



# Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Newsletter

<https://www.healthwatchusa.org> Aug 1, 2022

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 July Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> had:*

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

**Information & Registration for Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Sept. 14th, 2022 COVID-19 Conference - Frontline Worker Safety:** <https://healthconference.org>

**Health Watch USA's 2021 Activities Report:** <https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20211231-HWUSA-Report-2021.pdf>

**Health Watch USA's 2020 Activities Report:** <https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20201231-HWUSA-Report-2020.pdf>

## Health Watch USA - News Articles & OpEds



### **How patient risks of harm in the hospital have increased during the pandemic: Opinion**

Facilities appear to be responding by trying to water down regulations and to lessen the efficiency and impact of quality monitoring. What we received from the CDC were watered-down regulations, with not having specific recommendations to increase ventilation, admission COVID testing at the "discretion of the facility" and the encouragement, but not mandating, the use of N95 masks. All of the above has resulted in many staff not feeling safe, worsening the chronic nursing staff shortage. The CDC must set the highest standards for the world to emulate, not standards that are pliable for our profit-driven health care systems. References Courier Journal. July 11, 2022.

<https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2022/07/11/how-risk-patient-harm-hospital-increased-during-pandemic/10012556002/>



### **The Public Ignores Warnings from Infection Preventionists, but at What Cost?**

Preventing infections hides an infection's true threat and firmly places IPs into the category of unsung heroes. The inability of some leaders to focus on

preventing infections has placed our nation in peril, resulting in an ineffective COVID-19 response, fueled an exponential growth in monkeypox infections, along with a rise in antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and has allowed all but conquered diseases, such as polio, to start to reemerge. Scientists

early on warned of exponential growth (of SARS-COV-2), while politicians declared the epidemic gone, then under control. Only when the barn has burned down did elected officials become concerned about the once avoidable epidemic. Infection Control Today. July 25, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/public-ignores-warnings-infection-preventionists-what-cost->

## Radio / Podcasts

### **COVID-19: BA.5 Taking Over, Variants Arising Too Fast for Optimal Vaccine Development**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses the impending BA.4/BA.5 surge with increasing cases and hospitalizations. So far, ICU admissions and deaths have not risen significantly. With infections and hospitalizations comes the risks of Long COVID. New research has found that over 60% of patients with Long COVID have viral antigens in the blood. This may well be a sign of an indolent subclinical infection of the virus.

Data from South Africa has shown a lower rate of hospitalizations with the BA.4 and BA.5 variants. But unlike the United States they had a large surge of the Beta Variant which offers protection against the BA.4 and BA.5 variants. The United States had a large wave with the Omicron Variant which offers much less protection. Pre-Omicron, those infected by the Delta Variant will have better protection providing their immunity has not waned.

New variants are appearing almost once a month, far too quickly for a specific vaccine. There is also another concerning variant in India the BA.2.75, which may be even more infectious. With the Seasonal Flu, we have a new variant about once a year which allows for vaccine modification. However, COVID vaccines do produce a wide range of antibodies and will offer at least some protection against severe disease. There are two bivalent vaccines which are being tested which may offer even broader protection.

Vaccines are the safest way to augment your immunity, whether you have had a previous vaccination or infection become boosted. Thus, we need to take this virus seriously. We need to mask up, avoid indoor settings and stay up to date on vaccinations and boosters. Jack Pattie Show with Kruser. July 11, 2022. <https://healthwatchusa.net/Videos-JackPattie/20220711-JackPattie.htm>

