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# Weekly Update of Infectious Diseases and Related Information

May 21, 2024

## Policy

May 20

[Medicaid Unwinding Deals Blow to Tenuous System of Care for Native Americans | KFF Health News](#)

About a year into the process of redetermining Medicaid eligibility after the COVID-19 public health emergency, more than 20 million people have been kicked off the joint federal-state program for low-income families.

May 20

[Prescription drug ads should soon start looking noticeably different | Axios](#)

A new chapter in drug advertising begins Monday when a federal transparency rule takes effect requiring commercials to clearly spell out potential side effects and when a person should avoid the medicine.

May 20

[Doctors rail against proposed ban against public masking | North Carolina Health News](#)

Cameron Wolfe, an infectious disease specialist at Duke University with a knack for making medicine and science easily understood, is just as straightforward when offering his thoughts on a legislative proposal to ban masking in public.

May 15

[Chinese biotech crackdown would reset U.S. drug development | Axios](#)

Lawmakers in the House of Representatives on Wednesday are expected to set in motion a massive reordering of how U.S. pharmaceuticals are developed and made, by advancing a contracting ban on 5 key Chinese research firms.

May 14

[US relaxes regulations for labs handling bird flu samples to ease virus response | Reuters](#)

U.S. government officials have temporarily relaxed strict guidelines on how public health laboratories and health care facilities handle, store and transport H5N1 bird flu samples, which are considered high-risk pathogens, in response to the recent spread of the virus to dairy cattle.



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May 14

[Congress considers deadline for VA to fix beleaguered health record system | POLITICO](#)

Congress is poised to set a hard 2-year deadline for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and contractor Oracle Cerner to hit quality metrics for the agency's beleaguered project to modernize its electronic health record system or terminate the contract.

May 14

[The White House hikes tariffs on Chinese medical products | STAT](#)

The Biden administration announced Tuesday that it's raising taxes on a range of imported products from China, including syringes, needles and surgical gloves.

May 14

[Nursing Homes Wield Pandemic Immunity Laws To Duck Wrongful Death Suits | KFF Health News](#)

In early 2020, with reports of COVID-19 outbreaks making dire headlines, Trever Schapers worried about her father's safety in a nursing home in Queens.

May 13

[Supreme Court denies California's appeal for immunity for COVID-19 deaths at San Quentin prison | AP News](#)

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday denied an appeal from California corrections officials who sought immunity from lawsuits claiming they acted with deliberate indifference when they caused a deadly COVID-19 outbreak at one of the world's most famous prisons 4 years ago.

## COVID-19

May 17

[Study: Kids with long COVID have impaired exercise capacity | CIDRAP](#)

Researchers conducting a small study in Rome discover that, compared with healthy controls, children with long COVID have objective impaired functional capacity as expressed by low oxygen uptake at peak of exercise during exertion testing.

May 17

[Global meta-analysis estimates 43% rate of multidrug resistance in COVID patients | CIDRAP](#)

A meta-analysis of 173 studies involving nearly 900,000 COVID-19 patients in more than 50 countries finds that 42.9% were infected with multidrug-resistant organisms, which the authors say underscores the urgent need for stronger antimicrobial stewardship strategies.

May 15

[HHS looks to debar group at center of COVID lab-leak theories | The Hill](#)

The Department of Health and Human Services has initiated the process of debaring the infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance from being awarded federal funds, citing a lack of "responsibility" necessary to participate in these programs.



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May 15

[CDC to end program to vaccinate uninsured adults early | POLITICO](#)

Uninsured and underinsured adults could have a harder time getting the newest COVID-19 vaccine this fall, just as temperatures cool and cases are expected to rise.

May 15

[Hospital COVID patients 35% more likely to die than flu patients last winter, study suggests | CIDRAP](#)

During the 2023-24 respiratory virus season, hospitalized U.S. COVID-19 patients were at a 35% higher risk for death from any cause than those admitted for influenza, compared with a 61% higher risk the winter before, estimates a research letter published today in JAMA.

May 15

[Study: Before vaccines, 44% of COVID-19 patients in ICU died | CIDRAP](#)

A new analysis of pre-vaccine data from scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that 18% of hospitalized patients and 44% of those admitted to an intensive care unit for COVID-19 died, with wide variations among different groups.

