



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 5, 2020

China new virus deaths rise to 563; 2 cruise ships quarantined

(AP) China on Thursday reported 73 more deaths from a new virus, raising its total to 563, as the World Health Organization appealed for more funds to help countries battle the spread of the disease that led health officials in Asia to quarantine two cruise ships with some 5,400 people on board. The ships in Japan and Hong Kong are caught up in a global health emergency that seems to worsen by the day.

In the last 24 hours, the U.N. health agency has seen the biggest jump in cases since the start of the epidemic. According to the latest figures early Thursday, the number of confirmed cases jumped by 3,694 to 28,018. Outside mainland China, at least 230 cases have been confirmed, including two fatalities, one in Hong Kong and another in the Philippines.

As thousands of hospital workers in Hong Kong went on strike to demand the border with mainland China be closed completely, the city announced that all people entering from the mainland, including Hong Kong residents, must be quarantined for 14 days.

To treat the thousands of patients in its hard-hit central region, China built a new hospital in a matter of days and converted a gymnasium, exhibition hall and cultural center.

Patients were being moved into a 1,000-bed hospital with prefabricated wards and isolation rooms in Wuhan. A 1,500-bed hospital also specially built for virus patients is to open Thursday. The hospitals made from converted public spaces to treat patients with mild symptoms have a total of 3,400 beds, the simple cots placed in tight rows in cavernous rooms without any barriers between them.

Read more: <https://apnews.com/905489d29a3d4f8788f17a40003548a0>

In Quarantined Wuhan, Hospital Beds for Coronavirus Patients Are Scarce

(NPR - 7:10 PM) Scientists and public health authorities in China and around the world have mobilized quickly to identify and treat a global outbreak of this new strain of the coronavirus. But in Wuhan, which has [fully a third](#) of the more than 28,000 confirmed cases of the illness as of Wednesday, overwhelmed hospitals are struggling to screen all potential cases and to treat the ever-growing number of patients.

NPR spoke to more than a dozen families with confirmed or suspected cases of the coronavirus. They recounted days of waiting in line to be screened with little more than an intravenous drip as treatment.

Hospitals are so full that without an official coronavirus diagnosis, Wuhan residents say they cannot get care, leaving those with potentially fatal cases of seasonal pneumonia and influenza untreated.

Many such cases are being sent to makeshift isolation wards in requisitioned hotels or clinics to keep them apart from family members while they wait to be screened. Even those who test positive can wait days more for a hospital bed, increasing the risk of infection for others.

Full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/05/802896668/in-quarantined-wuhan-hospital-beds-for-coronavirus-patients-are-scarce>

12th US Conoravirus case confirmed in Wisconsin

The patient had been around an individual with the virus while traveling in China.

Read more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/conoravirus-case-confirmed-wisconsin-12th-case-u-s-n1130946>

Coronavirus hate attack:

Woman in face mask allegedly assaulted by man

Learn more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/coronavirus-hate-attack-woman-face-mask-allegedly-assaulted-man-who-n1130671>

Officials question report of virus spreading before symptoms

(AP) German health officials have raised questions about a report that suggested the new virus from China could be spread by people who are not yet showing symptoms.

The report, published last week in the New England Journal of Medicine, raised concerns that controlling the virus will be more daunting if it turns out it is spreading before people know they are sick.

But officials at the Robert Koch Institute, Germany's public health agency, said Tuesday the woman who set off a cluster of cases was taking anti-fever medicine. Recent interviews with her revealed she "might have had mild unspecific symptoms including back pain," the institute's Marieke Degen wrote in an email to The Associated Press. Full AP story: <https://apnews.com/4ae33df20a356efe246e11cc67345ccd>

UPS and pilots union to make flights to and from China voluntary

Read more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ups-and-pilots-union-agree-to-make-flights-to-china-voluntary/>

Face masks offer little protection against coronavirus, flu, experts warn

Story: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/01/31/coronavirus-flu-prevention-face-masks-offer-little-protection/4620463002/>

Coronavirus is scary, but the flu is deadlier, more widespread

(USA Today) So far, there have been an estimated [19 million cases of flu](#), 180,000 hospitalizations and 10,000 deaths in the U.S. this influenza season – including 68 children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Worldwide, seasonal influenza epidemics cause 3 million to 5 million severe cases every year and kill up to 650,000 people a year, according to the World Health Organization.

"You are much more likely to have influenza," said [Dr. Nora Colburn](#), an infectious-disease physician at Ohio State University's Wexner Medical Center.

"That just far surpasses the amount of cases compared to the novel coronavirus," Colburn said. "If you didn't travel specifically to Wuhan, China, or have contact with a person with suspected or known coronavirus, your chance of contracting this is extremely low."

