

27th September 2020

You cannot work for food when there is no food for work ~ African Proverb

Work is a Key Determinant of COVID-19 Risk

Persons at high occupational risk of COVID-19 include 'health-care workers, emergency response workers, and workers in social services and the care of older people'.

'In Italy, SARS-CoV-2 infection occurred at the workplace in 19.4% of cases; 30% of people of working age (15–65 years) became infected in the workplace. Health-care workers were the most involved occupational category'.

Anti-COVID-19 strategies should prioritize occupational epidemiological surveillance, workplace risk mitigation, and protection of vulnerable workers.

The Lancet Global Health, September 25 2020

28th September 2020

One cannot both feast and become rich ~ Ashanti Proverb

Easing COVID-19 Restrictions

'Lockdowns restrictions cannot be sustained for the long term in the hope that there will be an effective vaccine or treatment for COVID-19'.

'Governments worldwide face the common challenge of easing lockdowns, but clear and consistent strategies for exiting lockdown restrictions are lacking'.

'Five key factors for strategies to ease lockdown restrictions are knowledge of infection levels, community engagement, public health capacity, health system capacity, and border control measures'.

The Lancet, 24th September 2020

29th September 2020

Every day the ear goes to school ~ African Proverb

Silent SARS-CoV-2 Reinfections in Hospital Workers

Two hospital employees in India, a 25-year-old man and a 28-year-old woman, tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 in May, although neither had symptoms. Both worked in the COVID-19 ward, and returned to work after testing negative.

They tested positive again about three-and-a-half months after the first positive test. Neither had symptoms, but both had a higher SARS-CoV-2 viral load than in May. Each subsequently tested negative.

'The SARS-CoV-2 that infected them the second time was genetically different from the first virus that infected them — evidence that they were infected anew rather than harbouring leftover virus. These results suggest that asymptomatic reinfections may be underreported'.

30th September 2020

Better be among the wounded than among the dead ~ African Proverb

The wide variation in severity of COVID-19, from symptom-free infection to death, is not well understood.

'NIH researchers have found that >10% of people (95% men) who develop severe COVID-19 have misguided antibodies—autoantibodies—that attack the immune system rather than SARS-CoV-2. Additionally, >3.5% or more of people who develop severe COVID-19 carry a specific kind of genetic mutation that impacts immunity'.

'Both groups lack effective immune responses that depend on type I interferon, a set of 17 proteins crucial for protecting cells and the body from viruses. These findings may help explain why some people with COVID-19 develop severe disease, and why more men than women die from COVID-19'.

Science 2020 Sep 24; eabd4570 & eabd4585

1st October 2020

A cock does not crow for the whole world ~ African proverb

What's Sex Got to Do With COVID-19?

Data suggest that more men than women are dying of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) worldwide, but it is unclear why.

In the African region, the male to female ratio among confirmed cases is 1.6. Biological, psychological, behavioral, and social factors may put men at disproportionate risk of death.

'Women mount stronger immune responses to infections and vaccinations and outlive men. Sex-based differences in genes, sex hormones', and immune responses may be protective for women.

Front Immunol. 2020 Aug 28;11:2147

2nd October 2020

Troubles make hens miscarry ~ African proverb

SARS-CoV-2 transmission by fomites

'SARS-CoV-2 persists on inanimate surfaces for days, with potential implications for viral transmission'.

'A study sought to determine contamination of inanimate surfaces in a major referral hospital in northern Italy. Cleaning procedures were standard. A number of objects and surfaces were swabbed. Only the continuous positive airway pressure helmet of one patient was positive for SARS-CoV-2 RNA. Importantly, attempts to culture the positive swabs were unsuccessful, suggesting that patient fomites and surfaces were not contaminated with viable virus'.

These findings suggest that 'environmental contamination leading to SARS-CoV-2 transmission is unlikely to occur in real-life conditions, if standard cleaning procedures and precautions are enforced'.

The Lancet Infectious Diseases, September 29 2020

3rd October 2020

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out

Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Adults

'Since June 2020, several case reports and series have been published reporting a COVID-19 associated multisystem inflammatory syndrome in adults (MIS-A)'.

'Adults with MIS-A have cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, dermatologic, and neurologic symptoms without severe respiratory illness. They usually require intensive care and can have fatal outcomes'.

'Clinical suspicion and SARS-CoV-2 testing are needed to recognize and treat adults with MIS-A. Further research is needed to understand the pathogenesis and long-term effects of this condition'.

MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 2 October 2020