May 14

[TB-COVID co-infections increasingly common, tied to worse outcomes, data show | CIDRAP](#)

A new meta-analysis of 17 studies reveals that tuberculosis and COVID-19 co-infection are becoming increasingly prevalent around the world, with death rates gradually declining but remaining higher than COVID-19 infection alone.

May 14

[FDA warns of false results from Cue Health COVID tests | CIDRAP](#)

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) yesterday urged home test users, caregivers and health providers not to use Cue Health's COVID-19 tests for home and over-the-counter use and its test for point-of-care settings due to an increased risk of false results.

May 14

[COVID patient testing, isolation of sick staff cut in-hospital viral spread, modeling study suggests | CIDRAP](#)

Interventions such as testing patients for COVID-19 on admission, isolation of ill health care workers (HCWs) and universal HCW masking from March 2020 to July 2022 significantly reduced SARS-CoV-2 transmission among patients and staff in U.K. hospitals, suggests a simulation study led by U.K. Health Security Agency researchers in London.



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May 13

[Cue Health's Covid-19 tests could give false results, FDA warns | STAT](#)

The FDA warned consumers Monday to not use Cue Health's at-home COVID-19 test. This follows an FDA warning letter to the company last week that said Cue was not following the conditions stipulated in the emergency use authorizations for its tests.

May 13

[Data: Heart-failure patients have 82% better odds of living longer if vaccinated against COVID | CIDRAP](#)

The first study of COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness in a large population of adult heart-failure patients suggests that vaccinated participants are 82% more likely to live longer than their unvaccinated peers, according to an analysis presented over the weekend at the Heart Failure 2024 scientific congress of the European Society of Cardiology in Lisbon, Portugal.

## Mpox

May 16

[Study suggests mpox patients with no symptoms partly fueled 2022 outbreak in New York City | CIDRAP](#)

About 1 in 15 unvaccinated adults who visited a New York City sexual health clinic for testing had antibodies to mpox despite no history of vaccination or infection during the peak of the city's 2022 outbreak, suggesting that asymptomatic infections contributed to transmission, according to a new report in the Journal of Infectious Diseases.

May 15

[Shorter infection-to-infection interval observed in 2022 mpox outbreak | CIDRAP](#)

An international group of scientists estimates that the mean infection-to-symptom-onset incubation period of the 2022 global mpox outbreak was similar to that of previous outbreaks, but the onset-to-onset serial interval was about 5 days shorter in 2022. The serial interval is the time between when symptoms first appear in an initial patient and in the person they infect.

May 13

[Sex work in bars linked to rapid mpox spread in DR Congo hot spot | CIDRAP](#)

Interactions involving sex workers in bars is likely driving rapid mpox transmission in densely populated areas of Congo, researchers reported in an observational preprint study of hospitalized patients in Kamituga health zone.

## Influenza/Infections

May 20

[How annual bird migration could spread avian flu | Reuters](#)

Scientists are still trying to understand exactly how a virulent bird flu is spreading through farms in the United States, but one pattern is clear: poultry and cows risk exposure to sick wild birds migrating across the Americas.



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May 17

[L.A. County investigating reported hepatitis A case at Beverly Hills Whole Foods | Los Angeles Times](#)

Los Angeles County health officials are investigating a reported case of hepatitis A in an employee of a Whole Foods supermarket in Beverly Hills and are warning of possible public exposure to the highly contagious liver infection.

May 17

[Drug-resistant Trichophyton fungus represents emerging threat in US | CIDRAP](#)

In a new JAMA Dermatology report, researchers describe 11 Trichophyton indotinea infections in New York City from May 2022 to May 2023. The fungus represents a new emerging public health threat that causes extensive tinea infections often unresponsive to terbinafine, a first-line oral antifungal.

May 17

[WHO updates bacterial priority pathogens list | CIDRAP](#)

The World Health Organization (WHO) today updated its list of the bacterial pathogens it considers the biggest threat to human health.

May 17

[Measles outbreak at Chicago shelter occurred mostly in unvaccinated, case study shows | CIDRAP](#)

A study published yesterday in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) details a measles outbreak that sickened 57 people at a Chicago migrant shelter this year and how a prompt and coordinated mass-vaccination campaign helped contain it.

May 17

[ECDC warns of invasive meningococcal infections in travelers from Saudi Arabia | CIDRAP](#)

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control said today that it is monitoring reports from 3 countries of invasive meningococcal disease linked to Saudi Arabia travel.