Read more: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/02/01/coronavirus-flu-deadlier-more-widespread-than-wuhan-china-virus/4632508002/>

1 dead, 2 sick from Legionnaires' at Illinois senior center

(AP) An outbreak of Legionnaires' disease at a senior living center in suburban Chicago has left one resident dead and two others sickened, health officials said Wednesday.

The Lake County Health Department said in a news release that it has confirmed three cases of the disease, a type of severe pneumonia caused by the Legionella bacteria, at Brookdale Senior Living in Vernon Hills. The release says staffers at the facility were notifying residents and others who may have been exposed to the bacteria and were working with state and county health departments to determine "potential sources of contamination."

Full AP story: <https://apnews.com/97668e0c2484aa48189fd8764eaf651b>

Some hospitals wary as new liver transplant rules begin

(AP) Long-delayed rules that will more broadly share scarce donated livers go into effect Tuesday, to the dismay of some hospitals in Tennessee, Kansas and other states that fear their patients may lose out.

Where you live makes a difference in how sick you have to be to get an organ transplant, and wealthier patients sometimes travel to other states to get on shorter waiting lists. The new rules are an attempt to ease that geographic disparity by giving the sickest patients first chance at a donated liver even if it has to be flown about 500 miles to reach them.

The aim is to make the wait for livers, and eventually all organs, less dependent on your ZIP code.

Under the new policy, patients near death within 500 nautical miles (575 miles) of a donor hospital will be offered a matching liver first. If there are no takers, it will be offered next to progressively less sick patients at different distances within that circle.

The flip side: Patients that aren't as sick living in areas where there are more organ donors, such as parts of the South and Midwest, likely will wait longer as livers once used locally are shipped to urban centers where the shortage is more severe.

Learn more: <https://apnews.com/fce96324b153493e8ee5e643e5a131d4>

KY Bill to Arm All School Police with Guns Heads to State House

(WFPL) A Ky. House committee has given the green light to a bill that would require all school police officers to carry guns, with the goal of preventing school shootings.

The proposal is an update to a school safety bill that passed last year, which required every school to hire a school resource officer, or SRO. [This year's legislation](#) would mandate every SRO carry a gun.

Full story: <https://wfpl.org/bill-to-arm-all-school-police-with-guns-heads-to-state-house/>

Gray death - Combination of "some of the most deadly opioids including heroin, fentanyl and various fentanyl analogues"

(WDSU) A new type of heroin is leading one Louisiana sheriff's office to send a message to residents about how dangerous it is --- 10,000 times more potent than morphine, officials said. Officials with the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Office in southwest Louisiana issued the warning last week after making arrests in connection to the new drug.

It's called gray death and is a lethal combination of "some of the most deadly opioids including heroin, fentanyl and various fentanyl analogues," officials said on Facebook.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the new super drug began to surface in the South, first in Alabama and Georgia. Investigators said a "minuscule amount of this drug" can kill.

Full story: <https://www.wdsu.com/article/gray-death-louisiana-sheriffs-office-warns-people-to-never-pick-up-or-touch-new-deadly-drug/30766107#>

Scientists discovered a weed compound that may be 30 times more powerful than THC

(CNN) A [newly discovered cannabis compound](#) has been shown in the lab to potentially be 30 times more potent than THC, the most studied psychoactive compound in marijuana. Whether the new cannabinoid, named tetrahydrocannabiphorol, or THCP, will deliver 30 times the high of THC — or any high at all — is unclear.

Italian scientists also discovered a second previously unknown compound they named CBDP. It appears to be a cousin of CBD, the medicinal compound known for its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and anticonvulsant activity. The discoveries were recently published in the journal Nature, Scientific Reports.

Learn more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/03/us/cannabis-weed-compound-30-times-more-powerful-than-thc-scn/index.html>

Texting more dangerous for pedestrians than listening to music or speaking on the phone

(CNN) We can all agree that walking behind someone who's buried in their phone is annoying. Now scientists are suggesting it's dangerous, too.

Using your phone as you walk is more likely to cause an accident than taking a call or listening to music, researchers have warned, after analyzing the causes behind hundreds of pedestrian mishaps. Texting was associated with a higher rate of near misses and a failure to look left and right when crossing the road, the study found.

By comparison, talking on the phone was associated with only a small increase in time taken to cross a road safely, and listening to music had no notable impact on pedestrian safety.

Learn more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/03/health/texting-pedestrian-safety-study-wellness-scli-intl/index.html>

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact rbartlett@kyha.com (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.