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Oil in the age of coronavirus: a U.S. shale bust like no other



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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Southern Daily News is published by Southern News Group Daily

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Monday May 18 2020 | [www.today-america.com](http://www.today-america.com) | Southern News Group

## Europe sees two deaths, multiple cases of COVID-linked syndrome in



FILE PHOTO - A face mask is seen on the ground in Sherington, following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), Sherington, Britain, May 16, 2020. REUTERS/Andrew Boyers

(Reuters) - A new life-threatening inflammatory syndrome associated with COVID-19 has affected 230 children in Europe and killed two so far this year, a regional health body said on Friday, as medics worldwide were told to be on alert.

The Swedish-based European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said in a risk report that two children had succumbed to the condition: one in Britain and one in France.

The new coronavirus has so far taken its greatest toll on the elderly and those with chronic health conditions, but reports about the syndrome in children have raised fears it could pose a greater risk to the young than first through.

At a briefing in Geneva, the World Health Organisation (WHO) urged clinicians to be alert to the rare syndrome, but cautioned that links to COVID-19 were still unclear.

The condition, known as paediatric inflammatory multisystem syndrome (PIMS), shares symptoms with toxic shock and Kawasaki disease including fever, rashes, swollen glands and, in severe cases, heart inflammation.

"I call on all clinicians worldwide to work with your national authorities and WHO to be alert and better understand this syndrome in children," said WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

On Friday, the WHO issued a preliminary definition of the syndrome, which it said had become more frequent during the current pandemic but has also appeared in children who did not test positive for COVID-19.

The condition affected children and adolescents showing fever for more than three days, with elevated markers of inflammation.

The children also showed at least two of the following symptoms: rash or signs of inflammation around the mouth, hands or feet; shock or low blood pressure; heart problems; evidence of bleeding disorder; and acute gastrointestinal problems. The case definition pertained to children who had contracted COVID-19 or had had likely contact with COVID-19 patients, and had no other obvious microbial cause of inflammation, it said.

"We know so far very little about this inflammatory syndrome," said WHO epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove.

In France, doctors said a nine-year old boy died a week ago in the southern town of Marseille after developing a syndrome akin to Kawasaki disease and being in contact with the coronavirus though not suffering its symptoms.

He was hospitalised on May 2 after scarlet fever had been diagnosed. Back home, he suffered from a severe heart ailment and was rushed back to Marseille's Timone hospital's intensive care unit, where he died.

French researchers on Thursday reported Kawasaki disease-like symptoms in 17 children admitted to a Paris hospital between April 27 and May 7, while in an average two-week period they would have expected to see only one such case.

The European Union (EU) health body ECDC added it had agreed to include the syndrome as a possible complication of

COVID-19 to be reported for Europe-wide surveillance.

Research efforts should aim at determining what role the coronavirus, if any, plays in causing PIMS, it said.

The risk of PIMS in children was currently considered low, as was the risk of them contracting COVID-19, the agency said.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday issued guidance to doctors on how to recognise and report cases of the syndrome, following the reports of cases in Europe and more than 100 in the state of New York. [LIN2CW2EH]

At its briefing, the WHO urged governments and companies to work together to develop a vaccine and treatments against COVID-19, and make distribution equitable.

"Traditional market models will not deliver at the scale needed to cover the entire globe," Tedros said.

Costa Rica's President Carlos Alvarado called at the briefing for creating a pool of patents and licences on a voluntary basis to enable fair access.

France said on Thursday the world's nations would have equal access to any vaccine developed by pharmaceuticals giant Sanofi, a day after the company's chief executive suggested Americans would likely be the first in line.



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# Crowds at Wuhan clinics fear coronavirus testing could rekindle disease

WUHAN, China (Reuters) - As Wuhan, the Chinese city where the COVID-19 pandemic began, revs up a massive testing campaign, some residents crowding the test centres expressed concern on Saturday that the very act of getting tested could expose them to the coronavirus.

Safety has become a hot topic on social media groups among the 11 million residents of Wuhan, people told Reuters as they converged on open-air test sites at clinics and other facilities. Many said, though, that they support the voluntary campaign.

Wuhan health authorities sprang back into action after confirming last weekend the central Chinese city's first cluster of new infections since it was released from virtual lockdown on April 8.

The new cases - all of them people who had previously shown no symptoms of the disease - spurred Wuhan authorities to launch a citywide search for asymptomatic carriers of the virus, aiming to gauge the level of COVID-19 risk.

