

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

https://www.healthwatchusa.org April. 1, 2024

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

#### Activity for the Month of Nov. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>:

- -- 4 Articles/Op-Eds regarding COVID-19.
- -- 2 Presentations.
- -- 2023 HW USA Conference Videos are Available.

Information Regarding Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Nov. 1st, 2023: Long COVID's Impact on Patients, Workers & Society: https://healthconference.org

Health Watch USAsm 2023 Activities Report:

https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20231231-HWUSA-Report-2023.pdf

Health Watch USAsm 2022 Activities Report:

https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20221231-HWUSA-Report-2022-2.pdf

Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> 2021 Activities Report:

https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20211231-HWUSA-Report-2021.pdf

Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> 2020 Activities Report:

https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20201231-HWUSA-Report-2020.pdf

### Nov. 1st, 2023, Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Webinar



Long COVID's
Impact on
Patients, Workers &
Society
Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>

Speaker Presentation Videos and PowerPoints Can Be Viewed
At: https://healthconference.org

To take the continuing education course (no charges apply) go to: <a href="https://sokyahec.thinkific.com/courses/longcovidimpact">https://sokyahec.thinkific.com/courses/longcovidimpact</a>

### **Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> - Peer-Reviewed Publications, News Articles & OpEds**



#### Long COVID's Impact on Patients, Workers, & Society: A review

Abstract: The incidence of long COVID in adult survivors of an acute SARS-CoV-2 infection is approximately 11%. Of those afflicted, 26% have difficulty with day-to-day activities. The majority of long COVID cases occur after mild or asymptomatic acute infection. Children can spread SARS-CoV-2 infections and can also develop long-term neurological, endocrine (type I diabetes), and immunological sequelae. Immunological hypofunction is exemplified by the recent large outbreaks of respiratory syncytial virus and streptococcal infections. Neurological manifestations are associated with anatomical brain damage demonstrated on brain scans and autopsy studies. The prefrontal cortex is particularly susceptible. Common symptoms include brain fog, memory loss, executive dysfunction, and personality changes. The impact

on society has been profound. Fewer than half of previously employed adults who develop long COVID are working full-time, and 42% of patients reported food insecurity and 20% reported difficulties paying rent. Vaccination not only helps prevent severe COVID-19, but numerous studies have found beneficial effects in preventing and mitigating long COVID. There is also evidence that vaccination after an acute infection can lessen the symptoms of long COVID. Physical and occupational therapy can also help patients regain function, but the approach must be "low and slow." Too much physical or mental activity can result in post-exertional malaise and set back the recovery process by days or weeks. The complexity of long COVID presentations coupled with rampant organized disinformation, have caused significant segments of the public to ignore sound public health advice. Further research is needed regarding treatment and effective public communication. Proceedings from Health Watch USA 2023 Webinar. Medicine. Mar. 20, 2024. Download Article: <a href="https://journals.lww.com/md-">https://journals.lww.com/md-</a>

journal/fulltext/2024/03220/long covid s impact on patients, workers,



**COVID** denialism allows other infectious diseases to spread. We must make public health a priority.

"Falling vaccination rates are being driven by anti-science, and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention only needs to look in the mirror to discover one of the driving forces. The antiscience rhetoric governmental institutions are spewing regarding COVID-19 is causing far reaching and enduring damage to public health, fueling conspiracy theorists and anti-vaxxers. Many in the mainstream public do not truly understand the intricate details of science, but they know when they are being gaslighted." We need to stop believing we live in a world of rainbows and unicorns. COVID-19 is currently filling over 22,000 hospital beds and resulting in more than 200 deaths each week. In addition, long COVID is ravaging our entire adult population with 6.8% afflicted with the disease, a number which appears to be increasing. Society must know the true downside and risks of spreading this virus and determine the number of chronic disability and premature deaths that we can tolerate..." *References* Courier Journal: March 13, 2024 <a href="https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2024/03/13/covid-19-denialism-threat-to-public-health/72942668007/">https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2024/03/13/covid-19-denialism-threat-to-public-health/72942668007/</a>



