

GPHIN Daily Report for 2020-11-05

Special section on Coronavirus

Canada

Areas in Canada with cases of COVID-19 as of 04 November 2020 at 19:01 pm EDT

Source: Government of Canada

Province, territory or other	Number of confirmed cases	Number of active cases	Number of deaths
Canada	247,703	31,725	10,331
Newfoundland and Labrador	292	3	4
Prince Edward Island	64	0	0
Nova Scotia	1,118	19	65
New Brunswick	347	28	6
Quebec	109,918	9,467	6,350
Ontario	79,692	8,321	3,182
Manitoba	6,751	3,772	87
Saskatchewan	3,408	799	25
Alberta	29,932	6,110	338
British Columbia	16,135	3,203	273
Yukon	23	2	1
Northwest Territories	10	1	0
Nunavut	0	0	0
Repatriated travellers	13	0	0

A detailed [epidemiologic summary](#) is available.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html#a1>

Canada – Coronavirus disease (COVID -19) Outbreaks and Outcomes (Official and Media)

Canada

40 workers at Elgin County orchard test positive for COVID-19

Source: CBC News
GPHIN ID: [1008185994](#)

An apple orchard in Elgin County is the site of a large COVID-19 outbreak, mainly affecting migrant workers, where 40 people have tested positive for the virus.

The case spread has been linked by public health officials to close living conditions, because the workers at Martin Family Fruit Farms lived in bunkhouses, where it's impossible to maintain physical distance.

"We were notified of a positive test on Friday and then from there, we acted on that and proceeded to have everyone who works at our orchards, spread over two properties, tested," owner Kevin Martin told CBC News from the company's headquarters in Waterloo.

The orchards are in the small town of Vienna, south of Tillsonburg.

Southwestern Public Health officials, which oversee Elgin County where the outbreak occurred, say they tested 157 people for the virus after one person sought medical treatment on Friday.

They don't know who caught the virus first, or from where, said Medical Officer of Health Dr. Joyce Locke.

"We are conducting contact tracing for all of the positive cases to identify spread beyond the workplace," she said at a Tuesday media briefing.

Workers from Trinidad and Jamaica

The majority of the workers who have tested positive were on the farm through the temporary seasonal worker program, Martin told CBC News. They were from Trinidad and Jamaica.

"Some of our workers are new, but the majority are workers that come year over year," he said. "We certainly have some that have been coming to our farm for 20 years. Ultimately, we're concerned about everyone's health and safety at this time. The initial case seems to be recovering and we're monitoring everyone."

The migrant workers are in mandatory self-isolation in local hotel rooms, Martin said. Any locals who tested positive are isolating at their own homes, he added.

The workers are being visited daily by public health officials and given meals, medicine and necessary items such as pyjamas, Locke said.

'Lapse in compliance'

Southwestern Public Health said the number of cases at the orchard suggest there were lapses in compliance. Officials said no charges have been laid to date, but the situation is under investigation.

"We are working with the farm operator to identify the breakdown in the process and to mitigate further risk to their employees," explained Locke.

In July, Locke put in place 22 separate measures that govern agricultural employers that employ migrant farm workers, Temporary Foreign Workers, local workers, or workers from temporary help agencies. The measures include everything from physical distancing practices, guidelines for accommodations, screening practices, and keeping accurate and updated contact information.

"The risk to the community is considered low as all cases are in isolation," Locke said.

"An on-farm inspection has taken place and public health officials are working with the farm operator to ensure all appropriate measures are in place to contain the spread of the virus and prevent future outbreak events."

Martin said his farm followed health and safety protocols and is working with public health officials.

There is no risk that the coronavirus transferred onto the produce handled by the affected employees.

Vienna is on the shores of Lake Erie.

Nearby Aylmer has recently declared a state of emergency after residents there planned a second anti-mask rally. A previous rally on Oct. 24 attracted a large crowd of people opposed to COVID-19 restrictions.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/elgin-farm-covid-1.5788053>

Canada

Peguis First Nation trains its own members to operate COVID-19 testing site Social Sharing

Source: CBC News

ID: 1008189836

Health staff in Peguis First Nation began training to do COVID-19 testing in the community on Monday. (Kirk Mann)

Peguis First Nation is setting up its own COVID-19 testing site run by community members.

"Now we don't need to... wait for a testing site to come in to help us. Now we have the skill, the manpower, the training to be able to do that for our community members," said Denise Bear, the nurse in charge of the Peguis Health Centre.

Peguis, about 160 kilometres north of Winnipeg and the largest First Nation in Manitoba with more than 10,000 members, recorded its first confirmed case of COVID-19 on Sept. 5, and has had a total of 134 cases, with 66 active cases and 68 recovered as of Wednesday.

Bear, who is from Peguis, has been a nurse since 1989 and has been the head nurse at the health centre since April 2017.

She said Dr. Ian Whetter and the University of Manitoba's Ongomiizwin Health Services program has been doing the training, which started Monday.

"He's trained our nurses and they're provided all the information on what we need to do to be able to run a site like that," said Bear.

"And also the questions to ask if someone needs a rapid test or just a regular COVID swab."

The nurses conduct and handle the nasal swab samples, and community members will take on other tasks like filling out forms, screening people, transporting samples, providing security and traffic control.

"[Ongomiizwin] walked all of the people that went for training through each of the different stations," said Bear.

In total, 16 people from the community have been trained to run the COVID-19 test site. They can also train others if needed.

Chief Glenn Hudson said he pushed to have the community runs its own testing site when the community first had positive cases.

"By training our own frontline nurses, health and safety workers to run tests in our facility, collecting these samples... we will gain obviously a valuable ground in fighting this pandemic," said Hudson.

The initiative was a collaboration between the First Nation, the Interlake Regional Health Authority and the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.

Peguis on 2-week lockdown

Starting at the beginning of November, the First Nation instituted a community-wide two week lockdown in three-day increments, which is expected to be done on Nov. 15.

Under the policy, non-essential businesses are closed, a 24-hour curfew has been implemented with checkpoints throughout the community and people are required to stay home with no visiting allowed.

COVID-19 in Indigenous communities: active cases reach 500

SCO grand chief calls on province, feds to commit and fast-track First Nations COVID-19 response funding

Every fourth day, a "relaxed lockdown" allows one person per household to travel to nearby communities for essential shopping, with a curfew from midnight to 6 a.m.

Hudson said that so far, most people have been complying with the lockdown and that there have been very few cars on the road.

Peguis First Nation Chief Glenn Hudson said he pushed to have his own people trained to do tests, when the community recorded its first cases in September. (Jeff Stapleton/CBC)
"People are complying and they understand the importance because of the communal spreading," said Hudson.

Bear said she is optimistic that the lockdown will help to reduce COVID-19 cases within the community.

"I think in two weeks time we're going to see a huge difference in the amount of cases coming forward," she said.

"So I can hardly wait for that time to come."

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/peguis-covid-19-testing-site-1.5789955>

Canada

COVID-19 in Indigenous communities: active cases reach 500

Source: CBC News

ID: 1008189835

In the last week, 356 new cases have been reported on-reserve

Active cases of COVID-19 jumped to 500 from 362 in the last week, according to data from Indigenous Services Canada.

In the last week, 356 new cases have been reported on-reserve with the majority occurring in the Prairies. Cases in Manitoba doubled, while Quebec also saw a spike in cases.

Akwesasne, south of Cornwall, Ont., announced that it is dealing with an outbreak after five cases were reported in the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's northern jurisdiction and four cases in the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's southern jurisdiction.

"While we understand the effects of COVID-19 fatigue, we cannot let our guards down," the Mohawk Council said in a news release.

"The time to take collective action is now in order to prevent a much worse scenario and stricter measures in the future."

As of Nov. 2, there have been a total of 1,610 cases on-reserve in Canada since the pandemic started. Ten additional hospitalizations were reported since last week bringing the total to 83. The death toll remains at 15. The number of First Nations people who have recovered from the disease has reached 1,095.