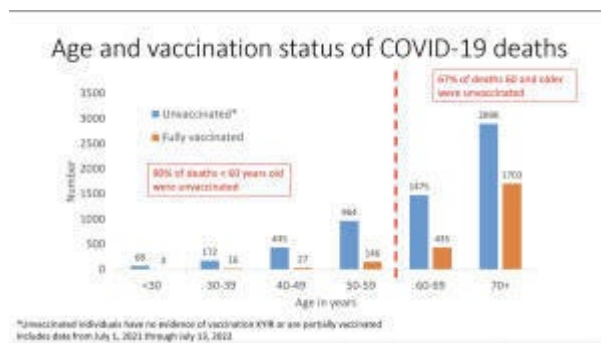
### **COVID-19: Dangers of BA.5; Mask Up, Pick Up & Become Fully Boosted**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses the increasing cases, hospitalizations and ICU admissions being fueled by the BA.5 variant. BA.5 is the most infectious pathogen known to mankind. It is more infectious than measles. Use of N95 masks, avoidance of indoor venues and when possible, use curbside pickup. Vaccination and being up to date on boosters is also an imperative. During the Omicron surge, those vaccinated with three mRNA doses had four times the death rate than those vaccinated with four doses, and those who were unvaccinated had over a 40 times greater death rate. The better outcomes and reduced case fatality rate is more dependent on the immunity of the population rather than the properties of the virus. Jack Pattie Show July 18, 2022. <https://healthwatchusa.net/Videos-JackPattie/20220718-JackPattie.htm>

## COVID-19, Monkeypox, Polio: Become Vaccinated & Boosted

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the rapid spread of monkeypox and that we need to institute more vigorous public health measures to stop the disease with case tracking and ring vaccinations. If monkeypox enters rodents in the United States it will become endemic. In addition, the rapid rise in cases of the BA.5 variant and the need to be up-to-date on vaccinations and boosters is encouraged. The BA.5 is not so much a weaker virus but the population is becoming more immune and we now have effective therapeutics. But if you are not up-to-date on vaccinations you will be at risk. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 (do not wait for severe symptoms) and are over the age of 50 or immunosuppressed, you should see if you are a candidate for paxlovid. Hospitalizations and ICU admissions are on the rise in Kentucky. There is also the first case of polio in an unvaccinated individual. Unfortunately, vaccine hesitancy is spilling over into other diseases and the consequences can be severe, if our population does not become vaccinated. We need to act as a community not individuals and guard the health of each other. Jack Pattie Show. July 25, 2022. <https://healthwatchusa.net/Videos-JackPattie/20220725-JackPattie.htm>

## COVID-19 Articles of Interest

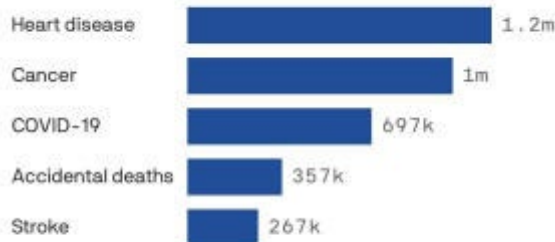


### Deaths as a Function of Age and Vaccination Status

This slide is from the Kentucky Dept. of Public Health and shows the importance of vaccination in the avoidance of death. 90% of the deaths in those who were under the age of 60 were in the unvaccinated.

### Leading causes of death in the U.S.

March 2020 to October 2021



Data: Shiels MS, Haque AT, Berrington de González A, Freedman ND.

Leading Causes of Death in the US During the COVID-19 Pandemic, March 2020 to October 2021. JAMA Intern Med. Published online July 05, 2022. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.2476; Chart: Axios Visuals

**COVID-19 is now the third leading cause of death in the United States.**



An internet meme regarding the public's current views of the pandemic.

## Officials reorganize HHS to boost pandemic response

The Biden administration is reorganizing the federal health department to create an independent division that would lead the nation's pandemic response, amid frustrations with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The move elevates a roughly 1,000-person team — known as the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, or ASPR — into a separate division, charged with coordinating the nation's response to health emergencies, according to seven people briefed on the plan who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/07/20/biden-administration-aspr-independent-division/>

New mutations give the virus an advantage if they can increase transmissibility:

- the original Wuhan strain has an R0 of 3.3
- Delta has an R0 of 5.1
- Omicron BA.1 has an R0 of 9.5
- BA.2, which is the dominant subvariant in Australia at the moment, is 1.4 times more transmissible than BA.1.
- a pre-print publication from South Africa suggests BA.4/5 has a growth advantage over BA.2 similar to the growth advantage of BA.2 over BA.1.