## COVID-19 Harmonization: Balancing Risks and Benefits of CDC's Latest Move

"The CDC's recent decision to align recommendations for respiratory viruses, particularly COVID-19, has garnered support from the public and infectious

disease societies....the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) lends its backing to the CDC's harmonization efforts, concerns persist regarding the implications of this shift, especially considering the Omicron variant's unique characteristics and the ongoing challenges posed by COVID-19's multi-system impacts. Currently, IDSA is supporting the CDC in dropping the isolation time to 0 days for asymptomatic carriers. In view of protracted viral shedding in patients who have become symptom-free after infection (11% had positive cultures at 10 days) and a 40 to 50% rate of asymptomatic infections, some have concerns regarding this decision. COVID-19 is still ravaging our society, with over 200 deaths each week and over 20,000 individuals in the hospital each day. And the tolls of long COVID may be mounting, not decreasing. During the first week of February 2024, 6.8% of all adults are experiencing long COVID symptoms, up from 5.3% during the week of October 18 to 30, 2023. In Sweden, a country that had very few COVID-19 interventions, a major insurance company, If, reported that after the pandemic, 1 in 3 young adults are experiencing brain fog. A better prevention harmonization may well be with the measles and polio viruses." *References* Infection Control Today. March 11, 2023. https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-harmonization-balancing-risks-benefitscdc-s-latest-move

#### A potential discovery of highly fatal SARS coronavirus?

It's time for a reality check. We must take this recent preprint seriously, and our government

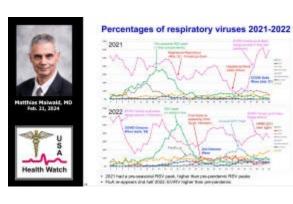


needs to take proactive measures to prepare for future pandemics. This entails implementing strategies such as source control through improved ventilation systems and the utilization of N95 masks or respirators. While considerable efforts have been made to emphasize individual responsibility in combating pandemics, the

reality is that collective action led by public health authorities is indispensable. Relying solely on individual actions will not suffice to safeguard against future threats posed by dangerous

pathogens. <u>References</u> Kevin MD. March 23, 2024. <u>https://www.kevinmd.com/2024/03/a-potential-discovery-of-highly-fatal-sars-coronavirus.html</u>

### **Health Watch USAsm - Meetings**



# Irregular reemergence of pathogens after lifting of pandemic restrictions - Matthias Maiwald, MD

Dr. Matthias Maiwald presents on the patterns of pathogen re-emergence after the COVID-19 pandemic. This is based on respiratory multiplex PCR data from a major women's and children's hospital in Singapore between 2019 and 2023. The dataset includes 83,250 results, mostly from

paediatric patients. Pandemic response measures disrupted the usual patterns of respiratory pathogens, and the subsequent relaxation affected their re-emergence. Nonenveloped viruses returned first, and some viruses (e.g. respiratory syncytial virus [RSV]) had out-of-season peaks that were higher than pre-pandemic peaks, and some other viruses (e.g. adenovirus and metapneumovirus) had unusual phases of high activity. Bordetella pertussis (agent of whooping cough) remained near-absent until the end of 2023, while Bordetella parapertussis (agent of parapertussis) and Mycoplasma pneumoniae (agent of childhood pneumonia) started to return around March 2023. Population-based immunological susceptibility and unusual exposure patterns presumably played a role in these observed phenomena. View YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/Yx VyP3Z9wl



## Long COVID Scotland - Dr. Sally Witcher and Jane Ormerod

Sally Witcher, PhD and Jane Ormerod from long COVID Scotland discuss the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and long COVID in the United Kingdom and Scotland. The presenters stressed the lack of available healthcare for those suffering from long COVID and also the lack of gathering data and transparency regarding the magnitude of the problem. Governmental strategies are overreliant on vaccinations and

even if vaccines produced ironclad durable immunity, they are not widely available to the general public. Few if any are masking, including medical personnel in major healthcare centers. Similar to many countries, there is rampant misinformation which is inhibiting the public health response. Currently, the United Kingdom's workforce is being adversely affected to a large degree by chronic illnesses, but there remains little discussion or recognition of the impacts of long COVID. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> meeting, March 20, 2024. View YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/K22GqxLKrRg

#### **Upcoming Meetings - Save the date**

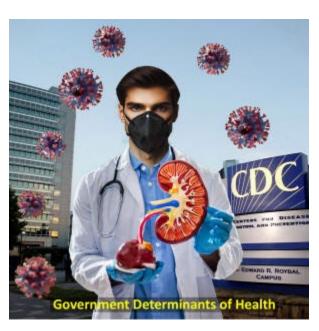


**April 17, 2024 (7 pm):** Dr. Kaitlin Sundling: Impacts of COVID Infection and the Ongoing Pandemic in Pathology and Cancer Care.

May 15, 2024: Dr. Jacqueline Helcer Becker, Ph.D. Overview of the Impacts of Long COVID on Behavioral Health. Cognitive and Psychiatric Symptoms and Potential Mechanisms.