In an Oct. 30 update, ISC said the increasing number of cases has been linked to community transmission and to large private and public gatherings in settings where physical distancing and wearing of masks were not observed.

There have been a total of 28 confirmed positive cases in the Nunavik region of Quebec. All have recovered as of Oct. 30.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-covid-19-update-1.5787763>

Canada

Manitoba coronavirus curfew survey goes live, premier defends call for input

Source: Global News

GPHIN ID: [1008181743](https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-covid-19-update-1.5787763)

Premier Brian Pallister is defending his government's decision to ask Manitobans to help decide if a curfew is needed to curb rising COVID-19 numbers.

On Monday — as Winnipeg moved into the red zone on Manitoba's pandemic response scale and the

rest of the province was elevated to orange — Pallister said the province is considering instituting a curfew after hearing about large get-togethers being promoted on social media on the weekend. An online survey looking for opinions on the idea went live on the province's website Tuesday morning. But the plan to wait for feedback faced criticism from some social media who wondered why the government wouldn't just follow advice from public health experts and put a curfew in place if it's needed. Winnipeg Mayor Brian Bowman was among those urging the province to implement the curfew quickly. "If the province feels this is the right thing to do, I would encourage them to just do it and not wait another day for a survey," Bowman said Monday.

"The virus doesn't take a night off. It's in our community right now, and if the epidemiology and the evidence would support a curfew, then I think the province should simply introduce that measure in a timely fashion and not wait for a survey."

[Sign up for our Health IQ newsletter for the latest coronavirus updates]

On Tuesday Pallister argued the plan won't work without buy-in from the public.

"I think it's important, when you're restricting people's freedom of movement — as we'll be doing with this — that we make sure that we ask the public for their view on this first and then we'll implement it if the public feels they can support it," he said.

"The fact of the matter is this is a societal challenge that is best addressed by having people buy into the proposals that we make."

The nine-question survey includes questions on what time in the evening a curfew should start, where in the province it should be imposed, and who should be exempt (first responders, Winnipeg Transit drivers, essential service workers, etc.)

While the survey says government is considering the curfew "in order to limit the movement of people later in the evening and overnight" it doesn't say what time a possible curfew order would be lifted in the morning or how long it may be needed.

Pallister has said the province will announce later this week if they will go ahead with the curfew.

"On this one we're simply asking Manitobans for their feedback," Pallister said Tuesday when asked about the validity of results obtained by an online survey.

"It might be criticized for being less scientific than some methods, but I think it's an important part of the process to get the public involved and give the public the chance to get their view heard whether they're scientists or not."

Pallister said the survey is part of the province's broader public engagement strategy during COVID-19 that will see telephone town halls, stakeholder roundtables and further online surveys offered in the coming weeks.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7439252/manitoba-coronavirus-curfew-survey/>

Canada/ United States

Canada relaxes border restrictions for small Alaska town

Source: NEWS 1130

GPHIN ID: [1008187195](#)

JUNEAU, Alaska — A decision by Canadian officials to relax border restrictions will benefit residents of a small Alaska town where the only road out of the community runs through British Columbia.

The Canadian government on Oct. 30 announced a number of exceptions to 14-day quarantine rules for some border towns including Hyder, Alaska, CoastAlaska reported Tuesday.

The town, which is separated from the rest of Alaska by mountain peaks and open water, has been restricted since March by coronavirus regulations that kept its population of about 60 residents largely cut off from their Canadian neighbours.

"There is a lot more freedom of movement across the border, but it is not completely open for locals to go back and forth," Hyder resident Jennifer Jean said.

Jean is co-chair of the Hyder and Stewart, B.C., COVID-19 Action Committee, which spearheaded the effort to reopen the border and attracted support from elected officials on both sides.

Crossings will be limited for necessities including groceries, fuel, firewood or assistance to family

members, while recreation and socializing do not qualify, Jean said.

A school attended by Hyder students closed this year due to low enrolment and students planned to enrol in a community across the border before the quarantine rule blocked that option days before the fall semester began.

The new rules give Hyder students permission to attend class in Canada if they obtain permission from local authorities.

"We were really looking forward to just the freedom of movement back and forth and open border like we used to enjoy before COVID," Jean said. "But the reality is, we are living in a pandemic, and the concessions that have been put in place have allowed the freedom of movement that is necessary."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some — especially older adults and people with existing health problems — it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

The Associated Press

<https://www.citynews1130.com/2020/11/04/canada-relaxes-border-restrictions-for-small-alaska-town/>

Canada

Canada quietly updates COVID-19 guidelines on risk of airborne spread

Source: CBC News

ID: 1008189433

Canada has quietly revised its guidelines on how COVID-19 spreads to include the risk of aerosol transmission, weeks after other countries and international health organizations acknowledged the airborne threat of the coronavirus.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) updated its guidance without notice this week, making mention of the risk of transmission from aerosols — or microscopic airborne particles — for the first time.

"SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, spreads from an infected person to others through respiratory droplets and aerosols created when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, shouts, or talks," the updated guidance said.

"The droplets vary in size from large droplets that fall to the ground rapidly (within seconds or minutes) near the infected person, to smaller droplets, sometimes called aerosols, which linger in the air under some circumstances."

The federal agency's guidelines previously said the virus spreads only through breathing in respiratory droplets, touching contaminated surfaces and common greetings like handshakes and hugs.

PHAC did not immediately respond to CBC's request for comment on the changes to the guidelines.

Change to guidelines 'pretty major,' aerosol expert says

"This is pretty major," said Linsey Marr, one of the top aerosol scientists in the world and an expert on the airborne transmission of viruses at Virginia Tech. "The big difference now is that ventilation is important — distancing alone is not enough."

SECOND OPINION

Canada still downplays risk of airborne spread of coronavirus despite WHO, CDC guidance

CBC News pressed the federal agency last month on why it still made no mention about the risk of aerosols despite other international agencies doing so.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidelines in early October to include that COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission, after mistakenly posting and later removing a draft version of guidelines in late September.

The World Health Organization also came under fire in July after 239 scientists from 32 countries wrote an open letter calling on the United Nations agency to update its messaging on the risk of airborne transmission of the coronavirus.

The WHO amended its guidelines days after the letter and acknowledged the possibility that aerosols can lead to outbreaks of COVID-19 in places like choir practices, restaurants and fitness classes.

Update came after new mask advice

The update to PHAC's guidelines came after Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam recommended the use of three-layer non-medical masks Tuesday to prevent the spread of COVID-19 ahead of winter weather that could bring more people together indoors.

"This is an additional recommendation just to add another layer of protection. The science of masks has really accelerated during this particular pandemic. So we're just learning again as we go," she said Tuesday.

"I do think that because it's winter, because we're all going inside, we're learning more about droplets and aerosols."

Canada's top public health doctor now recommends 3-layer non-medical masks

Marr said that updated PHAC guidance on three-layer non-medical masks was in line with the threat of aerosol transmission.

"If we were only concerned about large droplets, then pretty much almost any piece of single layer of fabric would work," she said.

"But because we are concerned about aerosols, then we do need to think about the quality and fit of our masks and we know that having multiple layers improves the filtering performance of masks."

Tam said Tuesday public health officials also wanted to emphasize that the public should wear a mask indoors when not with people in their household, another significant update to its guidance.

"That will help prevent droplets or aerosols more so than if you were just relying on the two metre distance," she said. "Again, adding another layer."

PHAC previously told CBC News in a statement on Sept. 24 that it was not updating its guidance on airborne transmission — even though it said there "have been situations where aerosol transmission in closed settings has occurred."

The agency said at the time its guidance would remain the same: limit time spent in closed spaces, crowded places and close contact situations, while maintaining physical distancing, hand-washing and mask-wearing.

Addressing aerosol transmission requires many measures

"Distancing helps, masks help, ventilation helps — no one of these things is perfect," Marr said.

Aerosol transmission, she said, would not be addressed by focusing on just one of these measures alone. "But when we combine all these things, we haven't seen any outbreaks."