**New Covid subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 are the most contagious yet – and driving Australia's third Omicron wave** [New Covid subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 are the most contagious yet – and driving Australia's third Omicron wave | Coronavirus | The Guardian](#)

## Like many Americans, I was tired of worrying about COVID. Then my family and I caught it

Sacramento Bee (California, USA): "After two years of taking every precaution, including vaxxing and double-boosting, I finally got COVID at the end of a family vacation last month. It's common now to hear about the "mild symptoms" of COVID, but that was not our experience — unless being in bed for days with body aches and fever is considered mild. This was the sickest I had felt in two decades. On the first day after I tested positive, I slept all afternoon, feeling groggy and bone-tired. ... Was I hospitalized? No. Are my lingering symptoms "mild"? No."

<https://www.sacbee.com/opinion/article263362728.html>

## Aggression Toward Healthcare Providers Common During Pandemic

Verbal and physical violence against healthcare personnel in Latin America has been highly prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new survey. After an aggressive event or abuse occurred, 56% of providers considered changing their care tasks, and more than a third considered quitting their profession. <https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/976889>

## **Progress in Adverse Event Rates in US Hospitalized Patients**

7:40 Regarding "...disruption which COVID caused in Patient Safety. Peter (Peter Pronovost - Chief Quality and Transformation Officer at Univ. Hosp. Healthsystem Cleveland) you mentioned that Patient Safety has gotten worse during COVID. Expand on that a little bit for us." Peter Pronovost: "CMS looked at their own data. What they saw is that a pretty significant increase anywhere from 30, even up to 70% for falls and pressure injuries during COVID. And just contrast that with other industries which are risky but also stressed. Like the airline industry. We did not see an increase in plane crashes." In many hospitals we have half the nurses who have less than 2 years' experience and this staffing is much worse on the acute side."

<https://edhub.ama-assn.org/jn-learning/audio-player/18708625>

## **Aerobic capacity of professional soccer players before and after COVID-19 infection**

"This observational study compared the same players' aerobic capacity pre-, and 60-days post COVID-19 recovery. The statistical analysis demonstrated that the infected players had significantly lower VO<sub>2</sub>max values [ $t(20) = 5.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $d = 0.613$  (medium effect)], and significantly lower VO<sub>2</sub> values at respiratory compensation point (RC) [ $t(20) = 2.97$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $d = 0.39$  (small effect)] after recovery. Furthermore, results indicated a significantly lower running time (RT) on the treadmill [ $t(20) = 4.84$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $d = 0.46$  (small effect)] when compared to the results that were obtained before they got infected. " The aforementioned findings indicate that post COVID-19 soccer players may not reach full recovery at two months. Therefore, our results highlight that further adaptations and improvements are needed with regard to aerobic capacity before soccer players return to professional games." <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-16031-7>

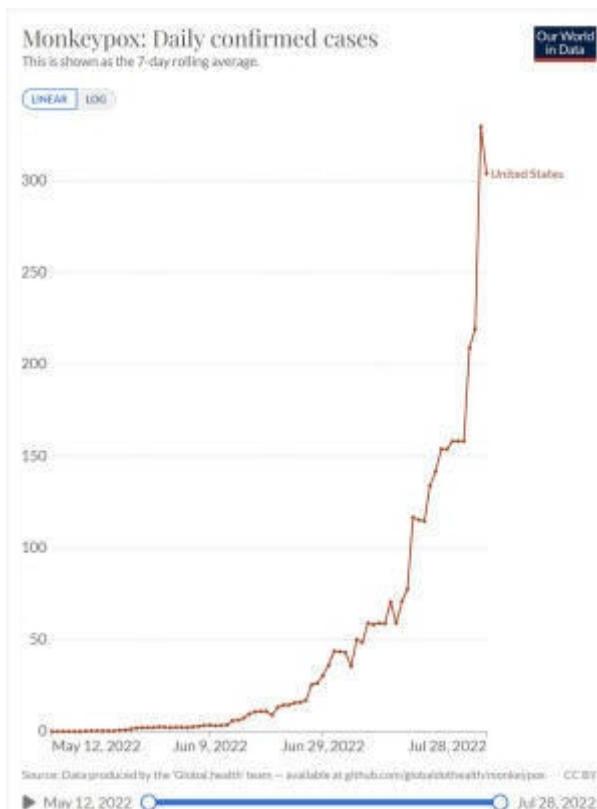
## **New data suggests the CDC's COVID guidance to isolate for 5 days after testing positive is wrong. You should follow Joe Biden's example instead.**

