



# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for September 21, 2020

*Fall equinox arrives on Tuesday, September 22, 2020, at 9:31 A.M. EDT.*

## Kentucky Adds 1400 More COVID-19 Cases Over The Weekend

(WFPL) The state reported another 439 new cases of COVID 19 on Sunday. Gov. Andy Beshear also announced three more deaths, bringing the total number of COVID deaths in Kentucky to 1,111.

On Saturday Beshear announced 1,002 new cases of COVID-19, the second highest daily total since the pandemic began. That brings to 1,441 the number of new cases for the weekend.

WFPL link: <https://wfpl.org/kentucky-adds-1400-more-covid-19-cases-over-the-weekend/>

Governor's Press Release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prld=376>

KyCOVID19.ky.gov: <https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>

## UK Could See 50,000 new cases a day US Approaching 200,000 deaths

Read more from ABC: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/live-updates/coronavirus/?id=73141490>

## Updated CDC guidance acknowledges coronavirus can spread through the air

(CNN) The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated guidance on its website to say coronavirus can commonly spread "through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols," which are produced even when a person breathes.

"Airborne viruses, including COVID-19, are among the most contagious and easily spread," the site now says.

Previously, the CDC page said that Covid-19 was thought to spread mainly between people in close contact -- about 6 feet -- and "through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks."

[The page, updated Friday](#), still says Covid-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another, and now says the virus is known to spread "through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks or breathes."

Read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/20/health/cdc-coronavirus-airborne-transmission/index.html>

**CDC "How COVID-19 Spreads" page:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

## Details Emerge on Unexplained Illness in AstraZeneca COVID Vaccine Trial

(HealthDay News) New details surfaced on Thursday on an unexplained neurological condition that struck a volunteer who was participating in AstraZeneca's coronavirus [vaccine](#) trial.

In an internal safety report obtained by *CNN*, company officials describe how a healthy 37-year-old woman "experienced confirmed transverse myelitis" after receiving her second dose of the vaccine. She was hospitalized on Sept. 5.

The report describes how the patient had the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine in early June and was fine. She received her second dose in late August. While out [running](#) on Sept. 2, she "had a trip [not fall] with a jolt." The report noted that she did not have any obvious injury to her spine when examined, according to *CNN*.

The next day, the report said, she had difficulty [walking](#), [pain](#) and [weakness](#) in her arms, [pain](#) and reduced sensation in her torso, a [headache](#) and reduced ability to use her hands.

Read more: <https://news360.com/article/538146675>

## We Will Not Have a Vaccine by November *No matter what you hear, the timeline is not possible*

(Slate) "I think there will be a vaccine that will initially be available sometime between November and December," Robert Redfield, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [said Wednesday](#). There were some caveats—there would be a "very limited supply," which would "have to be prioritized" for health care workers and high-risk folks. The public, said Redfield, might get this vaccine sometime next year. But still: a vaccine, available in November.

We could, maybe, physically have a vaccine by November. As [the New York Times vaccine tracker](#) notes, as of Friday afternoon there were **nine** vaccines [in Phase 3 trials](#), the last major stage of data collection prior to a vaccine's release to the public. This is the phase in which a large group of people get a vaccine to test its safety and efficacy. Five of these are not only in Phase 3 trials, but they have been approved for limited use in either

China or Russia. While this is promising for our long-term vaccine potential, it is by no means enough evidence to suggest we'll have a safe, effective vaccine before the end of the year. As the tracker also notes, "experts say the rushed process has [serious risks](#)."

There are two main "serious risks," and I've mentioned them a few times now: safety and efficacy. Evaluating the efficacy of a vaccine takes time because people have to get the vaccine (or a placebo shot) and then go about their lives where they may or may not encounter the virus, using the vaccine the way people will use it once it reaches a larger market. We are only just starting that process, which should take months—in [normal times, years](#)—now.

The second concern, around safety, is about whether the vaccine will produce some adverse reaction in a small fraction of people who get it.

Read full story: <https://slate.com/technology/2020/09/coronavirus-vaccine-timeline-safety-efficacy.html>

-----  
**Why the number of people getting tested for COVID-19 has dropped in the U.S.**

(VOX) Through the late spring and summer, it looked like America was, slowly but surely, building up its Covid-19 testing capacity. But after July and particularly at the start of September, that progress stalled out.

As of September 17, average daily tests were at about 730,000, down from an average of 780,000 in early September and 830,000 in late July, according to the [Covid Tracking Project](#). Meanwhile, the [percentage of tests coming back positive](#), which is used to gauge testing capacity, has remained around 5 percent — at times above the threshold of 5 percent that experts generally recommend, and exceeding the 3 percent threshold that [some have called for](#).