PHAC also said in September that it was reviewing evidence on the topic and acknowledged that aerosols could be suspended in the air and infect others nearby, but it wasn't known at what rate that happens and under what conditions.

SECOND OPINION

Scientists aim to 'see' invisible transmission of coronavirus

"It's important for the public health agencies to acknowledge this so that the public can now take appropriate steps to reduce transmission," Marr said. "And there's a lot of organizations like schools and businesses that look to the public health agencies for guidance."

She said the updated PHAC guidelines would make it harder for these types of organizations to ignore the threat of aerosol transmission.

Studies of superspreading events, such as a choir practice in Washington state, a call centre in South Korea and a restaurant in China, have supported the conclusion that some degree of transmission is occurring through aerosols.

How dissecting superspreading events can help people take COVID-19 measures seriously
Virus particles were also found in the air at a nursing home outbreak in May in Montreal, where a faulty ventilation system may have been a source of transmission that infected 226 residents and 148 employees.

An outbreak at a spin studio in Hamilton, Ont., saw at least 85 people infected and prompted the city to announce new, enhanced guidelines for gyms and fitness centres including mandatory masking.

"The gym followed all the guidelines: they had distancing, they did hygiene, they had people wearing masks before and after," Marr said, "but if it were just all large droplets, then the distancing and hygiene would be sufficient — but obviously, it wasn't."

"Because aerosols do play an important role in transmission and if you just distance and just do hygiene, that's not enough."

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/coronavirus-canada-aerosol-transmission-covid-19-1.5789906>

Canada

First Nations sound alarm over Keeyask outbreak

Source: Winnipeg Sun

ID: 1008189118

Concerned Manitoba First Nation leaders held a virtual press conference on Wednesday to discuss the outbreak of COVID-19 at the Keeyask construction site in Northern Manitoba, including members of nearby Tataskweyak Cree Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation, War Lake First Nation, and York Factory Cree Nation.

The first case of COVID-19 at the site was confirmed on October 22. Organizations have been told that there are 31 positive cases in the area. Fifty-nine workers are now isolating in special dorm rooms at the Keeyask site.

"Fundamentally, we want to protect our people, Elders and children. I would be remiss if I didn't connect the outbreak we are experiencing in all our surrounding communities in the north to this outbreak," said Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC).

"It is terrible that the negligence of Manitoba Hydro has caused further complications and put an exceptional strain on our health care system."

Last Friday and this past Monday, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc., AMC and the four First Nations met with Manitoba Hydro's CEO and staff as well as public health officials.

The First Nations wanted to know how Manitoba Hydro plans to contain the outbreak as well as the exact number of workers who have left the Keeyask site since October 20.

From these meetings, the organizations and First Nations concluded that Manitoba Hydro has no plan to address the uncontrolled COVID-19 outbreak at the site.

"Now our worst fears have come true and we need the Government of Canada to step in and help us ensure First Nations people will be kept safe from the uncontrolled epidemic being allowed to continue at this Manitoba Hydro site," said Chief Doreen Spence, Tataskweyak Cree Nation.

"We need to ensure that we reduce the spread of the virus and eliminate any further spread outside the Keeyask. We have been meeting with our pandemic team, and we are very concerned about our members in the Keeyask," said Chief Betsy Kennedy, War Lake First Nation.

No less than two people who tested positive had left the site. Contract tracing has identified that the virus has moved to two more health regions as well as to the Northern health region.

"We are not getting any true, accurate information from Manitoba Hydro. Information that we get is very vague and not transparent. It puts us in a tough spot," said Chief Morris Beardsley, Fox Lake Cree Nation.

"Manitoba Hydro fails to see this as a serious outbreak. Our doctor advises us that this is an uncontrolled epidemic, but that does not raise any flags in regards to Manitoba Hydro's decision making. We are now in day six of the outbreak, and still, the camp is in operation," said Chief Leroy Constant, York Factory First Nation.

Constant added that the First Nations have been asking for the camp to shut down for the safety of all Manitobans, however, their request has fallen into deaf ears.

"We have and continue to engage daily with our partners and neighbouring communities, including supporting their individual pandemic response plans, and provide updates on the situation as new information becomes available," said Hydro's media relations officer Bruce Owen.

"The statement that we have not been open and transparent with information being communicated to our Keeyask Cree Nation partners is patently false."

Nicole Wong is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter who works out of the Winnipeg Sun. The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

<https://winnipegsun.com/news/news-news/first-nations-sound-alarm-over-keeyask-outbreak>

Canada

COVID-19 in Sask: New known cases unexpectedly low Wednesday due to technical difficulties in testing lab

Source: CBC | Saskatchewan News

ID: 1008188920

Saskatchewan is reporting 37 new COVID-19 cases Wednesday, but the final number is expected to be higher.

According to the province, the Roy Romanow Provincial Laboratory experienced technical difficulties Tuesday with the validation of COVID-19 tests. This resulted in fewer cases to report Wednesday than expected.

The province says it is anticipating any delayed cases to be reflected in Thursday's COVID-19 case update.

For the time being, there have been a total of 3,408 reported cases in the province, 799 of which are considered active.

One of the reported new cases is located in the far north west, one is in the north central, 13 are in the Saskatoon area, six are in the central east and 14 are in the Regina area.

One case reported Wednesday has a pending location.

The province also reported 78 new recoveries. To date, a total of 2,584 known cases have recovered from COVID-19 in Saskatchewan.

Twenty-six people are currently in hospital, with 22 receiving inpatient care: two in the north west zone, five in the north central zone, 10 in the Saskatoon area and five in the Regina area.

Four people are in intensive care, with two in the north central zone, one in Saskatoon and one in Regina.

Mandatory masks, gathering sizes

Saskatchewan will be making masks mandatory in indoor public spaces in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert, and reducing the allowed size of gatherings provincially.

The orders were announced Tuesday and take effect on Friday.

The public health mandatory masking order will be in place for 28 days, then is subject to review by Dr. Saqib Shahab, the province's chief medical health officer.

The province said that much of the recent spread of COVID-19 has occurred in private settings and in homes.

As a result, the maximum allowable gathering size for private gatherings in the home will decrease to 10 from 15. This includes those who ordinarily live in the home. Any event that occurs in a private home and

any outbuildings including weddings, religious gathering and funerals must abide by the 10-person gathering limit issued by the province.
The limit does not apply to households with more than 10 family members living in the same home.
The province said enforcement options will be considered based on observed compliance with the public health order.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/wednesday-sask-covid-19-cases-unexpectedly-low-due-to-technical-difficulties-in-lab-1.5789729?cmp=rss>

Canada

Ottawa releases preliminary guidance on policy for early COVID-19 immunization

Source: RCI | English

ID: 1008188905

With several COVID-19 vaccine candidates around the world entering the final stages of clinical trials and regulatory approval, health authorities in Canada released today preliminary guidance on policy for who will be first in line for early immunization.

The guidance by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), an expert advisory group, provided recommendations to the Public Health Agency of Canada on targeting key populations for early COVID-19 vaccination.

Top of the list for early immunization are those at high risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 and those most likely to transmit COVID-19 to them, as well as workers essential to maintaining the COVID-19 response, according to the guidance published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal today.

The list of key populations to be targeted by the first wave of immunizations also includes those contributing to the maintenance of other essential services for the functioning of society; and those whose living or working conditions put them at elevated risk of infection and where infection could have disproportionate consequences, including Indigenous communities.

Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Theresa Tam, said health authorities remain cautiously optimistic that safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines will be available in the first quarter of 2021.

Feds invest \$214M in made-in-Canada vaccines, says Trudeau

It is also important for everyone to know that there will be a limited supply of the vaccines at first, she said.

"Federal, provincial and territorial governments will have to make important decisions on how to use the initial vaccine supply to protect high-risk populations and those who help keep our pandemic response, society and economy running," Tam said.

"We know Canadians will understand the need to prioritize some groups during the early weeks of COVID-19 vaccine roll-out until there is enough vaccine for everyone who wants it."

