



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for August 19, 2020

KY Reports Twelve New Coronavirus Deaths

(KyForward News & Kentucky Today) Another deadly day for the coronavirus in Kentucky on Tuesday as a dozen deaths were announced, and the total number of cases has advanced past 40,000 after another 627 was reported.

"This is about what we've seen on other Tuesdays going back three or four weeks," Gov. Andy Beshear said during a Tuesday Capitol briefing. "We're announcing 627 new cases of COVID-19, 76 of them are in Kentuckians 18 years or younger. There were also 14 new cases involving children under five years of age, including a one-month old from Pike County, he said.

Tuesday's new cases bring the total to 40,299, since the first one was reported on March 6. Despite the big jump in new cases, the state's positivity rate dropped to 5.48 percent, down from Monday's 5.8%. To see all recent daily reports, [click here](#).

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/governor-andy-beshear-reports-twelve-new-coronavirus-deaths-as-cases-top-40000/>

Full press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=319>

White House virus task force puts more than half of Kentucky counties in 'red' or 'yellow' danger zone

(From [Ky Health News](#)) Beshear pushed back on suggestions from some counties that his recommendations and mandates should not all be statewide. He said the latest **White House Coronavirus Task Force report on Kentucky**, for Aug. 8-14, showed 63 of the state's 120 counties in a red or yellow danger zone, which he said shows the virus is a statewide problem and is spreading quickly "in a state that has very small counties."

He cited advice he got from Dr. Deborah Birx, the task force's response coordinator. "That's exactly the reason that when we took the actions on bars and restaurants and reduced gatherings to 10 or under, Dr. Birx said you have to do it statewide," Beshear said.

"She said, 'I can hand you this report, but when you have this many counties that are in the red or in the yellow zone, you have statewide community spread that is uncontrolled – uncontrolled spread of covid-19.' That doesn't mean we can't get it under control, it just means it takes some time and we have to be patient."

The report puts 20 counties in the "red zone," meaning that the number of new cases numbered more than 1 per 1,000 residents and their positive test rate was 10% or higher. The report puts 43 counties in the "yellow zone," meaning they had between 0.1 and 1 cases per 1,000 and a positive test rate between 5 and 10% in the reporting week.

Beshear pointed out that one county in the red zone has already gone back to school, and others have voted to go back shortly, despite his recommendation that schools delay in-person instruction until Sept. 28. Green County started school Monday and Warren County voted yesterday to start classes Aug. 24, with students alternatively attending two days a week.

COVID-19 Becomes Nation's No. 3 Killer

([Newser](#)) Heart disease and cancer remain the leading causes of death in the US. But next comes COVID-19, for the first time. "COVID is now the No. 3 cause of death in the US," says Dr. Thomas Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "ahead of accidents, injuries, lung disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and many, many other causes." Johns Hopkins University data show the death toll has topped 170,000. In addition, contracting the disease is much more likely to be fatal in the US than in other parts of the world, [CNN](#) reports. Deaths in the US are averaging more than 1,000 a day. "Last week, Americans were eight times more likely to get killed by COVID than were Europeans," Frieden says.

Trust, Fear and Solidarity Will Determine the Success of a COVID Vaccine

Kaiser Health News: <https://khn.org/news/trust-fear-and-solidarity-will-determine-the-success-of-a-covid-vaccine/>

ASPR Implements Check-in Calls for NDMS Responders Returning from the Field

(ASPR) When disaster strikes, state, tribal, or territorial authorities can call on responders from the [National Disaster Medical System](#) (NDMS) to help handle some of the nation's toughest emergency-related health challenges. In the initial days of the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, NDMS responders provided medical support during the first quarantine operations in more than 50 years. Since then, NDMS responders helped save lives at alternate care sites, including the Javits Center in Manhattan, provided mortuary

assistance, helped decompress ICUs, worked to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in hard hit areas like the Northern Navajo Nation, and more. The response to COVID-19 is continuing at a relentless, unprecedented pace, and our NDMS responders are answering the call to service by providing the best of care during one of the greatest public health crises in a century.

