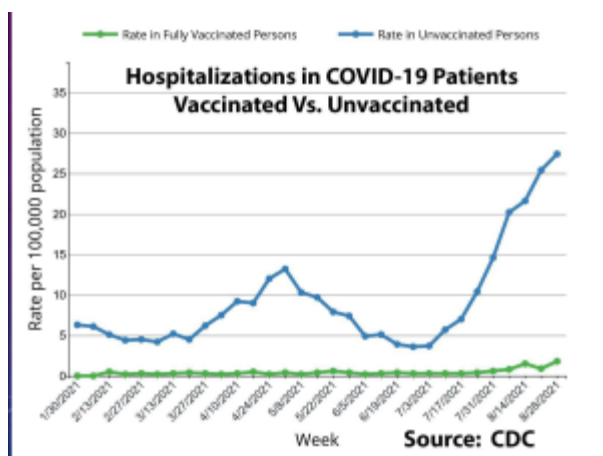
COVID-19 Articles of Interest



Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 Among Adults Hospitalized with COVID-19–Like Illness with Infection-Induced or mRNA Vaccine-Induced SARS-CoV-2 Immunity — Nine States, January–

September 2021

Among COVID-19–like illness hospitalizations among adults aged ≥ 18 years whose previous infection or vaccination occurred 90–179 days earlier, the adjusted odds of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 among unvaccinated adults with previous SARS-CoV-2 infection were 5.49-fold higher than the odds among fully vaccinated recipients of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine who had no previous documented infection (95% confidence interval = 2.75–10.99). https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7044e1.htm?s_cid=mm7044e1w



Age-Adjusted Rates of COVID-19-Associated Hospitalizations by Vaccine Status in Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years, January–August 2021

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#covidnet-hospitalizations-vaccination>

Association Between COVID-19 Diagnosis and In-Hospital Mortality in Patients Hospitalized With ST-Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI)

Among patients with out-of-hospital or in-hospital STEMI, a concomitant diagnosis of COVID-19 was significantly associated with higher rates of in-hospital mortality compared with patients without a diagnosis of COVID-19 from the past year. Among patients with out-of-hospital STEMI and COVID-19 vs out-of-hospital STEMI without COVID-19, the rates of in-hospital mortality were 15.2% vs 11.2%. Among patients with in-hospital STEMI and COVID-19 vs in-hospital STEMI without COVID-19, the rates of in-hospital mortality were 78.5% vs 46.1% (absolute difference, 32.4% [95% CI, 29.0%-35.9%]; $P < .001$).

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2785893>

Why We Need to Upgrade Our Face Masks—and Where to Get Them

High-quality respirators such as N95s and K95s are now widely available and provide the best protection against COVID, according to experts. Why aren't more people wearing them? <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-we-need-to-upgrade-our-face-masks-and-where-to-get-them/>



COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Global Perspective

*Health Watch USAsm &
Massachusetts Nurses Association*



White Paper: COVID-19 lessons learned: a global perspective

On June 15, 2021, infectious disease authorities from around the world participated in a joint webinar to share experiences and lessons learned in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the overriding goals of the conference “COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Global Perspective” was to provide documentation of worldwide COVID-19 response strategies, in order to combat the plethora of misinformation and conspiracy theories that are being actively disseminated. This misinformation is having a profound negative impact on controlling the pandemic in many countries. Misinformation which was addressed in the conference included challenging the seriousness of COVID-19 infections, a refusal to recognize aerosolization as the major mechanism of spread, a belief that schools can be opened safely without implementation of extensive

control strategies, and that masks and vaccines are not effective. A second goal was the identification of common strategies between nations. Common strategies included the implementation of a range of closures, mask mandates, travel bans and the need for expanded testing. But of utmost importance there was recognition of the need to implement a coordinated national strategy, which is depoliticized and led by scientists. ARIC. Aug. 26, 2021.

<https://aricjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13756-021-00992-x>

Conference Videos are Now Available. Continuing Educational Credits through Southern Kentucky AHEC. For more information on continuing education go to www.healthconference.org

COVID-19: Introduction To Suppression Strategies

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses strategies used by many countries including exclusion, elimination, suppression, and mitigation; along with the disruptive influences of misinformation and false hopes for herd immunity. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/Ej98j5WiGUw>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Australia

Professor Imogen Mitchell, Clinical Director of the Australian Capital Territory COVID-19 Response, discusses lessons learned in Australia. To date there are 910 deaths from COVID-19. If the United States did as well, adjusted for population, we would have lost less than 13,000 individuals. Australia is a federated nation, early on the State and Territories formed a national governing committee, guided by scientists, to formulate and direct the nation's COVID-19 response. Strategies included a zero tolerance for cases with cities imposing lockdowns, masking, physical distancing, along with strong testing and contact tracing for as few as 1 or 2 cases. Travel restrictions and 14-day quarantine were imposed on those entering the country and travel between State and territories was restricted during outbreaks. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/UpFrw3Wdbmw>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Singapore