The federal government has already reached procurement agreements with drugmakers AstraZeneca, Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, Pfizer, Moderna and Medicago for a total of 358 million doses of various COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

Health Canada officials announced in early October that they received the first submission to approve a COVID-19 vaccine developed by pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca in partnership with the University of Oxford.

<https://www.rcinet.ca/en/2020/11/04/ottawa-releases-preliminary-guidance-on-policy-for-early-covid-19-immunization/>

Canada

Second COVID-19-linked illness MIS-C confirmed in B.C.

Source: citynews1130.com

ID: 1008188725

VANCOUVER (NEWS 1130) — A second child in B.C. has come down with multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), a rare syndrome related to COVID-19.

Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed.

The cause is not known.

Children who are hospitalized with symptoms, including stomach illness, rash and inflammation, are given a serology test to see if they've had COVID-19.

B.C.'s first case was confirmed mid-October. The patient was a child under the age of five who has fully recovered.

Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry explained said in October that the syndrome shows up weeks or months after a child has had the virus — similar to Kawasaki disease showing up after a child has had the flu. Kawasaki affects children's blood vessels and the cause is also unknown.

"We will continue our ongoing monitoring of any child who is hospitalized with the syndromes that meet the case definition and our pediatricians at children's and women's hospitals have been an incredible team of experts supporting children and parents around the province to make sure that we understand what it happening here with this," she said Oct. 15.

Henry also said then that there were 16 other suspected cases of MIS-C, but those were investigated and ruled out.

"Initially we were only reporting confirmed cases but in the summer we changed our monitoring to report cases under investigation to be aligned with both the Canadian and WHO case definitions and to make sure that we could monitor all of the children who might have been affected by this."

Canadian doctors began tracking MIS-C earlier in May after it was reported in children in the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and the United States.

<https://www.citynews1130.com/2020/11/04/second-mis-c-case-bc/>

United States - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - Communication Resources (Official and Media)

United States

New coronavirus outbreak reported at Alaska's largest prison

Source: 570 News

GPHIN ID: [1008187181](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — **Alaska's largest prison has experienced the latest outbreak of the coronavirus within the state's correctional system.**

The Alaska Department of Corrections said 22 inmates and five staff at Goose Creek Correctional Center tested positive for COVID-19, The Anchorage Daily News reported Monday.

It is not clear how many inmates, if any, displayed symptoms of the virus, but none have required hospitalization, department spokeswoman Sarah Gallagher said Monday.

There are now two large COVID-19 outbreaks at the state's prisons, officials said. The other is at Fairbanks Correctional Center, an overcrowded facility where the state in mid-October said 33 people had contracted the virus.

The Goose Creek outbreak was reported in one of the prison's 10 self-contained units, each with 64 cells and a day room with couches and a television. The medium-security prison for men has a capacity of 1,535 inmates and there are currently about 1,350 housed there.

One inmate tested positive Oct. 28 and testing throughout the unit with 119 inmates revealed the additional cases, Gallagher said.

The inmates who tested positive are in isolation in a different part of the prison and medical staff check them multiple times daily. Nearly 100 other inmates from the unit have been placed in quarantine, Gallagher said.

Goose Creek is located on Point MacKenzie about an hour west of Wasilla, where coronavirus cases have increased along with other parts of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Fairbanks also continues to

see high numbers of new cases.

“As we see these cases just surging in the community, it’s not a surprise to see it showing up in our institutions,” Gallagher said.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some — especially older adults and people with existing health problems — it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

The number of infections is thought to be far higher because many people have not been tested, and studies suggest people can be infected with the virus without feeling sick.

<https://www.570news.com/2020/11/04/new-coronavirus-outbreak-reported-at-alaskas-largest-prison/>

International - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak and Outcomes (Media)

China

China Tightens Entry Requirements by Adding Second COVID-19 Test

Source: Sixthtone.com

GPHIN ID: [1008185928](#)

International travel to the Chinese mainland has slowly resumed after a ban on most foreign nationals was imposed in March. Now, strict testing and quarantine measures are helping curb the risk of imported COVID-19 cases but also creating headaches for would-be returnees.

Starting this week, most if not all foreign and Chinese nationals flying into the country are required to present negative results for both nucleic acid and IgM antibody tests administered 48 hours before boarding. IgM is a type of protein the immune system produces to fight infections, and a negative IgM test result means an individual has either never been exposed to the COVID-19 virus or has recovered after being infected.

According to Lu Hongzhou, an infectious disease expert at Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center, it typically takes three to four weeks after infection before a recovered coronavirus patient tests negative for IgM antibodies.

“The policy makes sense for the current situation,” Lu told Sixth Tone. “We need the IgM test, as there could be false negatives for the nucleic acid test.”

Chinese experts have estimated false negative rates on nucleic acid tests to be anywhere from 20% to 50%.

The new entry requirements were posted on the websites of Chinese embassies in countries reporting surging infection rates, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Russia, India, and Nepal. It is unclear whether the rule applies to all incoming passengers or only those coming from or transiting through high-risk countries.

Previously, China-bound passengers were only required to show a negative result for a nucleic acid test taken 72 hours before boarding, as well as submit to 14 days’ quarantine upon arriving in the country.

According to the new announcements, inbound passengers should also apply for “certified health declaration forms” from their respective Chinese embassies after receiving their negative test results.

Transiting through low-risk countries to skirt these requirements is not an option, as the rules apply to a passenger’s first port of departure.

The stricter entry requirements are an inconvenience to some travelers, who argue that not all medical institutions are able to provide test results within 24 hours, especially if the local health system is overwhelmed by domestic cases.

“It’s extremely inconvenient (to complete the required tests),” a student surnamed Wen in Australia told Sixth Tone. “I’m in Newcastle, around two or three hours’ drive from Sydney. My plane leaves Sunday, which means I have to do the test Friday and get the result Saturday — but that will be really difficult here.”

Others, meanwhile, believe the 48-hour window, though tight, is workable. Under a related hashtag on microblogging platform Weibo, a user appearing to be a Chinese mother in the U.K. commented that she was successful in registering for the tests after explaining the new entry requirement to local medical institutions.

“Although the time is quite tense, it’s still possible to manage,” she wrote.

While many countries around the world are still struggling to contain COVID-19, China has largely brought the virus under control, apart from sporadic clusters that have been traced to new arrivals and

imported seafood.

On Monday, China's National Health Commission reported 44 "confirmed" — or symptomatic — cases among newly arrived passengers, along with 48 asymptomatic imported cases. The country's total number of confirmed cases stands at 86,070, while global infections exceed 46 million.

Editor: Bibek Bhandari.

(Header image: Passengers wait at a public health checkpoint at Shanghai Pudong International Airport, March 13, 2020. People Visual)

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1006379/china-tightens-entry-requirements-by-adding-second-covid-19-test>

Denmark

Denmark to cull millions of minks over mutated coronavirus

Source: Medical Xpress

GPHIN ID: 1008188100

Denmark, the world's biggest producer of mink fur, said Wednesday it would cull all of the country's minks after a mutated version of the new coronavirus was detected at mink farms and had spread to people.

The mutation "could pose a risk that future (coronavirus) vaccines won't work the way they should," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told a press conference.

"It is necessary to cull all the minks."

Denmark's police chief Thorkild Fogde said they would start the culling as "soon as possible," but conceded that with 15 million to 17 million minks spread over 1,080 farms it was "a very large undertaking".

The novel coronavirus has been detected at 207 mink farms, including some cases with a mutated version that has been confirmed to spread back to humans.

Health authorities have also concluded that the mutated virus has "is not inhibited by antibodies to the same degree as the normal virus".

"Studies have shown that the mutations may affect the current candidates for a COVID-19 vaccine," Health Minister Magnus Heunicke said.

"It is a threat to the development of coronavirus vaccines. That is why it is important that we make a national effort," he added.