"Scientists have questioned the scientific rationale behind the five-day quarantine policy since the CDC introduced it last December. And now, critics of the policy have more data to back up their claims. In two new preprints, scientists found that people infected with COVID-19 remained infectious after five days. One from the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston showed that one-quarter of COVID patients may still be infectious eight days after first testing positive." July 27, 2022. <https://fortune.com/2022/07/27/cdc-covid-guidelines-5-day-isolation-testing-positive-joe-biden/>

**Nature:** "Many scientists disputed that (CDC's) decision then and they continue to do so. Such dissent is bolstered by a series of studies confirming that many people with COVID-19 remain infectious well into the second week after they first experience symptoms. Reductions in the length of the recommended isolation period — now common around the world — are driven by politics, they say, rather than any reassuring new data." <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02026-x>

## **Comparable Environmental Stability and Disinfection Profiles of the Currently Circulating SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern B.1.1.7 and B.1.351**

Many are stressing alcohol hand sanitizers but soap and water also works, is often available & less expensive. "Treatment with heat, soap, and ethanol revealed similar inactivation profiles indicative of a comparable susceptibility towards disinfection." <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33993274/>



**Monkeypox mutating 12 times faster than expected amid warning UK cases could hit '60,000 a day'**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/monkeypox-virus-uk-cases-mutating-b2111814.html>

### **TSA, American Airlines hit by COVID outbreaks at LAX**

CBS Los Angeles: "According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's listing of active outbreaks at non-residential settings, a total of 220 workers with the Transportation Security Administration has tested positive for COVID in the last week. In fact, a number of departments at LAX are experiencing large outbreaks, including American Airlines, which has reported a total of 154 infections; and Southwest Airlines with 28 infections, according to the Department of Public Health. The outbreaks are notable because a mask mandate remains in place at LAX, and has been a requirement since the start of the pandemic. However, enforcement is spotty, and passengers are no longer required to wear masks on their flights."

<https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/tsa-american-airlines-covid-outbreaks-lax/>

### **New York state declares monkeypox an 'imminent threat to public health'**

"The United States has one of the highest levels of monkeypox in the world, with over 4,900 confirmed cases as of Thursday...." <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/york-state-declares-monkeypox-imminent-threat-public-health/story?id=87578480>



## Sept. 14th, 2022 Health Watch USA Webinar

**Frontline Workers: A Global Perspective**



**Frontline Worker Safety in the  
Age of COVID-19**  
Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>

[Download Brochure](#)

For more information go to:  
<https://healthconference.org>

### Speakers Will Include:



Past Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, MD  
– Introduction



Professor Lidia Morawska, PhD, MSc. "Airborne infection transmission & Impact on Frontline Workers" Time Mag. Top 100 Most influential persons in the World for 2021. (Australia)



Professor Dale Fisher "COVID-19: Protecting Staff, Protecting Patients and Staying Practical", National University Health Systems, Singapore & WHO's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network Steering Committee. (Singapore)



Ambassador Deborah Birx, MD "COVID-19 USA - Lessons and new tools to improve workplace safety" Past White House Coordinator Coronavirus Response (USA)



Professor Nele Brusselaers, MD, PhD "Evaluation of science advice during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sweden" (Sweden)



Professor Laith Jamal Abu-Raddad, PhD "Immune protection of COVID-19 vaccination and natural infection" (Qatar)



Ziyad Al-Aly, MD "An Overview of Long COVID" (USA)

**Register Today .** (The event will be all day from 8:45 am to 4:30 pm.

CEUs, CME for a variety of specialties are planned, including Physicians, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Radiologists, Physical Therapists and Social Workers are planned.)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BqU3RDzseOHEFEpSBKsJW07tYjiupK-Qe9tEINECZFE>

**Agenda:** [https://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2022Conference\\_downloads/20220914-AGENDA-Frontline Worker Safety in the Age of COVID-12.pdf](https://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2022Conference_downloads/20220914-AGENDA-Frontline Worker Safety in the Age of COVID-12.pdf)



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