Dr. Matthias Maiwald, Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Microbiology & Senior Consultant in Microbiology, National University of Singapore, discusses the COVID-19 response in Singapore. Strategies used were social distancing, mask wearing, and the closing of schools and non-

essential businesses during a full lock-down. In addition, contact tracing was facilitated by phone app reporting of contacts in Singapore's population. Outbreaks occurred in migrant workers' dorms, and other outbreaks were associated with the airport, a hospital and a shopping mall. At hospitals, all patients were tested for SARS-CoV-2 upon admission and staff were tested every two weeks, if vaccinated; and once a week, if not vaccinated. An important observation was that during the full lock-down, infectious diseases caused by many other respiratory viruses all but disappeared. Rhinoviruses and enteroviruses reappeared 13 weeks after the end of lock-down, later adenoviruses reappeared. However, influenza stayed at a very low level well into 2021. This is a testament as to how effective the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 is in comparison to other respiratory viruses, and how difficult it will be to eradicate it around the world. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/-WPQv9ghTy0>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Kenya

Dr. Paul Yonga discusses lessons learned in Kenya. Kenya adopted a suppression strategy guided by a newly formed National Emergency Response Committee. The country utilized regional and localized lockdowns, mandatory masking, curfews and social distancing. Barriers included stigmatization of the disease, large political rallies and a lack of vaccines, the latter of which inhibited the long-term effectiveness of a suppression strategy. There were also poor working conditions for frontline workers and healthcare staff, including a lack of PPE and pay shortages. Currently, Kenya is expecting another wave, possibly driven by the Delta Variant which comprises 90% of sequenced cases in some regions. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/oTOFjLYa2Q>

COVID-19: India In Crisis -- Vineeta Gupta, MD, JD

Dr. Vineeta Gupta describes the conditions in India and the socioeconomic challenges which inhibit the pandemic's control. The impact of the Delta (B1617.2) Variant on India and the United States is also discussed. <https://youtu.be/vsOj76yBH9g>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Spain

Dr. Jesús Rodríguez-Baño, MD, PhD from University Hospital Virgen Macarena, University of Sevilla discusses Spain's COVID-19 response. Spain is a federated nation. The country underwent three waves. During the first wave a national emergency was declared, and a hard lockdown was enacted. In the second and third waves regional governments guided the response. During these waves there were limits on gatherings and universal masking was mandated. Spain did not have a well-developed anti-vaccination movement as was seen in other European countries. However, the COVID-19 response became politicized during the second and third waves, a phenomenon seen in several other countries, including the United States. There was also intense discussion over the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Politics and economics took the lead in some of the decisions instead of healthcare, but everyone agreed there needs to be a balance in every decision taken. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/pWuu10Gg7ro>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Germany

Dr. Sebastian Hoehl presents on COVID-19 lessons learned in Germany. Dr. Hoehl was one of the first to recognize that asymptomatic spread is a major contributor to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In his presentation he discusses strategies used by Germany to quell COVID-19 surges and the importance of frequent testing in the opening of schools. He also discusses the social disparities of COVID-19 and how it targets and disproportionately affects the socially disadvantaged. YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/_9is03QomGI

COVID-19: Lessons Learned In The United Kingdom

Dr. Stephanie Dancer provides an extensive description of how SARS-CoV-2 spreads and the importance of aerosolization. COVID-19 clusters at NHS Lanarkshire, Scotland, was caused by spread from the community, and was transmitted in hospitals by both patients and staff. Corrective measures included the use of masks, opening of windows and minimizing the risks in bathrooms and of toilet plumes. Air exchanges in most hospitals were deficient. They were improved to six complete air exchanges per hour for general wards and ten for bathrooms. Proper building ventilation is of utmost importance in controlling respiratory pathogens. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/sMW3wUWUboA>

COVID-19: Lessons Learned in the United States

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses how the United States has viewed and dealt with COVID-19. Barriers to true acceptance are exemplified by Kubler-Ross stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Final Acceptance. The role of foreign adversaries and misinformation is discussed and how this is preventing true acceptance of COVID-19 and an effective pandemic response. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/eV8lBv7ADU4>

COVID-19: Comments Regarding Variants

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh Discusses COVID-19 Variants

1. The Delta Variant detected in The United States & the need for more genomic sequencing to detect community spread.
2. Mutations and Variants can be tracked on the websites.
<https://nextstrain.org/> and <https://outbreak.info/>
3. How Variants are named and How The Spanish Flu Got its Name.
4. Almost all nations in almost all pandemics mitigate the severity and extent of disease and deaths.

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/U9Xs6JizJSE>

COVID-19: Veteran Administration's Fourth Mission

Acting Deputy Secretary Carolyn Clancy and Under Secretary Dr. Beth Taylor discusses the Veteran Administration's fourth mission to aid and support state and local health care systems in times of pandemics and other health emergencies. The presentation details the Veterans Administration activities to support health care systems during the COVID-19 pandemic along with lessons learned during the reassignment of resources and staff to support the United States' pandemic response. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/oBtNJeoNW2k>

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