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## Army Public Health Center experts offer tips for staying at home without feeling isolated

7 April- Following mandated stay-at-home and social distancing rules during the COVID-19 crisis is creating unique challenges for many individuals who are managing work, family and personal needs while still trying to stay healthy and not stress out or get too stir crazy. Health and nutrition experts at the Army Public Health Center have a number of recommendations to help keep you and your family on track. Lt. Col. Leslie Roberson, a clinical psychologist and APHC behavioral health specialist, recognizes the challenges. "Our family is spending more time together than usual due to COVID-19," said Roberson. "Being together in close quarters can be challenging. Did I mention we are also sharing the internet with four teenagers and the internet is required for telework?" Roberson recommends discussing daily work plans, especially when online meetings are occurring, so others in the household know when they need to be quiet. "We have a freshman in the home and both my husband and I are teleworking," said Sgt. 1st Class Sue Ellen Brown, the non-commissioned officer in charge of Pregnancy Postpartum Physical Training for Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. "A good strategy that has worked for us is to maintain a schedule and enforcing our timelines for workout, personal hygiene, lunch, break, and also balancing when our dog Elle wants attention and love. Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan K. Settle, APHC Health Promotion and Wellness Directorate NCOIC, is adapting well to telework.

[DVIDS](#)

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## Army researchers begin animal testing of coronavirus vaccine

6 April- Army researchers at Fort Detrick, Maryland have begun testing a potential coronavirus vaccine on animals, the first of many steps in manufacturing a widely available prevention against the virus, Defense Department officials announced Monday. Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman told reporters during a Pentagon briefing that, as of Monday, the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases was beginning non-human primate testing. The DoD is involved in five different clinical vaccine trials in addition to supporting other federal agencies conducting their own testing, added Air Force Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Paul Friedrichs, the Joint Staff surgeon. Friedrichs stressed while the vaccine-testing process is moving as quickly as possible, a breakthrough treatment is still months away. "Once we know that they're safe, then we expand the testing candidates," he explained. After animal testing, researchers will evaluate the medicine in a small group of people, then a larger test group. "Only when we know they'll be both safe and effective [will we] be able to offer them more widely." Friedrichs echoed recent remarks from Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House's coronavirus response coordinator, who regularly give briefs at the

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**Cloth Face  
Coverings -  
Guidance for  
Community Settings**

Information regarding when and how to properly wear a cloth face covering in community settings to limit the spread of COVID-19.



White House on the U.S. government's coronavirus response. "We are still months away, not weeks away, from a vaccine," he said. The military is also testing a number of drug mixtures that could dampen the severity of the coronavirus' symptoms, or even the length of the infection; Friedrichs said it's possible those results will come in faster than a potential vaccine. That also includes trials with hydroxychloroquine. Friedrichs said that while the drug is "not widely being distributed" to military personnel, the Pentagon is conducting a small-group study on its capabilities to treat COVID-19 cases. President Donald Trump in recent weeks has touted the effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine, used to fight malaria as well as a treatment for patients with arthritis or lupus, as a "game-changer." Evidence that it works, however, is anecdotal at best. [Military.com](#)

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## **Dozens more military bases have suspected 'forever chemical' contamination**

3 April- The number of military installations with known contamination or suspected discharges of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, continues to rise, according to an environmental advocacy group keeping tally based on information obtained from the Defense Department. According to a report released Thursday by the Washington, D.C.-based Environmental Working Group (EWG), 678 installations are either contaminated or had suspect discharges of PFAS compounds used in firefighting foams. The DoD had previously identified 651 active or former military bases where perfluorooctane sulfonate or perfluorooctanoic acid, also known as PFOS and PFOA, may have been used or released in a report from the Pentagon's PFAS Task Force released Feb. 13. PFAS chemicals have contaminated communities across the U.S. from industrial sites that manufacture or use the compounds in products such as non-stick cookware, stain repellent, materials and food wrappers. But EWG found that many of the highest levels of the chemicals, sometimes called "forever chemicals" because they do not break down and are impossible to destroy, are on or near military bases, where firefighting foams containing PFOS and PFOA have been used for decades in training and emergencies. "Through the Freedom of Information Act and other DoD documents, we have confirmed that the PFAS is in the tap water or groundwater of 328 of these 678 military installations," said Scott Faber, EWG's senior vice president for government affairs. "PFAS contaminate the blood of every American and have been linked to very serious health problems. ... The Pentagon's use of aqueous film forming foam has disproportionately exposed military service members and their families and nearby communities to higher levels of PFAS pollution." Last month, EWG officials said they had found 28 installations where the levels of PFAS in drinking water exceeded standards set by some states that are stricter than the Environmental Protection Agency's accepted lifetime threshold. [Military.com](#)