While the majority of cases had been observed in the northern part of the Jutland region, all minks in the country would still be culled.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-11-denmark-cull-millions-minks-mutated.html>

Denmark

University suspects seagulls spread coronavirus

Source: landbrugsavisen.dk

ID: 1008188526

TRANSLATED ARTICLE - ORIGINAL VERSION BELOW

Coronavirus may spread from mink farm to mink farm via seagulls, according to the University of Copenhagen.

The great mystery of how coronavirus has spread so markedly among mink farms may have come a step closer to its resolution. Coronavirus has been found at the University of Copenhagen on the feet of seagulls.

It writes among others DR.

"To have it clarified is the most important thing to prevent more farms from becoming infected and to prevent further spread of infection. The most important thing is to know how it moves," Anne Sofie Vedsted Hammer, associate professor and veterinarian in the department of veterinary animal sciences at the University of Copenhagen, told the media.

Several mink growers have already raised suspicions against the gulls because they sometimes eat some of the food that the minks lose out of the cages.

This has been explained to the Finans.dk among others by minkavler Niels Chr. Poulsen from Ringkøbing.

"We have always tried to explain that it is seagulls that lead the infection around. They land under the cages and eat off the food that the minks have lost. Then they fly on to the next farm and bring the infection with them", says Niels Chr. Poulsen.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Måske spreder coronavirus fra minkfarm til minkfarm via måger, lyder det fra Københavns Universitet.

Det store mysterium, der handler om, hvordan coronavirus har spredt sig så markant blandt minkfarme, er måske kommet et skridt nærmere sin løsning.

Hos Københavns Universitet har man nemlig fundet coronavirus på foden af måge.

Det skriver blandt andre DR.

"At få det belyst er det aller allervigtigste for at forebygge, at flere farme bliver smittet, og at man forhindrer yderligere smittespredning. Det allervigtigste er at vide, hvordan det flytter sig", siger Anne Sofie Vedsted Hammer, der er lektor og dyrlæge på institut for veterinærhusdyrvidenskab på Københavns Universitet, til mediet.

Æder minkenes foder

Flere minkavlere har allerede rettet mistanken mod mågerne, fordi de til tider æder noget af det foder, minkene taber ud af burene.

Det har blandt andre minkavler Niels Chr. Poulsen fra Ringkøbing forklaret til Finans.dk.

"Vi har hele tiden forsøgt at forklare, at det er måger, der fører smitten rundt. De lander under burene og spiser af det foder, minkene har tabt. Derefter flyver de videre til den næste farm og fører smitten med sig", siger Niels Chr. Poulsen.

<https://landbrugsavisen.dk/universitet-mistænker-måger-sprede-coronavirus>

Denmark

Denmark to restrict North Jutland borders due to mink coronavirus outbreak

Source: The Local – Denmark's news in English

Unique ID: 1008192948

Authorities in Denmark are to ask residents in North Jutland not to leave their home municipalities due to concerns over the spread of a mutated form of coronavirus.

Seven municipalities with confirmed coronavirus cases in mink are to be encompassed by restrictions asking residents to remain within municipal limits as far as possible.

The municipalities affected by the order are Hjørring, Frederikshavn, Vesthimmerland, Brønderslev, Jammerbugt, Thisted and Læsø.

"We have to stop movement of residents across municipal borders. We need to find a model for this," Per Bach Laursen, the mayor in the Vesthimmerland municipality, told Politiken.

Restaurants, sports and cultural activities are to be closed for the next four weeks, Laursen also told the newspaper.

Regional broadcaster TVMidtvest reports that there is unlikely to be any physical control of municipal borders, but that the government is still working to finalise measures. That is also based on comments from Laursen, the mayor in Vesthimmerland.

The intervention comes after the national government on Wednesday announced it would cull the entire population of minks at farms in Denmark.

The decision to cull up to 17 million animals was deemed unavoidable after a mutated version of the new coronavirus was detected at mink farms and then spread to people.

The mutation "could pose a risk that future (coronavirus) vaccines won't work the way they should," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told a press conference, adding: "It is necessary to cull all the minks."

Laursen told broadcaster DR that people in the affected North Jutland municipalities should stay within the borders of the municipality in which they live and get a coronavirus test.

Anyone who tests positive for coronavirus in the affected municipalities will also be required to test for whether they have been infected with the normal strain or the variation from mink farms.

Schools and child care facilities will remain open, but adult education will be limited, according to the Danish media reports.

The restrictions will come into effect from tomorrow for an initial four weeks.

Twelve people were registered as infected with a mutated form of the coronavirus, news wire Ritzau reported on Wednesday, but the real number is likely to be far higher. Newspaper Information reported on Thursday that up to four or five percent of infections in North Jutland may be with the specific mink mutation of coronavirus that is concerning authorities.

READ ALSO: Denmark to cull millions of minks over mutated coronavirus

<https://gphin.canada.ca/cepr/showarticle.jsp?docId=1008192948>

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan reports first case of coronavirus reinfection

Source: BBC Monitoring Central Asia

Published: 2020-11-05 09:35 UTC

Received: 2020-11-05 11:03 UTC (+88 minutes)

Unique ID: 1008192473

By BBC Monitoring

A Kazakh woman is reported to have contracted Covid-19 for a second time, in what is believed to be the first confirmed case of coronavirus reinfection in the Central Asian republic.

There is a confirmed case of virus reinfection in central Karaganda Region, privately-owned news website Zakon.kz reported on 4 November.

"We had a case of reinfection in Karaganda Region in late October. A female patient was confirmed to have contracted coronavirus in June and at the end of October," the report quoted Ayzhan Yesmagambetova, chairwoman of the Health Ministry's committee for sanitary and epidemiological control.

Yesmagambetova, however, denied allegations that there was another such case in West Kazakhstan Region, the report said.

Earlier the same day, deputy head of the regional health department Gulnar Abdrakhmanova said a case of coronavirus reinfection had been logged in West Kazakhstan.

But Yesmagambetova said the Health Ministry did not consider the patient's first case of illness to be Covid-19 due to lack of clear clinic symptoms, the report said.

Source: Zakon.kz in Russian 1141 gm 4 Nov 20

<https://gphin.canada.ca/cepr/showarticle.jsp?docId=1008192473>

Denmark

Denmark finds COVID strain that might hamper vaccine effort

Source: The Seattle Times: Web Edition

Published: 2020-11-04 08:49 UTC

Received: 2020-11-05 10:43 UTC (+25 hours 54 minutes)

Unique ID: 1008192269

Denmark says it's found a new strain of COVID-19 that might hamper efforts to develop a vaccine, after an outbreak in the country's mink population triggered a mutation of the virus.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told reporters that, because of developments in Denmark, there is now "a risk that the effect of a future vaccine will be weakened or, in a worst-case scenario, be undermined," during a virtual press briefing on Wednesday.

Her government has passed on the information to the World Health Organization, and now plans to cull Denmark's entire mink population. According to Copenhagen Fur, an auction house owned by Denmark's mink breeders, some 16 million animals are raised each year.

As the new coronavirus has spread from person to person, it has changed thousands of times. The vast majority of these changes are incremental, without what's known as a functionally significant mutation, though there's been previous debate over research showing that it may have evolved to become more contagious.

The mutation of the virus that's now been identified in Denmark "can have serious negative consequences for the global handling of the pandemic," Frederiksen said. There are 12 known cases in which humans have contracted the new form of the virus from mink, she said.

Denmark has already culled thousands of mink in recent months due to outbreaks of the virus. According to Wednesday's briefing, cases of COVID-19 were found in 217 out of 1,139 Danish mink farms.

Speaking at the same briefing, Kare Molbak, Denmark's top epidemiologist, said that in a "worst-case scenario, the pandemic will restart, this time in Denmark." He said the WHO would have to make the final call on whether the mutation found in Danish mink farms warrants a new classification.

The Danish prime minister and other government members and health officials who participated in Wednesday's briefing spoke via TV screens, after an outbreak of COVID in the parliament forced Frederiksen and more than half her cabinet to self-isolate.