The work that NDMS responders do is vital to public health – and it is hard. NDMS responders are working with determination, dedication, and perseverance to protect health and save lives; and ASPR is committed to ensuring our responders remain healthy, both mentally and physically. Although some responders experience challenging stress reactions while they are deployed, some of them have distressing symptoms that only start to manifest after they return home. After NDMS responders return home, they are contacted by behavioral health professionals who have experience working in disasters and are themselves on NDMS teams. Building on similar programs that have been implemented by the U.S. Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, responders are contacted after they have been home 10 to 14 days. The goal is to follow up at the 30-day mark with those responders who could benefit from additional contact.

Talking to a behavioral health specialist is completely voluntary, but many of our responders have told us that it helps. For some responders, this is one of the few times that they pause to really reflect on their deployment and how it has impacted them personally.

Full story: <https://www.phe.gov/ASPRBlog/pages/BlogArticlePage.aspx?PostID=389>

First Moderna Covid-19 vaccine trial moving at a good clip, but officials still "very concerned"

(CNN) The first coronavirus vaccine trial in the US is moving along at a good clip, but needs more minorities to enroll if it is to succeed, officials tell CNN.

While Black people and Latinos account for more than 50% of Covid-19 cases nationwide, so far they make up only about 15% of participants in the nation's first large-scale clinical trial to test out a coronavirus vaccine, according to data obtained by CNN from a government official. That could potentially delay a vaccine from getting to the marketplace.

Read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/18/health/vaccine-trial-progress-moderna-volunteers/index.html>

How Covid-19 smell loss differs from the common cold

Researchers have shown how smell loss associated with the [Covid-19](#) infection differs from what you might typically experience with a bad cold or flu. The main differences found are that, although Covid-19 patients also lose their sense of smell, they can breathe freely, do not tend to have a runny or blocked nose, and they cannot detect bitter or sweet tastes. These findings, published in the journal *Rhinology*, lend weight to the theory that Covid-19 infects the brain and central nervous system.

Learn more: <https://www.prokerala.com/news/articles/a1074028.html>

FDA Flags Accuracy Issue with Widely Used Coronavirus Test

(AP) Potential accuracy issues with a widely used coronavirus test could lead to false results for patients, U.S. health officials warned. The Food and Drug Administration issued the alert Monday to doctors and laboratory technicians using Thermo Fisher's TaqPath genetic test. Regulators said issues related to laboratory equipment and software used to run the test could lead to inaccuracies. The agency advised technicians to follow updated instructions and software developed by the company to ensure accurate results. The warning comes nearly a month after Connecticut public health officials first reported that at least 90 people had received false positive results for the coronavirus. Most of those receiving the false results were residents of nursing homes or assisted living facilities.

The FDA said one possible problem was related to the incorrect use of equipment that rapidly spins samples in preparation for processing. The agency's letter tells lab workers to follow new instructions developed by the company for this step. A second issue relates to the software used on Thermo Fisher's testing platform. FDA said labs must upgrade the software to a new version.

Full AP story: <https://baltimore.cbslocal.com/2020/08/18/fda-flags-accuracy-issue-with-widely-used-coronavirus-test/>

More infectious coronavirus mutation may be 'a good thing', says disease expert

(Reuters) - An increasingly common mutation of the novel coronavirus found in Europe, North America and parts of Asia may be more infectious but appears less deadly, according to a prominent infectious diseases doctor. Paul Tambyah, senior consultant at the National University of Singapore and president-elect of the International Society of Infectious Diseases, said evidence suggests the proliferation of the D614G mutation in some parts of the world has coincided with a drop in death rates, suggesting it is less lethal. "Maybe that's a good thing to have a virus that is more infectious but less deadly," Tambyah told Reuters.

Read more: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-mutation-idUSKCN25E08Y>

Strongest immune responses in patients who recovered from severe Covid-19

Researchers examined 200 individuals from Sweden across full spectrum of exposure, infection and disease. According to a study published in journal *Cell*, the strongest T cell responses were present in individuals who recovered from severe Covid-19 infection, while even mild cases of Covid-19 lead to robust memory T cell responses to SARS-CoV-2. The memory T cell is one of the key components that helps in preventing recurrent episodes of the virus.

