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ACHA COVID-19 Update: March 17, 2021

These updates have been provided by ACHA's COVID-19 Task Force. Please forward this message to others on campus who may benefit. Non-members can subscribe to receive these and other messages [here](#). We will continue to update the [COVID-19 webpage](#) with important alerts and resources.

ACHA Updates

Hot Topic: Commencement—Virtual, Hybrid, or In-Person? Public Health Considerations and Decision Making

Friday, March 26 at 3:00-4:00 PM ET

Come to our next free webinar and listen to senior administrators/health center directors from a large university, a medium-sized university, and a public historically black college as they discuss the decision-making process, planning, and public health considerations for holding commencement activities.

[Register here.](#)

Recording Available! Hot Topic: COVID-19 Variants—Which Ones Should We Worry About and How Do We Deal with Them?

In this webinar recorded on March 12, two expert infectious disease epidemiologists and a chief health officer spoke about COVID-19 variants, genomic sequencing, and the impact of variants on college campuses. View the recording [here](#).

CDC Updates

CDC Training—Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine (Johnson & Johnson): What Healthcare Professionals Need to Know

CDC has created a new, web-on-demand, self-paced [module](#) for healthcare providers who will be administering the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. This module will provide information to healthcare professionals about the COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by Johnson & Johnson, based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and guidance from the manufacturer.

Other CDC COVID-19 training sessions are available [here](#).

Data, Numbers, and Epidemiology

The Short-Term, Middle-Term, and Long-Term Future of the Coronavirus

This STAT [article](#) makes predictions on the future of the pandemic, once we are out of the current "crisis phase."

Short-term future: variants are the main concern, and the UK variant is expected to become the dominant strain in the US. The Biden administration expects enough vaccine by the end of May for all adults, but the

country will not reach herd immunity over the summer. There is concern of a fall surge due to the South African or Brazilian variant.

Middle-term future: seasonal waves of viral activity due to "susceptible replenishment" as immunity wanes, SARS-CoV-2 evolves, and babies are born.

Long-term future: SARS-CoV-2 could become just another of the four endemic seasonal coronaviruses that cause the common cold.

Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases by Continent

This Axios [article](#) and accompanying graph show Europe's surge in cases, likely due to the UK variant. The increasing rate of vaccination and the warmer weather are advantageous to the U.S. Vaccination in the EU has been moving slowly. That combined with the variants in Europe are "making Europe's challenge of vaccinating its way out of the current surge that much more difficult."

Prevention and Treatment

Retail Store Customer Flow and COVID-19 Transmission

This [study](#) from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences mathematically analyzes the effectiveness of various interventions aimed at limiting COVID transmission in retail stores. These interventions include reductions in customer density and restricting movement of customers in stores to one-way flow. The researchers assess two mechanisms of transmission: 1) close contact and 2) wake exposure, which refers to spread of viruses from one person by airflow to someone behind them. Restricting customer movement to one-way flow is only effective if COVID-19 spreads by close contact, while reducing customer density is very effective with either mechanism. Though this study describes retail store flow, it has implications for many campus operations that have similar flow patterns.

Effectiveness of 3 versus 6 Feet of Physical Distancing for Controlling Spread of COVID-19

This Clinical Infectious Diseases [article](#) is a nonrandomized study over a 16-week period from September 2020 to January 2021 comparing COVID-19 rates in 242 Massachusetts school districts. Some districts maintained 6 feet and some maintained only 3 feet of distance between students. Adjusting for rates of SARS-CoV-2 in the community, case rates were similar in both students and staff regardless of the 3 or 6 feet of distance, leading researchers to the conclusion that "lower physical distancing policies can be adopted in school settings with masking mandates without negatively impacting student or staff safety."

First Pill for COVID-19 Could be Ready by Year's End

This Medscape [article](#) discusses three oral agents in development by RedHill Biopharma. Currently, all options for monoclonal antibodies for prevention and early treatment require IV administration; an oral treatment could help speed treatment and prevent hospitalization.

Vaccines

Little Difference in Vaccine Hesitancy Among White and Black Americans, Poll Finds

This NPR [piece](#) looks at the [latest NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist survey](#) of 1,227 adults conducted March 3-8, 2021. Among the respondents, "73% of Black people and 70% of White people said that they either planned to get a coronavirus vaccine or had done so already; 25% of Black respondents and 28% of white respondents said they did not plan to get a shot." Thirty-seven percent of Latino respondents said they would not get vaccinated, while 63% said they intended to or already had been vaccinated. Vaccination intent fell along party lines, with Democrats being much more likely to get vaccinated.

Pfizer/BioNTech Say Data Suggests Vaccine 94% Effective in Preventing Asymptomatic Infection

This Medscape [article](#) reports on Israeli data collected from January 17 to March 6 showing the Pfizer vaccine was 94% effective in preventing asymptomatic infections—thus significantly reducing transmission—as well as 97% effective in preventing symptomatic disease, severe disease, and death. The analysis showed the vaccine was effective against the B.1.1.7 (UK variant) and that unvaccinated individuals were 44 times more likely to develop symptomatic COVID-19 and 29 times more likely to die than their vaccinated counterparts.

College Campuses

BU Precision Diagnostics Center 2021 Virtual Conference: Covid-19 Testing and Surveillance on University Campuses

March 23, 2021 at 9:00 am - 5:00 pm ET

The Precision Diagnostics Center will be hosting a [virtual conference](#) highlighting the efforts of universities over the past year to implement Covid-19 surveillance and testing programs. This conference will include detailed talks from several universities that built their own testing programs. Other topics include quarantine, isolation and contact tracing efforts, challenges returning to laboratory research science, and deep sequencing efforts to determine the presence and emergence of SARS-CoV-2 variants on campus.

Mental Health

Webinar: It's OK Not to Be OK: Physician Burnout and Mental Health

Wednesday, March 24 at 2:00-3:00 PM ET

The National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation presents this [webinar](#) with health care leaders who are working to reduce burnout in their industry and address challenges related to the pandemic.

See all updates here: https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Resources/Topics/COVID-19_Update.aspx

ACHA COVID-19 Page: <https://www.acha.org/COVID-19>



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