<https://gphin.canada.ca/cepr/showarticle.jsp?docId=1008192269>

Denmark (Machine Translation)

Corona virus: All mink in Denmark must be killed

Source: Danish Veterinary and Food Administration

On the basis of a new risk assessment from the health authorities, the government has decided to slaughter all Danish mink herds. This happens after the discovery of a new mutation of the virus. (Press release from the Ministry of the Environment and Food)

News , Published: November 4, 2020

The government has decided to kill all mink in Denmark.

This is based on the fact that the Statens Serum Institut has in preliminary studies found a new mutated coronavirus in mink that can affect the effect of a vaccine.

- We are facing one of the biggest health crises the world has ever experienced. The government and I are painfully aware of what this means for all the Danish mink breeders who are about to lose their livelihood and for some; their life's work. But it is the right thing to do in a situation where the vaccine, which is currently the light at the end of a very dark tunnel, is in danger, says Minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Mogens Jensen.

Dangerous infection reservoir

In mid-June, the first mink farms in North Jutland were found to be infected with Covid-19, and the virus has since spread to 207 farms spread across Jutland, counted per. 4/11.

The Statens Serum Institut has previously found various mutations of Covid-19 in the Danish mink, which did not affect the effect of vaccines, and on the recommendation of the veterinary and health authorities,

the government decided on 1 October to beat all infected herds and herds within a radius of 7 , 8 kilometers down.

The Statens Serum Institut has now found a new mutation, which the majority of vaccine candidates do not optimally protect against, in samples from five mink farms in North Jutland and samples from 12 people.

At the same time, mink farms constitute a large virus reservoir that increases the risk of several new virus mutations.

Minister of Health and the Elderly Magnus Heunicke says:

- The health authorities assess that the mink breeding during the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic entails a significant risk to public health - and to the possibilities of preventing COVID-19 with vaccines. The Statens Serum Institut has found a mutation in which preliminary studies suggest that the mutation may affect the effect of current candidates for a vaccine against COVID-19. There is no evidence that the course of the disease is more severe in people infected with the variant. A large virus reservoir of mink increases the risk of new virus mutations re-emerging, against which vaccine candidates do not provide optimal protection. As the situation looks in North Jutland right now, we unfortunately have to look at a number of local initiatives and restrictions to curb the infection among the citizens of the affected municipalities. We'll continue the discussions tonight,

Tempo bonus for mink breeders

It is crucial that the minks are killed quickly.

Therefore, the government is now introducing an extra pace bonus of DKK 20 per. mink if the mink breeder empties his herd within 10 days - however 5 days for herds under 7,500 animals.

Likewise, the Police and the Armed Forces will intensify their efforts.

- The government will appeal to the industry and the mink breeders to support and contribute to this effort, although I understand that it will be a very heavy task for all breeders to have to kill all its animals, says Minister of Food Mogens Jensen.

Read [here](#) the risk assessment from the Statens Serum Institut, which is part of the basis for today's decision to kill the Danish mink.

Further information:

Ministry of the Environment and Food's press telephone: 2091 5901

Ministry of Health and the Elderly's press telephone: 2132 4727

<https://www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/Nyheder/Aktuelt/Sider/Nyheder%202020/Corona-virus-Alle-mink-i-Danmark-skal-aflives.aspx>

Czech Republic

Czech Republic asks WHO for emergency help against coronavirus surge

Source: politico.eu

ID: 1008189419

The World Health Organization has agreed to send an emergency medical team to the Czech Republic, following a request from the government as the country's hospitals struggle to cope under the strain of the second wave.

The Czech government "accepted the WHO offer to activate the Emergency Medical Team system to bring teams of health professionals to support the national efforts," a spokesperson from the WHO's regional office for Europe said Tuesday.

First reported by Radio Prague, the request to the WHO follows assistance from the U.S., which agreed to send military doctors and medical workers to the country. Volunteers have also answered the call for help, reports Reuters.

Thousands of health care professionals are currently unable to work because they're infected, possibly topping 10,000, according to the AP and Reuters. With an average infection rate of 1,586 per 100,000

people, the country ranks second in the EU, behind Belgium, in case incidence, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

While the government attests that there's still sufficient capacity in ICUs, it has acknowledged that it's facing problems with infected health care workers.

The move comes just days after the appointment of a new health minister. It also marks a turnaround of sorts for Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, who tweeted in September that the WHO should “keep quiet” after it called for an increase in tracing capacity.

https://www.politico.eu/article/czech-republic-asks-who-for-emergency-help-against-coronavirus-surge/?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication

South Korea

South Korea Approves New Test to Simultaneously Detect COVID-19, Flu

Source: sputniknews.com

ID: 1008189385

Health officials in South Korea have approved a new test that can detect both COVID-19 and seasonal influenza at the same time.

The new test targets genes specific to both SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and the flu virus, and is a version of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, a molecular diagnostic testing technique used to identify viral genetic material and confirm infections.

The two viruses cause similar symptoms, and so being able to get diagnoses for both diseases in three to six hours “would be convenient for patients and also reduce the burden of medical workers,” senior South Korean Health Ministry official Yoon Taeho said during a virus briefing this week, AP reported. South Korea has been unable to completely curb the spread of COVID-19, with the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Wednesday reporting 118 new cases of the virus in the Seoul metropolitan area.

The country's number of cases has reached 26,925, with 474 COVID-19-related deaths, AP reported.

“Despite efforts by health authorities to trace contacts and suppress transmissions, such efforts have been outpaced by the speed of viral spread,” Yoon said.

In the US, health officials have been reporting that some patients have become infected with COVID-19 and the seasonal flu at the same time. Officials have been urging people to get their flu vaccinations as soon as possible.

<https://sputniknews.com/society/202011041081009429-south-korea-approves-new-test-to-simultaneously-detect-covid-19-flu/>

WHO

Critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19

Source: WHO

Interim guidance

4 November 2020 | COVID-19: Critical preparedness, readiness and response

Overview

Updated 4 November 2020

All countries should increase their level of preparedness, alert and response to identify, manage and care for new cases of COVID-19. Countries should prepare to respond to different public health scenarios, recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to managing cases and outbreaks of COVID-19. Each country should assess its risk and rapidly implement the necessary measures at the appropriate scale to reduce both COVID-19 transmission and economic, public and social impacts.

Previous version: [Critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19, 22 March 2020](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/critical-preparedness-readiness-and-response-actions-for-covid-19)

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/critical-preparedness-readiness-and-response-actions-for-covid-19>

WHO

Considerations for implementing and adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19

Source: WHO

Interim guidance

4 November 2020 | COVID-19: Critical preparedness, readiness and response

Overview

This document is intended for national authorities and decision makers in countries that have introduced large scale public health and social measures. It offers guidance for adjusting public health and social measures, while managing the risk of a resurgence of cases.

- [Access the Annex 1: Considerations for public health and social measures in the workplace in the context of COVID-19](#) (Uploaded 10 May 2020)

- [Access the Annex 2: Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19](#) (Uploaded 10 May 2020)

- [Access the Annex 3: Considerations for Mass Gatherings in the context of COVID-19](#) (Uploaded 14 May 2020)

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-in-adjusting-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19-interim-guidance>

Studies Related to Coronavirus disease (COVID -19) Outbreak (Media)

Study

Delirium could be an early marker of COVID-19

Source: Medical Xpress

GPHIN ID: [1008187117](#)

Delirium accompanied by fever could be an early symptom of COVID-19. This is the main conclusion drawn by a scientific research review carried out by researchers from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) and published in Clinical Immunology and Immunotherapy, which highlights the fact that some patients also develop delirium in addition to more well-known symptoms.

The manifestation of this state of confusion, when accompanied by high fever, should be considered an early marker of the disease, particularly in the case of elderly patients.