Read more: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/strongest-immune-responses-in-patients-who-recovered-from-severe-covid-19-report/article32390682.ece>

Scientists decode immune system changes in children with rare COVID-19 related syndrome

According to the researchers, including those from King's College London in the UK, the rare disease, referred to as pediatric inflammatory multisystem syndrome (PIMS-TS), has emerged in a small number of children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more: <https://www.indiatvnews.com/science/scientists-decode-immune-system-changes-in-children-with-rare-covid-19-related-syndrome-643285>

New Physician Survey Uncovers Nearly Half of Physicians Believe COVID-19 Will Not Be Under Control Until After June 2021

PRNewswire/ -- The Physicians Foundation today released its biennial [Survey of America's Physicians](#) revealing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physician practices and their patients. This year's survey is a three-part series examining how COVID-19 is affecting and is perceived by the nation's physicians. The first part of the survey, [COVID-19's Impact on Physicians' Practices and Patients](#), finds that the majority (86%) of physicians believe COVID-19 won't be under control until January 2021, with nearly half (49%) not seeing the virus being under control until after June 1, 2021. Furthermore, a majority (72%) of physicians believe that the virus will severely impact patient health outcomes due to delayed routine care during the pandemic.

Physicians see a potential harm to patients caused by the "indirect effects" of the virus. The primary indirect harm to patients presented by COVID-19, cited by 75% of physicians, is employment changes that may result in patients losing health insurance. The loss of employer-based health insurance may prevent patients from seeking the care they need and in turn, exacerbate their ill health.

Further, 67% of physicians indicated that patient reluctance to seek medical care due to COVID-19 presents great harm to patients, while 65% said closure of physician practices presents great harm to patients.

In addition, 59% see opening businesses, schools and public places as a bigger risk to patients than continuing policies of isolation.

Learn more: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-survey-uncovers-nearly-half-of-physicians-believe-covid-19-will-not-be-under-control-until-after-june-2021-301113722.html>

***Related* - Med School Applications Soaring Potential for even stiffer competition**

Read more: <https://www.medpagetoday.com/publichealthpolicy/medicaleducation/88140>

California Has First Case of Plague in 5 Year

Read more: <http://newser.com/s295093>

Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines Extracts from [August 18](#) & [August 19, 2020](#)

[Federal Study of Covid Treatments Enters a New Phase](#) (*The New York Times*) A clinical trial showed that remdesivir helped hospitalized patients. Now researchers are asking whether when the drug is paired with another antiviral drug, patients will recover faster.

[ICU Capacity is More About the Clinicians than the Number of Beds](#) (*STAT*) In our zeal to understand how our health systems are coping with Covid-19, a key issue is often overlooked: human capacity. Contractors can build new hospitals in a week. But training competent doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists, and other clinicians to work in intensive care units takes years. If we build ICU beds, patients will come. But who will care for them?

[Texas Becomes Fourth State to Surpass 10,000 COVID-19 Deaths](#) (*The Texas Tribune*) New Jersey, New York and California have also exceeded 10,000 known COVID-19 fatalities. Experts say official death tolls are all but certain to be undercounts.

[Cellphone Apps Designed to Track Covid-19 Spread Struggle Worldwide Amid Privacy Concerns](#) (*The Washington Post*) Some public health advocates had hoped cellphone location data would help blunt the virus's spread, but voluntary use has lagged.

[Vaccine Refusal and Measles Outbreaks in the US](#) (JAMA) Measles importation continues to be the precipitant of US measles outbreaks, but the proportion of imported cases has been steadily declining, indicating the increasing contribution of sustained domestic measles transmission.

[Study Finds No Race Difference in COVID-19 Hospital Deaths](#) (CIDRAP) After adjusting for sociodemographic factors and underlying conditions, black COVID-19 patients were no more likely than white patients to die of any cause in hospitals, a retrospective study published today in JAMA Network Open has found.

[Yep, Masks And Protective Gear Are Still Hard To Get — Especially For Small Buyers](#) (NPR) At the height of summer, temperatures climb to nearly 100 degrees most days in Pharr, a small city in South Texas. Nonetheless, nurse practitioner Oralia Martinez and her staff have set up a temporary exam room outside her small clinic. This is their way of preserving masks and other personal protective equipment as they treat COVID-19 patients in the Rio Grande Valley, where infections are spiking.