Space is limited. To attend any of these meetings, send an email to kavanaghh.ent@gmail.com

### **Health Watch USAsm - Initiatives**



## HHS and CDC Omission Labeled a Government Determinant of Health

Serious Questions Build Over Inconsistent HHS Approach to Kidney Health

"AAKP is calling out CDC leadership, as well as appointed leaders at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for their failure to specifically highlight the documented, higher risks of severe COVID illness, hospitalization, and death among immunosuppressed kidney transplant recipients and immunocompromised chronic kidney disease (CKD) and dialysis patients. The unique vulnerabilities of kidney patients, who often manage multiple co-morbidities including diabetes and hypertension, were not specifically

mentioned during the CDC's March 1st policy announcement, despite AAKP's request these concerns not be ignored." Read Full News Release - AAKP:

https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20240307-AAKP Press Release NewCDC Respiratory Guidance Ignores Kidney Patient Concerns.pdf

#### Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> - Articles of Interest



# New study links hospital privatisation to worse patient care

#### **Key findings:**

- "\*Increases in privatisation generally corresponded with worse quality of care, with no studies included in the review finding unequivocally positive effects on health outcomes.
- \*Hospitals converting from public to private ownership status tended to make higher profits. This was mainly achieved by reducing staff levels and reducing the proportion of patients with limited health insurance coverage.
- \*Privatisation generally corresponded with fewer cleaning staff employed per patient, and higher rates of patient infections.
- \*In some studies, higher levels of hospital privatisation corresponded with higher rates of avoidable deaths.
- \*However, in some cases (e.g. Croatia), privatisation led to some benefits for patient access, through more precise appointments and new means of care delivery, such as out-of-hours telephone calls." <a href="https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2024-02-29-new-study-links-hospital-privatisation-worse-patient-care">https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2024-02-29-new-study-links-hospital-privatisation-worse-patient-care</a>



# World Health Organization: Indoor airborne risk assessment in the context of SARS-CoV-2

Description of airborne transmission mechanism and method to develop a new standardized model for risk assessment

"The SARS-CoV-2 virus can spread in several ways: through zoonotic transmission, direct and indirect contact transmission, direct deposition transmission, and inhalation or airborne transmission." "Currently, the recommended minimum ventilation rate

for hospital rooms under airborne precautions is 12 air changes per hour (ACH) or 160 L/s per patient in most guidelines. " "Nonetheless, ventilation rates above this threshold are likely to

provide significantly greater reduction in the concentration of infectious aerosols" <a href="https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/376346/9789240090576-eng.pdf">https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/376346/9789240090576-eng.pdf</a>

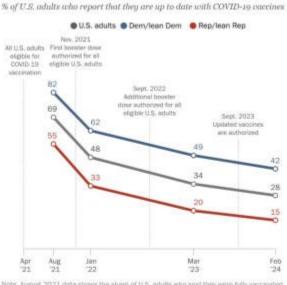
#### Mandating indoor air quality for public buildings

If some countries lead by example, standards may increasingly become normalized Abstract: People living in urban and industrialized societies, which are expanding globally, spend more than 90% of their time in the indoor environment, breathing indoor air (IA). Despite decades of research and advocacy, most countries do not have legislated indoor air quality (IAQ) performance standards for public spaces that address concentration levels of IA pollutants (1). Few building codes address operation, maintenance, and retrofitting, and most do not focus on airborne disease transmission. But the COVID-19 pandemic has made all levels of society, from community members to decision-makers, realize the importance of IAQ for human health, wellbeing, productivity, and learning. We propose that IAQ standards be mandatory for public spaces. Although enforcement of IAQ performance standards in homes is not possible, homes must be designed and equipped so that they could meet the standards. Science: <a href="https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adl0677">https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adl0677</a>

#### Alarming 45-fold rise in measles in Europe - WHO

"Health chiefs are warning that cases are still rising and "urgent measures" are needed to prevent further spread. Some 42,200 people were infected in 2023, compared to 941 during the whole of 2022. The WHO believes this is a result of fewer children being vaccinated against the disease during the Covid pandemic. In the UK, health officials said last week that an outbreak of highly contagious measles in the West Midlands could spread rapidly to other towns and cities with low vaccination rates." BBC, Jan 23, 2024 https://www.bbc.com/news/health-68068226

#### Declining share of Americans have the most up-todate level of protection against the coronavirus



Note: August 2021 data shows the share of U.S. adults who said they were fully excurated January 2022 and Merch 2023 data shows the share who said they were fully excurated and full received a booster shoft within the last se months. February 2024 data shows the share who say they have received the updated COVID-19 vectore. Respondents who gave other respenses or fill not give an ensere are not shown. Summit Survey or U.S. adults conditioned Feb. F.13, 2024.