"Delirium is a state of confusion in which the person feels out of touch with reality, as if they are dreaming," explained UOC researcher Javier Correa, who carried out this study at the University of Bordeaux (France). He added, "We need to be on the alert, particularly in an epidemiological situation like this, because an individual presenting certain signs of confusion may be an indication of infection." Correa, together with UOC Cognitive NeuroLab researcher Diego Redolar Ripoll, has reviewed the body of scientific work published on the effects of COVID-19 in relation to the central nervous system, i.e. the brain. The review found that there are growing indications that the coronavirus also affects the central nervous system and produces neurocognitive alterations such as headaches and delirium, as well as psychotic episodes.

"The main hypotheses that explain how the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 affects the brain point to three possible causes: hypoxia or neuronal oxygen deficiency, inflammation of brain tissue due to cytokine storm and the fact that the virus has the ability to cross the blood-brain barrier to directly invade the brain," said Correa. He stressed that any one of these three factors has the potential to result in delirium and explained that evidence of hypoxia-related brain damage has been observed in autopsies carried out on patients who have died from the infection and that it has been possible to isolate the virus from the cerebral tissue.

According to the researchers, delirium, cognitive deficits and behavioral anomalies are most likely to be the result of systemic inflammation of the brain and a state of hypoxia, which also causes the neuronal tissue to become inflamed in areas such as the hippocampus, which are associated with the cognitive dysfunctions and behavioral alterations presented by patients suffering delirium.

More information: undefined undefined et al. Delirium In Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2 Infection: A Point Of View, Clinical Immunology and Immunotherapy (2020). DOI:

10.24966/CIIT-8844/1000039

Provided by Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-11-delirium-early-marker-covid-.html>

United Kingdom (study)

UK to use AI for COVID-19 vaccine side effects

Source: Healthcare IT News

GPHIN ID: 1008187927

Software Company Genpact UK has been paid £1.5m for an AI tool that will be used to process the adverse reactions of the COVID-19 vaccines.

The Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Authority (MHRA) has paid Genpact UK a tender of £1.5m to develop an AI tool to sift through the high volume of reports of adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccines.

The government contract states that the AI tool will “process the expected high volume of Covid-19 vaccine adverse drug reaction (ADRs) and ensure that no details. . . are missed.”

WHY IT MATTERS

As the UK prepares for a widespread inoculation programme of monumental scale in the months ahead, the need for an effective and powerful tool to process a large number of reports is critical in managing the high volume of reports.

The types of vaccine being developed, such as the mRNA and chimpanzee adenovirus are relatively new, making it hard to predict how they will interact with millions of people's immune systems.

The contract from MHRA also concedes that the timelines of the coronavirus vaccine has been accelerated so fast that an accurate analysis of their safety may not be available when they start to be trialled in national immunisation campaigns.

THE LARGER CONTEXT

As the global race for a COVID-19 vaccine gains steam, Abu Dhabi's G42 Healthcare announced a volunteer healthcare management programme with US wearable technology firm WHOOP to monitor the health and fitness of those taking part in the company's COVID-19 vaccine trials.

The UK government is currently in talks with Palantir Technologies to strengthen its test-and-trace programme, according to the Financial Times [paywall].

ON THE RECORD

An MHRA spokesperson told Healthcare IT News: “Based on the available published reports from the Phase I/II trials, we do not currently anticipate any specific safety concerns with COVID-19 vaccines, and we expect the general safety profile to be similar to other types of vaccine.

“Our past experience with other new immunisation campaigns is that we tend to receive around 1 Yellow Card report per 1,000 doses administered and we are preparing our surveillance systems on that basis.

“The purpose of the AI tool we are introducing as part of our Yellow Card system is to help us rapidly evaluate such reports after approval, and not as part of the approval process.

“A COVID-19 vaccine will only be deployed once it has been proven to be safe and effective through robust clinical trials and approved for use by the appropriate licensing authority.

"It is also important to note that a report of a suspected ADR is not proof of a side effect occurring due to the vaccine but a suspicion by the reporter that the vaccine may have caused the side effect."

Visit Yellow Card website for more information on Yellow Card reporting in general, including what actions the MHRA can take.

<https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/uk-use-ai-covid-19-vaccine-side-effects>

Domestic Events of Interest

Canada

Albertan contracts rare form of swine flu, a first-ever reported in Canada

Source: National Post

ID: 1008188234

EDMONTON — Alberta's chief medical officer of health says Canada's first confirmed case of H1N2v, a variant swine flu virus found in humans, has been detected in the central part of the province.

Dr. Deena Hinshaw and Dr. Keith Lehman, the province's chief veterinarian, say in a statement that it's an isolated case and there's no increased risk to Albertans.

The statement says the virus was detected in mid-October after an Albertan with mild influenza-like symptoms sought medical care.

Officials say H1N2v is rare with only 27 cases reported globally since 2005, and note there have been no cases in Canada before this one.

H1N2 is known to occur in pigs around the world and is caused by the type A influenza virus.

The statement says health and agriculture officials are investigating to verify that no spread has occurred.

"AHS will proactively offer influenza testing to residents in parts of central Alberta, if they are presenting for COVID-19 testing, at an AHS assessment centre," said the statement Wednesday

"This testing will be optional and supports our ongoing influenza surveillance in the region."

They say they are taking the matter seriously, but note that sporadic cases of variant influenza have been reported over the past decade in North America.

"H1N2 is not a food-related illness," said the statement. "It is not transmissible to people through pork meat or other products that come from pigs and there is no risk associated with eating pork."

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/cp-newsalert-alberta-confirms-human-case-of-swine-flu-in-central-part-of-province>

Canada, ON

Sarnia salmonella cases climb, hospitalizations reported

Source: blackburnnews.com

ID: 1008188746

The number of lab-confirmed cases of salmonella food poisoning linked to Sarnia's Barakat restaurant on Lambton Mall Road continue to climb.

Lambton Public Health announced Friday, October 30, that four Salmonella cases had been confirmed and the number of confirmed cases increased to 15 Monday.

Medical Officer of Health Dr. Sudit Ranade provided a further update to Lambton County Council Wednesday morning.

"There are, at least, about 24 lab-confirmed cases to date, over 100 people who we consider probable cases based on their telling us that they have symptoms and their exposure and a few hospitalizations as well," said Ranade. "So, this is another serious infectious disease that we are working actively to control."

Dr. Ranade said a particular source of the infection has yet to be identified.

"We're disclosing numbers of cases and we're disclosing the broad scope, the epidemiological details, to give you an overview of what's happening in that outbreak."

Dr. Ranade said their disclosure for salmonella and COVID-19 are similar.

"The difference, if you're talking about disclosure of setting, that's really based on what we consider the exposure to be. So, it's disease, exposure, action. This is a foodborne disease, we know that the exposure is having eaten the food and so, in order to identify people who might have been exposed who may need to take action, we identify the place where they may have been exposed because that was the setting where they ate the food."

He said if there was a different kind of exposure, the health unit would judge that based on its risk assessment and understanding of both disease and exposure.

The restaurant has voluntarily closed while the investigation continues.

Anyone who ate at Barakat Mediterranean Cuisine between October 21 and October 29 and became ill with symptoms like diarrhea, fever, stomach cramps and vomiting, is asked to call Lambton Public Health at 519-383-8331.

<https://blackburnnews.com/sarnia/sarnia-news/2020/11/04/sarnia-salmonella-cases-climb-1/>

Canada, ON

Sexually-transmitted infection rates rising - Belleville Intelligencer

Source: Belleville Intelligencer

ID: 1008189083

Local rates of three sexually-transmitted infections are rising, sparking a call for more condom use and testing.

A gonorrhea outbreak declared in June continues, with 48 cases between January and September compared to 35 in all of 2019, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health staff reported Tuesday in a news release.

The release added local rates of syphilis and HIV are also increasing. Those statistics weren't immediately available Tuesday.

It noted many people with such infections don't realize they're infected and could pass it unknowingly to others.

"Anyone who is having unprotected sex could be at risk of STIs and should consider getting tested regardless of age, sex, or relationship status," said Dr. Piotr Oglaza, the counties' medical officer health, said in the release.

"The best way to prevent any type of STI is to use a condom or other type of barrier protection every time, unless you are sure of your partner's status and your own."