May 16

[Bird Flu Lands as the Next Public Health Challenge | KFF Health News](#)

Public health officials are watching with concern since a strain of bird flu spread to dairy cows in at least 9 states, and to at least 1 dairy worker. But in the wake of COVID-19, many farmers are loath to let in health authorities for testing.

May 16

[USDA experiments suggest H5N1 not viable in properly cooked ground beef | CIDRAP](#)

In an update today on food safety testing in light of H5N1 avian flu detections in some dairy cattle, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) said that inoculation of ground beef patties with a virus surrogate and cooking them to medium or well inactivated the virus.



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May 16

[COVID-19 linked to increased preterm birth, other problems in pregnancy | CIDRAP](#)

Findings from a large study in California, which distinguished the COVID-19 pandemic period from individual SARS-CoV-2 infections, suggest that SARS-CoV-2 infection is tied to increased preterm birth, high blood pressure during pregnancy and severe maternal morbidity. The study is published as a research letter in JAMA Network Open.

May 16

[COVID, other misinformation varies by topic, country on social media | CIDRAP](#)

PLOS One has published a study noting that the spread of COVID-19-related and other misinformation on social media varies by topic and by country in Europe.

May 16

[New USDA testing with substitute H5N1 bird flu virus reminds us why eating rare burgers can be risky | CNN](#)

Laboratory tests by the USDA haven't found any H5N1 bird flu virus in raw beef, but they are a good reminder why eating rare hamburgers can be risky.

May 15

[86% of chikungunya patients in Spanish cohort report months of debilitating joint pain | CIDRAP](#)

A single-center analysis published today in Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease finds that 86% of travelers returning to Spain with a chikungunya virus infection during a 2-year period reported joint pain that significantly reduced their quality of life.

May 15

[USDA confirms 3 more H5N1 outbreaks in dairy herds | CIDRAP](#)

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service today reported 3 more H5N1 avian flu outbreaks in dairy herds, raising the total to 49 in 9 states.

May 14

[CDC launches new influenza A wastewater dashboard; states report more H5N1 in dairy herds | CIDRAP](#)

The CDC today unveiled a new influenza A wastewater tracker, part of its surveillance for H5N1 avian influenza, as 3 states reported more detections in dairy herds.

May 14

[A third of US food outbreaks and 3,500 illnesses tied to non-irradiated eligible food | CIDRAP](#)

Of 482 U.S. foodborne outbreaks caused by 4 common bacteria from 2009 to 2022, 32.2% — involving more than 3,500 sick people and 10 deaths — were linked to a food that could have undergone pathogen-neutralizing irradiation but did not, researchers from the CDC reported yesterday in Emerging Infectious Diseases.



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May 14

[Panel recommends closure of wild poliovirus outbreak in Mozambique and Malawi | CIDRAP](#)

After a detailed investigation, the independent Polio Outbreak Response Assessment Team today recommended closure of a wild poliovirus type 1 outbreak in Malawi and Mozambique, the WHO regional office for Africa said in a statement.

May 14

[There's bird flu in US dairy cows. Raw milk drinkers aren't deterred | AP News](#)

Sales of raw milk appear to be on the rise, despite years of warnings about the health risks of drinking the unpasteurized products — and an outbreak of bird flu in dairy cows.

May 14

[USDA, FDA turf battles hamper responses to outbreaks like H5N1 bird flu | STAT](#)

On a bright June day in 2018, one of the nation's top regulators waved groceries in the air, quizzing the secretary of agriculture on which agency is charged with monitoring different types of food.

May 13

[Wastewater testing finds H5N1 avian flu in 9 Texas cities | CIDRAP](#)

Researchers who sequenced viruses from wastewater samples from 10 Texas cities found H5N1 avian flu virus in 9 of them, sometimes at levels that rivaled seasonal flu.

May 13

[BSE reported in Scottish breeding cow | CIDRAP](#)

Scotland's government last week reported a classical bovine spongiform encephalopathy case involving a cow that died on a farm in Ayrshire, its fifth such case since 2014.