Only in the past few days have test numbers begun climbing up, reaching a new high of 1,061,411 tests on September 19, possibly due to an [increase in states' reporting of antigen tests](#). Experts say the US should instead continue building up its Covid-19 testing capacities to prepare for potential future outbreaks. Testing, paired with contact tracing, remains crucial to controlling the coronavirus, letting officials isolate the sick, track others who may have been infected and get them to quarantine, and deploy broader public health measures as necessary.

So why did testing decline for weeks in the US?

1. The summer's worst Covid-19 outbreaks in the US have receded — reducing demand for tests. President Donald Trump's
2. The administration's recommended less testing, before backtracking on the changes this week. And
3. State governments may not be reporting all the tests within their borders, particularly relatively newer antigen tests that are growing in use.

Read full story to learn more: <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/21444071/covid-coronavirus-testing-pandemic-september-decline>

**Related story - Group of 'armed citizens' confronts  
Minn. health workers conducting random COVID-19 testing**

Read more: <https://www.twincities.com/2020/09/17/group-of-armed-citizens-confronts-health-workers-conducting-random-covid-19-testing/>

-----  
**Canada Comes Up With No-Nose COVID-19 Test - "swirl, gargle and spit"**  
*'It is one of the first of its kind around the world'*

Learn more: <http://newser.com/s296415>

-----  
**Researchers identify a drug that can treat Covid-19**

Researchers have found a drug that could be repurposed to treat or prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. Researchers mentioned in their study published in the journal Cytokine and Growth Factors Review that 4-Phenylbutiric acid (4-PBA) can avert mortality caused by respiratory failure due to cellular stress. The preliminary test of the drug, which was conducted on animal models, also showed promising results.

Learn more: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/researchers-identify-a-drug-that-can-treat-covid-19/article32652664.ece>

-----  
**Iodine solution can completely inactivate Covid-19: Study**

Read more: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/iodine-solution-can-completely-inactivate-covid-19-study/article32652334.ece>

-----  
**Poorly Protected Postal Workers Are Catching COVID-19 by the Thousands.**  
*It's One More Threat to Voting by Mail.*

Learn more: <https://www.propublica.org/article/poorly-protected-postal-workers-are-catching-covid-19-by-the-thousands-its-one-more-threat-to-voting-by-mail>

## Administration Shut Down U.S. Postal Service Plan to Mail Masks to Every American

(People) The Trump administration shut down a plan from the U.S. Postal Service to mail five free [face masks](#) to every U.S. household in April, [according to several reports](#). The USPS, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), had [drafted a press release](#) announcing that it would distribute a stockpile of 650 million reusable masks to every residential address in the country. The first shipments, in April, would go to COVID-19 hotspots.

Internal White House emails, obtained by [the Washington Post](#) and [NBC News](#), showed that the Trump administration decided to cancel the program. An official in the administration told the *Post* that “There was concern from some in the White House Domestic Policy Council and the office of the vice president that households receiving masks might create concern or panic.”

HHS opted to instead distribute the masks to nonprofit organizations and state and federal agencies. A spokesperson for the department told the *Post* that about 600 million have been sent out since April.

Full story: <https://people.com/health/trump-administration-shut-down-usps-plan-mail-free-masks/>

### Fact check: Staph infections are common and aren't caused by face masks

*The latest anti-mask claim to make the rounds online is that wearing face masks cause staph infections. But dermatologists say otherwise.*

Read more: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/09/18/fact-check-staph-infections-common-not-caused-face-masks/5692064002/>

### Kentucky hospitals say pandemic has cost them \$1.34 billion, net

(KY Health News) Kentucky hospitals say they have had collective financial losses of \$1.34 billion due to the covid-19 pandemic, with the biggest hit from elective procedures that were canceled or postponed.

2020 COVID-19 Losses for Kentucky Hospitals:

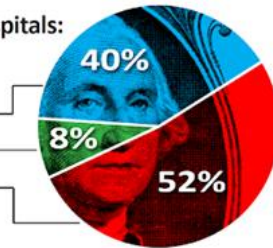
**\$2.6 Billion**

Losses Covered by Federal Assistance: **\$1.03 Billion**

Hospitals' Cost Mitigation Efforts: **\$199 Million**

Remaining 2020 Financial Loss: **\$1.34 Billion**

Source: Kentucky Hospital Association data



In a new report, the **Kentucky Hospital Association** tracks the hits hospitals have taken and the federal assistance they got to stay afloat. They say federal relief money, not counting almost that much in loans from Medicare, reduced their losses by \$1.03 billion, and they reduced their expenses by \$200 million.