Although Wuhan's cinemas and banquet halls remain shut to curb large gatherings, the testing requires people to wait in long, sometimes messy, queues.

"Some people have expressed worry in the (social media) groups about the tests, which require people to cluster, and whether there's any infection risk," said one Wuhan resident who asked not to be named.

A woman wearing a face mask looks on in front of others standing in a queue for nucleic acid testings in Wuhan,



WUHAN, China (Reuters) - As Wuhan, the Chinese city where the COVID-19 pandemic began, revs up a massive testing campaign, some residents crowding the test centres expressed concern on Saturday that the very act of getting tested could expose

the Chinese city hit hardest by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, Hubei province, China May 16, 2020. REUTERS/Aly Song

"But others rebutted those worries, saying such comments are not supportive of the government." The unprecedented scale of testing indicates

the official level of concern, some experts say. Others say it is an extremely costly exercise and question its effectiveness. At a testing kiosk set up at the side of a busy road in Jiangnan district in central Wuhan, a volunteer was patrolling and spraying disinfectant at a long line of people.

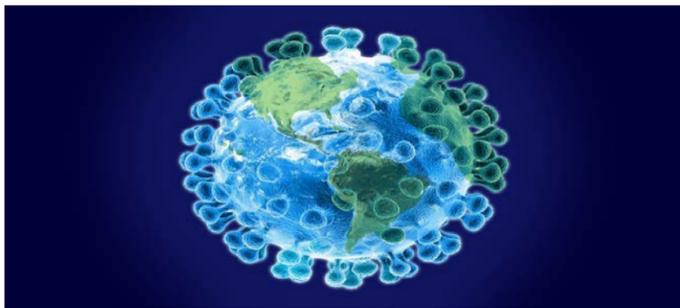
Many people observed social distancing, such as queuing 1 metre apart, and there were signs to remind them. But just as many did not. In some cases, volunteer workers were not insisting that they comply.

Stay Safe!

## BUSINESS

Wash Your Hands!

### World Coronavirus Updates



Graphic Courtesy axios.com

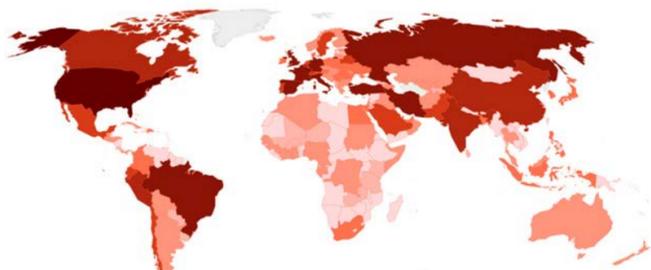
#### Confirmed cases of COVID-19

As of May 14, 11pm EDT

**Confirmed cases**  
4,442,163  
+95,145 from yesterday

**Deaths**  
302,418  
+5,221

**Recoveries**  
1,587,893  
+39,346



#### Top countries by confirmed case count

1. U.S.	1.42m	6. Brazil	203k	11. China	84k
2. Russia	252k	7. France	178k	12. India	81k
3. U.K.	234k	8. Germany	174k	13. Peru	80k
4. Spain	229k	9. Turkey	144k	14. Canada	74k
5. Italy	223k	10. Iran	114k	15. Belgium	54k

Data: The Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins; Map: Axios Visuals

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Brazil's health ministry added 844 and nearly 14,000 cases to its official tally on Thursday. The ministry noted that most of those infections and fatalities did not happen in the last 24 hours and were delayed from the official count due to investigations.

**By the numbers:** COVID-19 has infected over 4.4 million people and killed over 301,000 as of Thursday. More than 1.5 million have recovered from the vi-

rus. The U.S. has reported the most cases (over 1.4 million from 10.3 million tests), followed by Russia (over 252,000).

**What's happening:** The pandemic caused almost 600,000 Australians to lose their jobs, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Thursday, noting the record 6.2% jobless rate was "shocking" but "not unanticipated." Australia projects the rate will rise to 10% in Q2.

• **New Zealand's** finance minister an-

nounced on Thursday a "once in a generation Budget," outlining a \$50 billion rescue fund. NZ and Australia are reopening their economies from coronavirus constraints and are on track share a "COVID-safe travel zone" within weeks.

• **A UN report** projected on Wednesday the pandemic will cause the global economy to shrink 3.2%, as the World Health Organization warned the virus "may never go away."