"How Americans View the Coronaviria, COVID-19 Vaccines Anual Decleting Levets of Concern"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# How Americans View the Coronavirus, COVID-19 Vaccines Amid Declining Levels of Concern

"When it comes to vaccination, Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents remain more likely than Republicans and GOP leaners to say they've received an updated COVID-19 vaccine (42% vs. 15%). This 27-point gap in recent vaccination is about the same as in January 2022 when 62% of Democrats and 33% of Republicans said they were up to date (i.e., fully vaccinated and recently boosted)."Pew Research. March 7, 2024

https://www.pewresearch.org/science/ 2024/03/07/how-americans-view-thecoronavirus-covid-19-vaccines-amid-declininglevels-of-concern/

#### Long Covid: Health staff go to court for compensation

BBC: "Nearly 70 healthcare workers with long Covid have taken their fight to the High Court to try to sue the NHS and other employers for compensation. The staff, from England and Wales, believe they first caught Covid at work during the pandemic and say they were not properly protected from the virus. Many of them say they are left with life-changing disabilities and are likely to lose income as a result. The Department of Health said "there are lessons to be learnt" from Covid. The group believe they were not provided with adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) at work, which includes eye protection, gloves, gowns and aprons." <a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/health-68479912">https://www.bbc.com/news/health-68479912</a>

## Post COVID-19 condition imposes significant burden in patients with advanced chronic kidney disease:

"Background: The burden of post COVID-19 condition (PCC) is not well studied in patients with advanced kidney disease.

**Results:** 216 chronic kidney disease (CKD) stages G4-G5 patients, 375 dialysis patients, and 2005 Kidney Transplant Recipients (KTR) were included. Long-lasting symptoms were reported in 204/853 (24%) patients with prior COVID-19 and in 297/1743 (17%) patients without prior COVID-19 (aOR: 1.45 (1.17-1.78)], p<0.001). PCC was prevalent in 29% of CKD G4/5 patients, 21% of dialysis patients, and 24% of KTR. In addition, 69% of patients with PCC reported (very) high symptom burden. Odds of PCC was lower per ten-fold increase in antibody level after vaccination (aOR 0.82 [0.70-0.96], p=0.01) and higher in case of COVID-19 related hospital admission (aOR 4.64 [2.61-8.25], p=0.003).

**Conclusions:** Chronic kidney disease (CKD) stages G4-G5, dialysis patients, and Kidney Transplant Receipants (KTR) are at risk for PCC with high symptom burden after SARS-CoV-2 vaccination, especially if antibody levels are low and in case of hospitalization due to COVID-19. International Journal of Infectious Diseases." <a href="https://www.ijidonline.com/article/S1201-9712(24)00061-4/fulltext">https://www.ijidonline.com/article/S1201-9712(24)00061-4/fulltext</a>

#### Norwegian study: People who have had Covid-19 have a poorer memory

"The researchers examined what is called everyday memory.

It turned out that those who have had Covid-19 struggled more with memory after Covid-19 than before they became ill. They also struggled more than those who had never tested positive for Covid-19. Previous scientific articles from the Covid-19 study show that 10 to 15 per cent of those who have had Covid-19 report concentration and memory problems. In this publication, the average score for those who have had Covid-19 is between 0.7 and 0.8, where four is the worst possible memory. Ellingfjord-Dale points out that this is an average score. "There are individuals within this group scoring above this average," she says. "For them, the impact on memory and concentration could significantly detract from their quality of life. So for those affected, this is serious."

Many in Norway have been infected with Covid-19 not just once, but several times since spring 2020. Does this have any impact on memory problems? The researchers do not yet have an answer to this." <a href="https://www.sciencenorway.no/covid19-diseases-memory/norwegian-study-people-who-have-had-covid-19-have-a-poorer-memory/2332141">https://www.sciencenorway.no/covid19-diseases-memory/norwegian-study-people-who-have-had-covid-19-have-a-poorer-memory/2332141</a>

### A case report of an individual who self reported receiving 217 vaccinations, 130 of which were confirmed.

### Adaptive immune responses are larger and functionally preserved in a hypervaccinated individual.

"The individual "had no signs of a past SARS-CoV-2 infection, as indicated by repeatedly negative SARS-CoV-2 antigen tests, PCRs and nucleocapsid serology. "hypervaccination did not lead to adverse events and increased the quantity of spike-specific antibodies and T cells without having a strong positive or negative effect on the intrinsic quality of adaptive immune responses. " "https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(24)00134-8/fulltext