“While it sounds like we've gotten a lot of money, which of course we have, the losses are much

greater than that,” KHA President Nancy Galvagni said.

The report says the losses came mainly from fewer patients seeking care not related to covid-19, new limits on hospital capacity in case of a local outbreak, and stockpiling supplies like personal protective equipment. The pandemic has added other burdens. Hospitals must have 30 percent of their beds at stand-by in case of a local outbreak, and treatment of a covid-19 patient is much more expensive than other patients. KHA cited research indicating that hospitals lose between \$1,200 to \$8,000 per day on covid-patient care that won't be paid by insurers.

Another big question that's weighing on hospitals is the money they owe the federal government. Hospitals were able to request six months of advance payments from Medicare, but at some point Medicare will have to recoup that money. KHA is asking Congress to forgive the loans.

**Related stories - [Medicaid payments under threat as COVID pummels state budgets](#) & [Verma confirms Medicare loan recoupment delay amid Hill negotiations](#)**

### Thousands converge for Lake of the Ozarks motorcycle rally



(KC Star) The rumbling can be heard from miles away. Thousands of motorcycles have converged around the Lake of the Ozarks, where local officials are bracing for more than 100,000 visitors for the [14th annual Bikefest Lake of the Ozarks](#). The event is one of the last and largest of the season in the lake area. Lake Ozark Mayor Gerry Murawski said in years past they'd see about 100,000 bikers spread over the region over five days of events, scenic rides and concerts.

Read more here: <https://www.kansascity.com/news/state/missouri/article245824025.html>

### Chinese Factory Leaks New Disease That Afflicts Thousands

(Newser) A Chinese pharmaceutical factory has apparently leaked an illness into the air and infected thousands of people, [Global News](#) reports. Chinese officials say the factory was producing vaccines for animals with brucellosis—also known as Malta fever or Mediterranean fever—when bacteria vented out and infected at least

3,245 people in Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu province. [CNN](#) reports that another 1,401 residents have come back "preliminarily positive" among 21,847 tests in the city of 2.9 million. [State-run media](#) reported the problem late last year, but with low numbers, and the factory said eight workers had been "severely punished." Now officials say it's far worse than they realized.

Full story: <https://www.newser.com/story/296420/chinese-factory-leaks-bacterial-disease.html>

Related CNN story: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/17/asia/china-brucellosis-outbreak-intl-hnk/index.html>

CDC link on Brucellosis: <https://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/index.html>

-----

### **UK - Psychosocial Support for Healthcare and Behavior Healthcare Providers during COVID-19**

(UK Health Care) There is a link below for the latest **Well@Work** podcast created by the University of Kentucky Center on Trauma and Children through a SAMHSA grant to the Department for Behavioral Health Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. This resource is intended for your staff and members. We encourage you to forward this email with the link to all your employees, and any members, constituents, or licensees. **Well@Work Podcast- Episode 4: Sleep** <https://youtu.be/tLEv3R6T4xw>

#### **For those interested in the past episodes:**

Episode 1: Secondary Traumatic Stress - <https://youtu.be/JjqBKCHOVB0>

Episode 2: Moral Distress - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRYoIXbf3I>

Episode 3: Grief and Loss <https://youtu.be/tLEv3R6T4xw>

### **Ky. efforts at farmer suicide prevention are a national model, UK professor says:**

#### **Farmer Suicide Prevention Day is Wed., Sept. 23**

(KY Health News) Kentucky farmers, like those across the nation, work tirelessly to stay afloat amid plummeting farm incomes, market instabilities, extreme weather conditions, few safety nets and now, a global pandemic. And sometimes those stressors add up, leading some to consider suicide, and others to die by it.

To bring awareness to this issue, the General Assembly **passed** House Bill 59, sponsored by Rep. Brandon Reed, R-Hodgenville, during the last legislative session to designate the Wednesday of **National Farm Safety and Health Week**, which is the third week of September, as "Farmer Suicide Prevention Day." This year that date falls on Sept. 23.

"There are significant stress factors across rural America and it's important to know that it's okay for farmers to ask for help," said state Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles. "And one of the more unfortunate issues here is that the farm community is one of the last communities to reach out for help and so we've got to make sure that farmers know that there are resources available if they need to talk with someone."

Quarles pointed to several stressors that are unique to the farming community, including the extended stress that comes with only getting one or two paychecks a year, working under risky market conditions, and not having access to benefits or health insurance through an employer.

Farmers also worry about losing the family farm, said **University of Kentucky** professor Joan Mazur. She is deputy director of the **Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention**, which has received a \$48,000 federal grant to work on suicide prevention.

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](mailto: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.