



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for November 23, 2020

[NOTE: Our listserv had a problem again on Sunday, and apparently did not replicate. So we will insert some of the items from yesterday's edition here today.]

Governor Beshear announces highest number of cases for a Sunday

(WKYT) Governor Andy Beshear announced 2,194 new COVID-19 cases in Kentucky on Sunday. This report is the highest ever for a Sunday. The second highest was on October 25. The state total now stands at 158,100 cases. The state's positivity rate is now 9.19%.

This week was Kentucky's highest ever week for COVID-19 cases, surpassing the previous record week by 3,766 cases. The Governor also reported 4 new deaths Sunday. That brings the total COVID-19 related deaths in Kentucky to 1,787.

Full story: <https://www.wkyt.com/app/2020/11/22/governor-beshear-announces-highest-number-of-cases-for-a-sunday/>

Press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prld=479>

Fauci: 'Terribly Painful Months' Are Coming

(Newser) If you're looking for reassuring words regarding the pandemic, Dr. Anthony Fauci isn't offering many of them. In comments to the [New York Times](#) on Friday, he expressed his opinion that "December, January and early February are going to be terribly painful months." He attributed that prediction to the steepness of the case-count curve. "It's almost an exponential curve," he explained. "When you have an exponential curve up like that, by the time it peaks and then comes ultimately down, the duration of the surge is much longer." The *Times* provides context: "Epidemiologists dread exponential growth because cases can quickly double, then double again." But Fauci wasn't all doom and gloom, saying the "spectacular results of the vaccines" are sources of real hope. Elsewhere on the coronavirus front:

Full story: <https://www.newser.com/story/299051/faucis-view-on-the-next-few-months-terribly-painful.html>

Related – Fauci reassured children that Santa Claus has "innate immunity" to COVID-19. (USA Today)

Third Strong Vaccine May Have Big Advantage

Does not need sub-zero temperatures; more easily kept at hospitals and doctors' offices.

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/299114/third-strong-vaccine-may-have-big-advantage.html>

FDA Grants Emergency Authorization For COVID-19 Treatment From Regeneron

(NPR) One of the experimental drugs that President Trump received while he was battling the coronavirus has been approved for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration. The drug, made by the biotech company Regeneron, is the second antibody treatment to win emergency use approval from the FDA.

The treatment combines two antibodies — casirivimab and imdevimab — and administers them together by IV. In a clinical trial of about 800 people, the combination was shown to significantly reduce virus levels within days of treatment.

In its [authorization](#) on Saturday, the FDA made clear that the drug is only for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 in people 12 years and older who are at high risk of developing more severe symptoms. It's not for patients who are hospitalized because of COVID-19 or who require oxygen therapy because of the virus.

Full story: <https://www.npr.org/2020/11/22/937746317/fda-grants-emergency-authorization-for-a-second-covid-19-antibody-treatment>

MMR vaccine could protect against COVID-19

(Scienmag) The measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine has been theorized to provide protection against COVID-19. In a new study published in *mBio*, an open-access journal of the American Society for Microbiology, researchers provide further proof of this by showing that mumps IgG titers, or levels of IgG antibody, are inversely correlated with severity in recovered COVID-19 patients previously vaccinated with the MMR II vaccine produced by Merck. MMR II contains the Edmonston strain of measles, the Jeryl Lynn (B-level) strain of mumps, and the Wistar RA 27/3 strain of rubella.

"We found a statistically significant inverse correlation between mumps titer levels and COVID-19 severity in people under age 42 who have had MMR II vaccinations," said lead study author Jeffrey E. Gold, president of World Organization, in Watkinsville, Georgia. "This adds to other associations demonstrating that the MMR vaccine may be protective against COVID-19. It also may explain why children have a much lower COVID-19

case rate than adults, as well as a much lower death rate. The majority of children get their first MMR vaccination around 12 to 15 months of age and a second one from 4 to 6 years of age.”

Read more: <https://scienmag.com/mmr-vaccine-could-protect-against-covid-19/>

Health experts clash over use of certain drugs for COVID-19

(AP) Health officials around the world are clashing over the use of certain drugs for COVID-19, leading to different treatment options for patients depending on where they live.

On Friday, a World Health Organization guidelines panel advised against using the antiviral remdesivir for hospitalized patients, saying there's no evidence it improves survival or avoids the need for breathing machines.

But in the U.S. and many other countries, the drug has been the standard of care since a major, government-led study found other benefits — it shortened recovery time for hospitalized patients by five days on average, from 15 days to 10.

Read more: <https://apnews.com/article/health-experts-clash-drugs-for-covid-19-eda78c1994d6812cc72c13a1bd42828d>

A shortage of physicians with experience treating hospitalized patients could threaten the next surge response

(Stat News) As Covid-19 cases reach a [record high](#) in the U.S., [models project](#) that this third wave of the pandemic may be the worst yet. The confluence of weather patterns, pandemic fatigue, loose social distancing guidelines, and the upcoming flu season have led to a surge of hospitalizations that will continue to rise over the next few months.