#### Accelerated immune ageing is associated with COVID-19 disease severity

"Our analyses reveal a state of enhanced immune ageing in survivors of severe COVID-19 and suggest this could be related to SARS-Cov-2 infection. Our data support the rationale for trials of anti-immune ageing interventions for improving clinical outcomes in these patients with severe disease." <a href="https://immunityageing.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12979-023-00406-z">https://immunityageing.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12979-023-00406-z</a>

#### 'Forever Chemicals' Are Everywhere, But These Are The Most Common Sources

"In fact, studies show that nearly everyone has already been exposed to PFAS and has them circulating within their bodies. An estimated 97% of Americans have PFAS in their blood, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition to what's outlined above, PFAS exposure has been linked to a number of health issues, including cancer, reduced fertility, high blood pressure, changes in liver enzymes, and low birth weight — to name a few. They may also impair the immune system, reducing its ability to fight disease or respond to a vaccine, other research suggests. Forever chemicals break down slowly and can stay in the body for months or years. "What makes them different and important is that they are toxic, entirely man-made, and can remain in the environment and in the human body for a long time after we put them there," Scott Bartell, a professor of environmental and occupational health at the University of California, Irvine, told HuffPost." <a href="https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/forever-chemicals-are-everywhere-but-these-are-the-most-common-sources/ar-AA1hJkNJ">https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/forever-chemicals-are-everywhere-but-these-are-the-most-common-sources/ar-AA1hJkNJ</a>

# A self-controlled case series study to measure the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection associated with attendance at sporting and cultural events: the UK Events Research Programme events

"For the majority of event types studied in the third phase of the UK Events Research Programme, we found no evidence of an increased risk of COVID-19 transmission associated with event attendance. However, we found a 70% increased risk of infection associated with attendance at mainly outdoor unseated multi-day events."

https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-024-03276-4

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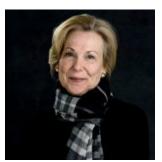


## Nov. 1st, 2023 Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Webinar

# Long COVID's Impact on Patients, Workers & Society Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>

For More Information Go To: http://www.healthconference.org

Speakers for the Nov. 1st 2023 Webinar Include:



Ambassador Deborah Birx, MD Past White House Coordinator Coronavirus Response (USA) "Impact of Long COVID on the United States".



Peter J. Hotez, MD, PhD, Dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology & Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine. will present on "Global Vaccines and Vaccinations: The Science vs The Anti-science." Dr Hotez will discuss the impact of developing new low cost and accessible vaccines for global health, including a recombinant protein COVID-19 "people's vaccine" now administered to more than 100 million adolescents and children in India and Indonesia. He will also discuss new trends in antivaccine sentiments in the US and an escalating and globalizing antiscience empire.

#### **Additional Presenters:**

- **1.** Pam Belluck, New York Times Reporter -- Presentation: "How Long COVID is affecting people's jobs and their needs at work."
- **2.** *Eleni Iasonidou, MD*, Pediatrician, Founder of Long Covid Greece and a one of the very first Greek representatives to join Long Covid Kids. Presentation: "Long Covid and its impact on children."
- **3. Georgios Pappas, MD, PhD**, Physician, Researcher and Advocate. Specializing on zoonoses and preparedness against deliberate and natural outbreaks/ epidemics Presentation:

"Combating Disinformation regarding COVID-19 and Long COVID."

- **4. Jane Thomason, MSPH, CIH**, Industrial Hygienist, National Nurses United & California Nurses Association -- Presentation: "The impact of Long COVID on Nurses."
- **5. Greg Vanichkachorn, MD, MPH**, Occupational and Aerospace Medicine, Mayo Clinic-Presentation: "Symptoms, treatment and rehabilitation of patients with Long COVID."
- **6. Dr. Wilmore Webley**, PhD, University of Massachusetts, -- Presentation: "The effectiveness of vaccines to prevent Long COVID."
- **7. Brian T. Walitt, MD, MPH**, Clinician with the NIH's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. -- Presentation: "Neuropsychiatric manifestations of Long COVID & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome."

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Continuing Education Is Planned for Physicians, Nurses, Social Workers, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapy, Dentistry and Respiratory Therapy. For More information Go To: <a href="http://www.healthconference.org">http://www.healthconference.org</a>

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https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/9900/
Frontline Worker Safety in the Age of COVID 19
A.126.aspx

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