

IDI COVID-19 Science Summary Compiled by Dr Andrew Mujugira (2nd to 8th August 2020)

2nd August 2020

If you watch your pot, your food will not burn ~ Mauritanian Proverb

On 10th July 2020, members of the department of anaesthesiology @ the University of Florida attended a private party. Eighteen subsequently tested positive for SARS-CoV-2: 14 junior residents, two senior residents, a fellow and an administrative employee.

Group gatherings where people are not wearing masks, especially in close quarters with loud talking, are the ideal setting for super-spreader events. Everyone, no matter what their age or professional background, needs to be careful with COVID.

Medscape Medical News

3rd August 2020

Unity is strength, division is weakness ~ Swahili Proverb

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented deluge of scientific publications, conspiracy theories and disinformation. Submissions to The Lancet are ~5 times the usual rate and 95% are rejected.

Amidst the rush to publish, mistakes have been made, and high-profile papers have been retracted. About 2 of every 10,000 papers published are retracted, but this is seized upon as proof that science is unreliable, ignoring that most published work is credible.

The politicization of COVID makes it increasingly difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff, fact from fiction. The credibility of politicians, governments, the media, scientists, and regulatory agencies is eroding and the public does not know whom, or what, to believe. As the finger pointing rages, COVID-19 kills thousands every day.

4th August 2020

Had you known what bees eat, you would not have tasted honey - Tanzanian Proverb

SARS-CoV-2 Transmission in a Youth Camp

- ❖ In June 2020, 597 persons attended an overnight camp in the US state of Georgia. All were required to test negative for SARS-CoV-2 fewer than 13 days before arrival. Average room occupancy was 15 persons. Campers were not required to wear masks.
- ❖ Subsequently, 260 tested positive for SARS-CoV-2: 51% for age 6–10 years, 44% for age 11–17 years, and 33% among those aged 18–21 years.
- ❖ SARS-CoV-2 spread efficiently in a youth-centric overnight setting, resulting in high attack rates among persons in all age groups. Asymptomatic infection was common and potentially contributed to undetected transmission.

MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 31 July 2020

5th August 2020

Evening promises are like butter: morning comes, and it's all melted ~ Moroccan Proverb

Children and SARS-CoV-2 Spread

- ❖ 'Children drive spread of respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses in the population, but data on children as sources of SARS-CoV-2 are sparse'.
- ❖ Preliminary data indicate that SARS-CoV-2 replication in older children (5-17 years) leads to similar levels of viral nucleic acid as adults (18-65 years), but significantly higher SARS-CoV-2 viral loads are detected in the upper respiratory tract of children younger than 5 years.
- ❖ 'Young children can potentially be important drivers of SARS-CoV-2 spread in the general population, as has been demonstrated with respiratory syncytial virus', and should be priority for immunization when SARS-CoV-2 vaccines become available.

JAMA Pediatr. July 30, 2020

6th August 2020

When the hyena drinks, the dog can only look on ~ Nigerian Proverb

COVID-19 Lockdown and Alcohol Consumption

- ❖ A complex interplay of financial stress, social isolation, bar closures, and worry about the future could contribute to increased alcohol intake and relapse under lockdown conditions.
- ❖ A survey of 182 persons with alcohol use disorders (73% male, 78% white, median age 57) assessed effect of the COVID lockdown on alcohol intake in the UK. 24% increased alcohol intake while 19% decreased alcohol intake. Of those abstinent before lockdown, 17% relapsed during lockdown.
- ❖ Lockdown represents a risk factor for increasing alcohol consumption in people with alcohol use disorders and relapse for those who were previously abstinent.

The Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology, 4th August 2020

7th August 2020

Good words are food, bad words poison ~ Malagasy Proverb

Ingesting Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizers

- ❖ Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should only contain ethanol or isopropanol, but some contain methanol. Persons with alcohol use disorder may drink these products as an alcohol substitute.
- ❖ From May 1 through June 30, 2020, 15 cases of methanol poisoning were reported in Arizona and New Mexico, associated with swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Four patients died, and three were discharged with visual impairment.
- ❖ Alcohol-based hand sanitizer products should never be ingested. Prompt evaluation for methanol poisoning is required in patients who have swallowed hand sanitizer.

MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 5 August 2020

8th August 2020

Whether you touch it, or you eat it, it's still garlic - Ethiopian Proverb

COVID Infodemiology

- ❖ Persons in congregate work settings are at increased risk for infection with respiratory pathogens, including SARS-CoV-2.
- ❖ During March 16 - March 25, 25.6% (929) of employees at a meat processing facility in South Dakota, USA and 8.7% (210) of their contacts were diagnosed with COVID-19; two employees died. The highest attack rates occurred among employees who worked <2 meters from one another on the production line.
- ❖ Implementing infection prevention and control measures in areas where employees have prolonged, close contact with others, might substantially reduce the risk for SARS-CoV-2 spread within facilities.

MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1015-1019