Concerns are once again growing about hospital capacity in terms of available beds and equipment, as well as the availability of frontline health care providers and how to keep them from getting Covid-19. One looming shortage that has been overlooked is the shortage of [providers with experience in treating hospitalized patients](#).

Most physicians in the U.S. stop treating patients in the hospital when they complete their residencies or fellowships. This lack of experience could have a significant impact on patient outcomes and should be considered in pandemic planning.

Read more: <https://www.statnews.com/2020/11/20/a-shortage-of-physicians-with-experience-treating-hospitalized-patients-could-threaten-the-next-surge-response/>

Related - Over 900 Mayo Clinic staff in Midwest have contracted COVID-19 in past 2 weeks

Read more: <https://abcn.ws/3pBjBrr>

In south-central Ky., health workers and officials battle coronavirus fatigue, politicization of pandemic

Read story from KyForward News: <https://www.kyforward.com/in-south-central-ky-health-workers-and-officials-battle-coronavirus-fatigue-politicization-of-pandemic/>

Two national grants worth more than \$107K provide telehealth for special needs children in Kentucky

(KyForward News) Kentucky's Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs (OCSHCN) has received two national grants to bolster telehealth services. One grant for \$100,000 comes from the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP), while the other is a minigrant for \$7,500 from Family Voices.

“The delivery of health care has evolved throughout the course of this pandemic – it has expanded beyond the walls of a medical facility,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “Telehealth is an example of the expanded delivery of care which allows Kentuckians to access health care services from the comfort of their home, limiting the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Learn more: <https://www.kyforward.com/two-national-grants-worth-more-than-107k-provide-telehealth-for-special-needs-children-in-kentucky/>

Study Links Increased COVID-19 Transmission to Poultry Plants Allowed to Operate Faster

Read more: <https://wfpl.org/study-links-increased-covid-19-transmission-to-poultry-plants-allowed-to-operate-faster/>

How Hospitals Can Cut Patients' Falls

(Medicine Net) A new toolkit to help reduce falls and fall-related injuries among hospital patients is highly effective, a new study shows.

Falls are the leading cause of preventable injury, so researchers set out to create a fall [prevention](#) toolkit for patients and their families. It includes measures such as a laminated poster to display by patients' beds, and

personalized [prevention](#) plans that can be included in patients' electronic health records and printed out or displayed on a computer screensaver. Learn more: <https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=249168>

Final Rule to Increase Access to Lifesaving Organs

HHS announced they are finalizing a rule that is designed to increase the supply of lifesaving organs available for transplant in the United States by requiring that the organizations responsible for organ procurement be transparent in their performance, highlighting the best and worst performers, and requiring them to compete on their ability to successfully facilitate transplants. [Read full news release](#)

Modified Mosquitoes Suppress Dengue in Field Trial

Wild-type pests pushed out, infections cut markedly in treated zones

Learn more: https://www.medpagetoday.com/meetingcoverage/astmh/89817?xid=nl_covidupdate_2020-11-23&eun=g173976d0r&utm_source=Saillthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyUpdate_112320&utm_term=NL_Gen_Int_Daily_News_Update

[CDC Holiday Season Travel](#)

The winter holiday season is a time when many families travel long distances to celebrate together. Travel increases the chance of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. If you must travel, be informed of the risks involved.

- [Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Know Your Travel Risk](#)
- [Know When to Delay Your Travel to Avoid Spreading COVID-19](#)
- [After you Travel Internationally](#)

If you decide to travel, follow these safety measures during your trip to [protect yourself and others](#) from COVID-19:

- Wear a mask to keep your nose and mouth covered when in public places.
- Avoid close contact by staying at least 6 feet apart (about 2 arms' length) from anyone who is not from your household.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

Celebration Tips

The COVID-19 pandemic has been [stressful](#) and isolating for many people. Gatherings during the upcoming holidays can be an opportunity to reconnect with family and friends. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 epidemic is worsening, and small household gatherings are an important contributor to the rise in COVID-19 cases. Holiday celebrations will likely need to be different this year to prevent the spread of COVID-19. When you talk with your friends and family about plans, it's okay if you decide to stay home and remain apart from others. [Hard choices to be apart](#) this year may mean that you can spend many more years with your loved ones.

Consider [activities](#) that pose lower risk of spreading COVID-19. Additionally, CDC offers these [considerations to slow the spread of COVID-19 during small gatherings](#). Celebrating virtually or with members of your own household (who are consistently taking measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19) poses the lowest risk for spread. Your household is anyone who currently lives with you and shares common spaces in your housing unit (such as your house or apartment). This can include family members, roommates, or people who are unrelated to you. People who do not currently live in your housing unit, such as college students who are returning home from school for the holidays, should be considered part of different households. In-person gatherings that bring together family members or friends from different households, including college students returning home, pose varying levels of risk.

Traditional Thanksgiving gatherings with family and friends are fun but can increase the chances of getting or spreading [COVID-19](#) or the [flu](#). [Follow these tips to make your Thanksgiving holiday safer](#). These considerations are meant to supplement—**not replace**—any [state, local, territorial, or tribal](#) health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which all gatherings must comply.

Please take the time to visit [I Wear a Mask because](#) to hear why CDC employees wear masks and how they hope to inspire others to do the same.

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.