



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for December 19-20, 2020

KY Governor Says Mitigation Efforts Have Stopped Growth of COVID-19 Cases

(Press Release) Gov. Andy Beshear Saturday said mitigation efforts have stopped the growth of COVID-19 cases in the commonwealth, noting that case numbers are continuing to decline and Kentucky's positivity rate is stable.

"What we are seeing is that the measures we have taken are working," said Gov. Beshear. "We have stopped the increase in cases, which we knew we had to do before we can start to decrease those numbers. Let's all commit to doing what we know is right – wearing masks, social distancing, washing our hands and limiting our holiday gatherings – so we can beat this virus once and for good."

As of 4 PM Saturday, there were 3,388 new cases, with 1,655 hospitalized. 438 were in the ICU, and 253 were on vents. Positivity rate is 8.58%. There were 27 new deaths reported today.

Full press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=524>

FDA authorizes Moderna COVID vaccine for emergency use

(CIDRAP) The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last night issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, bringing a second vaccine to the United States' battle against the pandemic and making it the first country to have two authorized vaccines that come with clear and compelling efficacy data.

The formal announcement follows the Dec 17 recommendation of the FDA independent expert panel, the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC). And it allows shipping to begin for use in people ages 18 and older. Federal officials have said they expect to ship 5.9 million Moderna doses to states next week.

In a [statement](#), FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn, MD, said, "With the availability of two vaccines now for the prevention of COVID-19, the FDA has taken another crucial step in the fight against this global pandemic that is causing vast numbers of hospitalizations and deaths in the United States each day." And he emphasized that expedited authorization for both vaccines adhered to rigorous standards for safety, efficacy, and manufacturing quality.

As required under the EUA, Moderna has released fact sheets for [providers](#) and for [patients](#).

When asked about components that might trigger allergies, Marks said though it's dangerous to speculate, one possibility experts are considering is polyethylene glycol (PEG), which is a component of both vaccines. Allergies to PEG are thought to be very rare, but perhaps they're not as rare as health officials think. He added that PEG is a common component of various pharmaceutical products, including bowel preps and laxatives.

For [both vaccines](#), PEG is part of the lipid nanoparticle bubble that stabilizes the mRNA molecules in the vaccine. PEG is also used as an anti-foaming agent in food and drinks and is the main ingredient in personal lubricants.

Full report: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/12/fda-authorizes-moderna-covid-vaccine-emergency-use>

Millions forced to cancel Christmas as 'new variant' of coronavirus spreads in U.K.

(NBC) Millions of people in London and the U.K.'s southeast will be forced to cancel their Christmas plans after scientists said Saturday that a new [coronavirus](#) variant was spreading more quickly.

[Prime Minister Boris Johnson](#) told a news conference that the toughest set of coronavirus restrictions — known as "Tier 4" — will be put in place from Sunday, putting regions under the strictest lockdown rules.

As a result, nonessential shops, gyms, cinemas, hairdressers and bowling alleys will be forced to close for two weeks, while people will be restricted to meeting one other person from another household in an outdoor public space.

A "bubble" policy — allowing up to three households to meet over the holiday period in parts of the country that are not under Tier 4 restrictions — will be severely curtailed and will only apply on Christmas Day, Johnson said.

Learn more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/uk-prime-minister-boris-johnson-calls-emergency-meeting-over-new-n1251803>

Santa 'Zooms' into Kentucky Children's Hospital with Christmas message, virtual North Pole tour

(KY Forward News) Because of restrictions at Kentucky Children's Hospital (KCH), two-year-old Mac-Mac doesn't get many visitors. But an extra special visitor stopped by via Zoom to bring him some holiday cheer. It was the big man himself.



Santa Claus, who stops by KCH every year to visit with patients and families, is doing his visits a little differently this year. Even though he is immune to COVID-19, Santa chooses to set an example and do his visits virtually rather than visit in person.

Santa took Mac-Mac on a virtual tour, showing him a video of Dancer and Prancer playing in snow, a sneak peek of the toys in the workshop and a video that Santa shot last year flying his sleigh. Mrs. Claus stopped by and Zippity the Elf zipped in to report to Santa that Mac-Mac had been extra good this year.

Read more: <https://www.kyforward.com/santa-zooms-into-kentucky-childrens-hospital-with-christmas-message-virtual-north-pole-tour/>

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 Preparedness@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.