• **Hong Kong's** department of health is investigating three new coronavirus infections, two of which were locally transmitted, it said Wednesday. Hong Kong only reported infections in people with travel histories for the past 24 days.

• **Doctors in Italy** have completed one of the first studies to examine the rise of an inflammatory illness that is affecting children — some of whom have tested positive for the coronavirus or its antibodies.

• **France** is reporting more coronavirus deaths than Spain, per John Hopkins data as of Wednesday, as the country cautiously reopens shops and schools.

• **European Union** member states should only allow tourists in from countries that can prove their coronavirus outbreak is under control, the European Commission said in guidance released Wednesday.

• **South Korea** reported 26 new coronavirus cases linked to a Seoul nightclub district, taking the cluster total to 119, with more than 10,900 infections as of Wednesday.

• **The United Kingdom** is reporting over 33,000 deaths from the coronavirus — the most fatalities outside of the U.S., per Johns Hopkins.

• **Wuhan** — the original epicenter of the coronavirus — on Tuesday ordered all its residents to be tested for COVID-19 within 10 days after six people became newly infected in a single neighborhood, China state media announced.

• **Russia** is reporting the most cases worldwide outside of the U.S., but significantly fewer deaths than the other most-affected countries. Experts doubt the country's official death toll.

• **Canadian Prime Minister** Justin

Trudeau said Tuesday that the country would be "very, very careful about reopening any international travel, including in the United States, before we feel that it is time," the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reports.

• **India** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a \$300 billion rescue package — equal to roughly 10% of the country's GDP — on Tuesday, the New York Times reports. India is on lockdown until May 18, but allowed rail services to partially resume Tuesday, despite a jump in case numbers, per the Times of India.

• **In Spain**, more provinces reopened Monday. Spain's best-case scenario is that the country can lift all restrictions by the end of June, per Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez.

**The big picture:** Policy responses to the crisis have been every-country-for-itself and — in the case of the U.S. and China — tinged with geopolitical rivalry.

• **But the scientific work** underway to understand the virus and develop a vaccine has been globalized on an unprecedented scale.

**Coronavirus symptoms include:** Fever, cough, shortness of breath, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headaches, sore throat and a loss of taste or smell.

#### Related

#### SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The purpose of this tool is to assist administrators in making (re)opening decisions regarding K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to check with state and local health officials and other partners to determine the most appropriate actions while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.

**Should you consider opening?**

- Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- Is the school ready to protect children and employees at higher risk for severe illness?
- Are you able to screen students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure?

**ALL YES** → **DO NOT OPEN**

**Are recommended health and safety actions in place?**

- Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible
- Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation
- Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
- Train all employees on health and safety protocols

**ANY NO** → **MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST**

**Is ongoing monitoring in place?**

- Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of students and employees daily upon arrival, as feasible
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home
- Plan for if students or employees get sick
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
- Monitor student and employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices
- Be ready to consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area

**ALL YES** → **OPEN AND MONITOR**

**ANY NO** → **MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST**

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Editor's Choice



Sen. Richard Burr walks to a republican luncheon on Capitol Hill in Washington. REUTERS/Erin Scott



Todd Cornish and Daeshawna Chaney from the Carlton Street Stable use their horse Kitty to transport food to give away to West Baltimore residents, in Maryland. REUTERS/Eric Lee



A journalist leafs through an edition of the newspaper L'Eco di Bergamo, in which ten pages of obituaries have been published due to the high number of deaths from the coronavirus, in Bergamo, Italy. REUTERS/Flavio Lo Scalzo



A member of the staff from La Paz hospital reacts after two minutes of silence for health workers that died of COVID-19, in Madrid, Spain. REUTERS/Juan Medina



An aerial photo shows the demolition of a cooling tower at a decommissioned nuclear power plant in Philippsburg, Germany. Daniel Maurer/EnBW/via REUTERS



Supporters gather outside the warehouse of medical equipment distributor Owens & Minor prior to a visit by U.S. President Donald Trump, in Allentown, Pennsylvania. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst



A graduate gets ready to pose for a picture at the empty campus of San Diego State University after the 23 Campuses of California State University system announced the fall 2020 semester will be online, effecting hundreds of thousands of students, in...MORE



People wear protective face shields and masks at a bank getting ready to reopen in Bangkok, Thailand. REUTERS/Jorge Silva

**Trump Administration Is Racing To Get A Vaccine To The Market Fast With "Operation Warp Speed"**

**Trump's New Vaccine Timeline Not Realistic Say Health Experts**



Public health experts are pushing back on President Trump's claim that a COVID-19 vaccine will be available by the end of the year.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The project's goal is to have 300 million vaccine doses available by January, an accelerated version of the administration's previous projections of needing 12-18 months to get a vaccine ready for the public.