[The U.S. Forced Major Manufacturers to Build Ventilators. Now They're Piling Up Unused in a Strategic Reserve.](#) (The Washington Post) During the first weeks of the covid-19 crisis in March, health officials panicked over an anticipated shortage of ventilators, breathing machines that were essential to help keep patients alive. But during the months it took for companies to develop their supply chains, test prototypes and train workers to build them, the approach to treating covid-19 changed. Now, unexpectedly, the vast majority of ventilators are going unused.

US Attorney: Memphis City Council's Permission Not Needed for [Operation LeGenD](#)
[Memphis \(TN\) Flyer](#) (8/18, Sells) reports, "The federal government does not need the Memphis City Council's permission to bring more law enforcement to the city. That's what Michael Dunavant, the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee, told council members Tuesday, August 18th. Dunavant was defending a new violent crime reduction effort – called Operation LeGenD – that will bring 40 federal agents from a variety of agencies to Memphis. The council heard from Dunavant Tuesday as they reviewed a resolution in opposition to the operation here. 'With all due respect to the council, no one's permission is needed to do this,' Dunavant said, noting federal law trumps local law. 'We will do this.'"

Related - InfraGard Webinar
"Current State of Civil Unrest"

Thursday, August 20, 11 AM ET/10 AM CT

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3750443367065719051>

CDC Clinician Call
[Influenza Vaccination Recommendations and Clinical Guidance during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
August 20, 2 PM ET
Zoom link below to join: <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1601970527>

Fires, heat and lightning in the western US - Reports from CNN

- ✓ Almost 45 million people across the West are under heat warnings and advisories today
- ✓ Wildfires rage in Northern California
- ✓ There are dozens of fires burning across California
- ✓ Colorado firefighters are battling the state's 2nd largest fire ever
- ✓ Police are going door-to-door to encourage residents to evacuate

CNN Collection of stories: <https://www.cnn.com/us/live-news/california-wildfires-08-19-2020/index.html>

Related - [California avoids power outages but fires threaten homes](#)

Car-sized Asteroid Just made close fly-by of Earth
NASA didn't see it coming!

Read more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/asteroid-2020qg-closest-fly-by-earth-on-record-nasa-astronomers/>

COVID Resources

Workforce

ASPR's Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE) published [National Crisis Support Hotlines and Directories for Healthcare Workers Experiencing COVID-19-Related Stress and Burnout.](#)

The CDC updated its [Staffing Resources and Guidance](#) for state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments on staffing the public health workforce.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) released its [EMS COVID Resource Reporting Tool](#).

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency in collaboration with the National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators released the [Identity, Credential, and Access Management \(ICAM\) Value Proposition Suite](#). The suite introduces ICAM concepts, explores federated ICAM use-cases, and highlights their potential benefits for the public safety community.

Data

The CDC updated its [interpretations of national and state level COVID-19 forecasting models](#).

[COVID-19 Forecasts: Deaths](#)

[COVID-19 Forecasts: Hospitalizations](#)

[COVID-19 Forecasts: Cases](#)

On August 13, the CDC updated its [COVID-19 Electronic Laboratory Reporting Implementation by State](#).

Other

[ASPR TRACIE Novel Coronavirus Resources](#)

[FEMA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Response](#)

[FDA's Emergency Use Authorization web page](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Homepage](#)

- [CDC What's New](#)
 - [COVID-19 Contact Tracing Communications Graphics](#) Tuesday, August 18, 2020
 - [Monitoring and Evaluation Action Guide: Wearing Masks as a COVID-19 Community Mitigation Strategy](#) Tuesday, August 18, 2020
 - [Information for Pediatric Healthcare Providers](#) Monday, August 17, 2020
 - [National Wastewater Surveillance System \(NWSS\)](#) Monday, August 17, 2020
 - [Operational Considerations for Maintaining Essential Services and Providing Prevention, Care, and Treatment for Tuberculosis \(TB\) in Low-Resource non-US Settings During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

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.