May 13

[CDC reports 41% more imported malaria cases in 3 southern border cities in 2023 than 2022 | CIDRAP](#)

A higher proportion of people who trekked through at least 1 country with endemic malaria on their way to 3 southern U.S. border cities arrived with cases of the mosquito-borne illness — nearly a third of them with severe disease — in 2023 than in 2022, finds a study published in the MMWR.

## Vaccines/Antivirals

May 20

[People using popular drugs for weight loss, diabetes are more likely to be diagnosed with stomach paralysis, studies find | CNN](#)

Injected medications that treat diabetes and obesity increase the risk of a rare but serious side effect: stomach paralysis, according to new data on the real-world use of the drugs.



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May 19

[ADHD drug shortage shows signs of letting up, but some patients still struggle | NBC News](#)

Many of the ADHD medication shortages that have plagued the U.S. for the last 2 years have now been resolved, the FDA says. Yet some doctors and patients report they are still struggling to get prescriptions filled.

May 17

[Study examines impact of azithromycin given during labor | CIDRAP](#)

A sub-study of a randomized trial conducted in 2 African countries found that azithromycin administration during childbirth reduced *E. coli* prevalence in infants but increased *Klebsiella pneumoniae* carriage and azithromycin resistance in both bacteria, researchers reported yesterday in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

May 16

[HPV vaccine program tied to big drop in cervical cancers across all socioeconomic strata | CIDRAP](#)

England's HPV vaccination program is linked to dramatically lower rates of cervical cancer and precancerous lesions in all socioeconomic groups, reveals a study led by Queen Mary University of London researchers.

May 16

[New menopause drugs treat hot flashes, but women may face insurance hurdles | NBC News](#)

New drugs to treat debilitating menopause symptoms — namely hot flashes — are finally on the market or are in development. But doctors say insurance companies either won't pay for them or make women try and fail with other, perhaps less effective, drugs before they do.

May 16

[UK announces funding to boost global fight against antimicrobial resistance | CIDRAP](#)

The British government today put forth a package worth roughly \$108 million to support international efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

May 16

[Report highlights role of socioeconomic, sociocultural factors in antimicrobial resistance | CIDRAP](#)

A policy brief published yesterday by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies suggests AMR policies need to take socioeconomic and sociocultural factors into account.

May 15

[Report calls for 'urgent action' to boost antibiotic pipeline | CIDRAP](#)

Antibiotic development advocates and infectious disease experts have been warning for years that the pipeline for new antibiotics is thin and ill-equipped to keep pace with the spread of AMR. They've published numerous reports and analyses in recent years to highlight the problem.





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May 15

[WHO prequalifies 2nd dengue vaccine | CIDRAP](#)

The WHO today announced that it has prequalified a second dengue vaccine, TAK-003, known as Qdenga and developed by Takeda.

May 14

[Study finds increased risk of death in sepsis patients treated with broad-spectrum antibiotic | CIDRAP](#)

A new study indicates that one of the most frequently prescribed broad-spectrum empiric antibiotics for patients with suspected sepsis is associated with increased mortality, U.S. researchers reported yesterday in JAMA Internal Medicine.

May 14

[Study highlights inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in US emergency departments | CIDRAP](#)

A review of U.S. emergency department visits involving antibiotic prescribing found that more than a quarter had inappropriate antibiotic prescriptions, and nearly half of those didn't even have a plausible indication for antibiotics, U.S. researchers reported today in Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology.

May 14

[Weight Loss Drug Works 'For up to Four Years', Study Suggests | Newsweek](#)

New research has found weight loss drug Wegovy can produce significant results for at least 4 years of treatment. The drug has also been found to deliver cardiovascular benefits in overweight and obese patients irrespective of the weight lost.

May 13

[Counterfeit fentanyl pills are becoming a lot more common in law enforcement seizures | NPR](#)

A new study shows a dramatic spike in the number of counterfeit fentanyl pills being seized by law enforcement, an indication of the growing illicit drug supply driving the country's historic opioid crisis.

May 13

[Korean study shows high broad-spectrum antibiotic exposure at end of life | CIDRAP](#)

A study of patients at the end of life in South Korea found high rates of exposure to broad-spectrum antibiotics, particularly among those with cancer, researchers reported today in Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology.

May 13

[Report urges G7 countries to commit to incentives for antibiotic development | CIDRAP](#)

The Global Coalition on Aging last week issued a report calling on G7 countries to commit to funding pull incentives and making other investments in antibiotic innovation.