The release encouraged people to discuss talk to their partners about their sexual histories and get tested for infections, even if no symptoms are present. Those seeking testing should contact their health care providers, a health unit release stated.

Sexually-transmitted infections can spread through unprotected oral, vaginal and anal sex with an infected person, as well as by sharing sex toys.

If not treated properly, the release continued, the infections may cause serious health problems, including infertility.

Free condoms are available from health unit offices.

Health unit staff are launching an awareness campaign, using the hashtag #GetTested, to promote testing and condom use while warning of the rising infection rates.

More information on sexually-transmitted infections is available on the health unit's website at hpepublichealth.ca or by calling 613-966-5500, ext. 243.

<https://www.intelligencer.ca/news/local-news/sexually-transmitted-infection-rates-rising>

Nigeria (Update)

Mysterious disease claims 30 lives in Delta communities

Source: Business Day

Published: 2020-11-05 09:15 UTC

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A mysterious disease ravaging Ute Okpu and Idumusa Communities in Ika North Local Government Area of Delta State has claimed the lives of 30 persons.

Last weekend, Deltans woke up to the news that 15 youths had been claimed by the strange disease in just fourteen days and as of Thursday, October 4, sources from the communities said the death toll had risen to 30.

The state government which had alarmed the death of 15 youths within the age bracket of 18 to 25 years old in the two communities suspected hemorrhagic fever, or substance abuse as the likely cause of death.

Investigation revealed that some of the victims vomited blood before giving up ghosts while others complained of general fatigue, headache, and feverish condition before dying either at home, before getting to or in the hospital.

A mother, Monica Emeke who lost two of his children (a boy 26 and girl 22) to the unidentified ailment at Ute Okpu expressed worry over the rate at which death was occurring as five persons died in one day in the community.

Other persons who spoke to our correspondent said several deaths have been recorded in neighbouring villages including Ute Erunu.

The state government has however assured residents in the area that everything possible was being done to curb the disease.

Commissioner for Health, Mordi Ononye gave the assurance when he led a team of public health officials to Ute Okpu with a view to unravel the mysterious disease.

Speaking at the palace of the traditional ruler of the community, Ononye said: "Delta State Government has received information on seemingly mysterious deaths in Ute Okpu and Idumusa communities of Ika North East LGA which prompted the Governor, His Excellency, Senator (Dr) Ifeanyi Okowa, to direct the State Ministry of Health to immediately investigate these deaths, identify the cause/causes and effective containment measures".

He called on members of the communities and residents of the state to observe good hygiene as the dry season approaches by properly covering their food, cutting grasses around their surroundings, eliminate rats in their houses and continue to observe the COVID-19 safety guidelines especially handwashing with soap and running water.

According to him, Governor Okowa has directed that the Comprehensive Health Center in Ute -Okpu be upgraded to a full-fledged hospital.

<https://businessday.ng/health/article/mysterious-disease-claims-30-lives-in-delta-communities/>

Researches, Policies and Guidelines

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Scientists find Ebola virus antibodies in people before 2018 DRC outbreak

Source: Science Daily

GPIN ID: 1008187932

Scientists found antibodies to Ebola virus in people up to a year before the 2018 Ebola virus disease outbreak began in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, or DRC. This suggests that either early cases may have been missed or that exposure occurs more commonly than previously thought, according to a study led by the University of California, Davis.

The study, published today in the journal *One Health Outlook*, also documents the first detection of antibodies to Bombali ebolavirus in a person, showing that spillover of that virus from bats to humans has likely occurred. Scientists from the UC Davis One Health Institute and Columbia University discovered Bombali virus -- a sixth ebolavirus species -- in bats in Sierra Leone in 2018.

"This study highlights that, yes, these are lethal diseases, but there's a range of severity -- not everyone who is exposed dies," said lead author Tracey Goldstein, an associate director of the One Health Institute at the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. "Spillover doesn't always cause lethal outbreaks. To prevent outbreaks, we need a better understanding of what's happening between them. If you really are trying to understand how a virus works, you need to study it at all times, not just during an outbreak."

WOMEN AT INCREASED RISK

For the study, scientists collected and tested biological samples from 272 people seeking care in the Rutshuru Health Zone of North Kivu Province over the year before the start of the outbreak that killed nearly 2,300 people. Antibodies, which indicate past exposure to a virus, were found in 10 percent of patients.

Scientists also administered questionnaires to patients to collect demographic and behavioral information, and to better understand their interactions with domestic animals and wildlife.

While people of both sexes and all ages tested positive for antibodies, women had a significantly increased risk of exposure. This is consistent with other studies and may be due to the larger role women play in preparing food and caring for livestock and sick family members.

"These findings are important for those of us who live in eastern Congo, because it shows that people may become exposed to Ebola virus without becoming ill," said Jean-Paul Kabemba Lukusa, the Gorilla Doctors' medical technologist who coordinated human surveillance for this study. "It helps reinforce the work we do to explain to people how important it is to limit direct contact with wild animals and to follow hygiene and safety best practices."

MOVING FORWARD

The study also demonstrates the need to address how humans come into contact with wildlife and the viruses they exchange.

Co-author Kirsten Gilardi directs the UC Davis Karen C. Drayer Wildlife Health Center and the Gorilla Doctors program, which provides veterinary care to wild mountain and eastern lowland gorillas in Rwanda, Uganda and DRC. As the region's country lead for the USAID PREDICT Project, Gorilla Doctors sampled both wildlife and humans for viruses that may be circulating among them.

"These findings suggest there are more spillover events than we realize," Gilardi said. "This may not happen once in a while and then the virus disappears. Preventing spillover means understanding and minimizing high-risk human-to-wildlife interactions."

Funding for the study was provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, Emerging Pandemic Threats PREDICT Project.

Story Source:

Materials provided by University of California - Davis. Original written by Kat Kerlin. Note: Content may be edited for style and length.

Journal Reference:

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United Kingdom

Laser-based method to detect antibiotic resistant bacteria invented by UK scientists

Source: Tech2.com

ID: 1008188453

Researchers have developed a new, quicker way of detecting drug resistance in bacteria, taking about 45 minutes, an advance that may help clinicians prescribe antibiotics correctly and reduce their misuse. According to the researchers, including those from the University of Sheffield in the UK, the standard method for detecting antibiotic resistance in bacterial samples is a relatively slow process that typically takes between 12 and 24 hours.

They said the new technique, described in the journal *ACS Sensors*, uses nanotechnology to detect resistance in approximately 45 minutes, and can help in the ongoing battle against drug-resistant bacteria – a problem which is predicted to cause 10 million deaths per year and cost the global economy USD 100 trillion by 2050.

The scientists believe speeding up the time it takes to identify antibiotic-resistant bacteria could improve the ability of clinicians to prescribe antibiotics correctly and reduce their misuse – a key step in the fight against drug resistance.

They said the new method uses a nano mechanical sensor and a laser to detect single bacterial cells as they pass through the light's focus, providing a simple readout of antibiotic resistance by detecting growth (resistant) or death (sensitive) of the bacteria.

By placing a reflective surface – a small stiff cantilever – in a filtered growth medium in a petri dish, and reflecting a laser off it onto a detector, the researchers said it is possible to detect bacteria as they pass through the path of the laser, therefore altering the signal at the detector.

Following the addition of the antibiotic to the petri dish, the study showed that it is possible to detect whether fewer bacteria interfere with the laser beam – indicating cell death in the antibiotic-sensitive bacteria.

"Our method allowed us to quickly differentiate between resistant and sensitive phenotypes in multiple strains of *E. coli*, a bacterium implicated in a number of challenging infections including UTIs," said Isabel Bennett, a co-author of the study from the University College London in the UK.

"We were able to show that our faster method was able to reproduce values from gold standard measurements, such as MIC's in a fraction of the time," said Alice Pyne, another co-author of the study from the University of Sheffield.

<https://www.firstpost.com/health/laser-based-method-to-detect-antibiotic-resistant-bacteria-invented-by-uk-scientists-8981511.html>