Drug industry experts say the new timeline is unrealistic. Many of the vaccine candidates are still in the early stages of development, and proving safety in humans is a time consuming task. Even if a vaccine were produced before 2021, experts agree that hundreds of millions of doses, at a minimum, would be required to prevent the disease from spreading across the entire country.



The world is pinning its hopes on a vaccine to prevent COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

People want to be able to attend sporting events, travel without worry and celebrate major life events in person with family and friends.

But until a vaccine is successfully deployed, it will be difficult to completely lift the social distancing restrictions that have devastated the U.S. economy. During a Fox News town hall Sunday evening at the Lincoln Memorial, Trump said he was confident a vaccine could be fast-tracked.

"We think we're going to have a vaccine by the end of this year. And we're pushing very hard. We're building supply lines, now, we don't even have the final vaccine," Trump said.

That timeline has been echoed, on a more nuanced note, by some of the administration's top scientists.

Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, told Fox News on Sunday that "on paper it's possible" to have a vaccine available in January, which would be the very edge of the 12 month estimate.

The key question, Birx said, is "whether

we can execute and execute around the globe."

Anthony Fauci, the country's leading infectious disease expert and a member of the White House coronavirus task force, also said it was possible for the U.S. to have a viable vaccine by January.



"We want to go quickly, but we want to make sure it's safe and it's effective," Fauci told NBC's Savannah Guthrie last week. "I think that is doable if things fall in the right place."

Operation Warp Speed aims to condense the typical timeline of clinical trials by testing multiple vaccine candidates at once.

Instead of waiting for complete evidence of safety before testing efficacy, they will test for both at once. Clinical trials typically go through three phases, with the final phase consisting of a randomly controlled study that often measures thousands of patients over the course of several years.

Vaccine experts admit the technology has sped up in recent years, but the process can only be condensed so much before putting people at risk.

"The issue is going to be: How quickly can you amass data in thousands of patients in a short period of time to know there's an efficacy signal, and know there's no safety flare that rises up?" said Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

"If we get it wrong it's going to have consequences that go beyond COVID," Hotez said. "The one place I would draw a line in the sand is rushing a phase three to ... prevent you from getting adequate information about whether

it works and whether it's safe."



Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar focused on emerging infectious disease at the Center for Health Security at Johns Hopkins University, said he doesn't think wrapping up by the end of December is realistic, and that everything would have to be perfect for the White House to meet its 12 month goal of January.

"The leading candidates are all using novel technologies that there may be unforeseen difficulties with in clinical trials," Adalja said.

On top of that, he said, scientists will need to have confidence in understanding dosing information, side effects and immunity across the entire U.S. population.

"It's much more rapid, but I wouldn't put a timeline on it," Adalja said.

"There's never been a human coronavirus vaccine ... I don't know how you can speed the answers to those questions." (Courtesy <https://www.msn.com/>)

**Related Triple combination therapy shows promise for COVID-19 patients with less severe illnesses**

As scientists scramble to find COVID-19 treatments among existing approved drugs, researchers in Hong Kong may have found a winning combination. Early data shows that a triple antiviral therapy may be safe and effective in treating patients with mild to moderate cases of COVID-19, according to a study published Friday in Lancet. The trio of drugs include ribavirin, lopinavir-ritonavir and Interferon beta 1b.

All three drugs used in the study are already approved to treat other illnesses. Interferon beta 1b is a drug commonly used to treat multiple sclerosis, lopina-

vir-ritonavir is an anti-retroviral medication used to treat HIV and ribavirin is commonly used to treat hepatitis C.



Doctors tested the amount of virus in samples taken from the patient's nose, saliva, back of the throat and stool on a machine that can detect the presence of viral genetic material. When researchers compared the two groups, they found that the typical patient given the three drug-combo tested negative for the virus five days earlier than those who received just a single drug. In addition, the triple therapy treatment group had shorter hospital stays and reported that their symptoms disappeared much faster than the control group. The study offers a promising sign that the drug cocktail helped their bodies beat back the virus faster. (Courtesy <https://abcnews.go.com/>)

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