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**Facemasks -  
Healthcare Provider  
Guidance for the  
Use of Homemade  
Cloth Facemasks**

This information is intended for the healthcare provider (HCP) population, but if it is used outside of the HCP population, it must be understood that homemade cloth facemasks are never to be used in an industrial setting for protection against chemical contaminants, dusts, mists, fumes, or vapors.



## Here's how to make a face mask out of that Marine green skivvy shirt

6 April- If you saw the Defense Department memo directing service members to wear a face covering over COVID-19 concerns, fear not, you can make one out of your green skivvy shirt with no sewing skills required. Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools headquartered out of Camp Johnson, North Carolina, posted a short image tutorial showing Marines stationed aboard Camp Johnson how they can make a skivvy shirt face mask.

[Marine Times](#)

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## Number of troops diagnosed with COVID-19 jumped nearly 50 percent over the weekend

6 April- As coronavirus cases have more than doubled in the past week, so too has the rate of troops testing positive for COVID-19, according to Defense Department data released Monday. So far more than 1,435 service members are confirmed, up from 569 a week ago and 978 on Friday. It's a similar story in the U.S. at large, when the total hit more than 300,000 on Sunday afternoon, more than twice the number a week earlier. The current numbers put the military's infection rate at 683-per-million, compared to the general U.S. rate of 932 per million. Of those 1,435 troops, 119 have recovered, while 37 are hospitalized. "[There] seems to be this belief that the best way for the Department of Defense to defeat COVID-19 is for us to stand down and stop operations around the world," Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman told reporters Friday, in the face of some criticism that the Pentagon wasn't doing enough to stem the spread of coronavirus. "One, that's not going to happen. Two, we don't believe that's necessary." The death toll still stands at six after the weekend, though the numbers have changed somewhat. [Military Times](#)

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### GLOBAL

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## Asymptomatic coronavirus cases appear to be on the rise in China, report says

6 April- Just as China is about to lift travel restrictions in Wuhan—the city considered to be the country's one-time epicenter of the coronavirus—Beijing has reported an increase in asymptomatic cases there, which raises new concerns about a second wave of infections. Reuters reported late Sunday that the country's National Health Commission identified 78 new cases considered asymptomatic. There were 47 the day before. Chinese leaders have begun loosening tough travel restrictions that have kept many inside. Mandatory 14-day quarantines, however, have been stepped up on those arriving from overseas. China has reported 82,641 cases and 3,335 deaths. Beijing has been criticized for allegedly withholding

information about the severity of the illness in the virus' early days. [Fox News](#)

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## Coronavirus: Scientists question school closures impact

7 April- Countries like the UK that have closed schools to help stop the spread of coronavirus should ask hard questions about whether this is now the right policy, says one team of scientists. The University College London team says keeping pupils off has little impact, even with other lockdown measures. But a scientist whose work has informed the UK strategy insists school closures play an important role. The government has said it will review its coronavirus policies after Easter. While children can catch coronavirus, they rarely get severe symptoms. But they can still spread the infection, which is why many countries have closed schools. [BBC News](#)

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## Coronavirus: Two COVID-19 vaccine trials show promising results in mice

7 April- Various researchers in the United States claimed they had developed promising new COVID-19 vaccine candidates. Early animal trials have shown promise so far, but human trials are still in the stages of the making plan. The researchers already had a massive leg up from beyond epidemics. In a statement, the researchers claimed they had previous experience in handling SARS-CoV in 2003 and MERS-CoV in 2014. Andrea Gambotto, co-senior author of the peer-reviewed paper published in the journal EBioMedicine, and associate professor of surgery at the Pittsburgh School of Medicine, explained these viruses that are closely related to SARS-CoV-2. These two viruses, which are closely related to SARS-CoV-2, "taught" the researchers that the spike protein is important for inducing immunity against the virus. The vaccine dubbed "PittCoVacc" (Pittsburgh Coronavirus Vaccine), according to researchers, works the same way as a flu shot. Injecting lab-made pieces of viral protein into the body would help build immunity, they explained. When examined in mice, the researchers discovered that the wide variety of antibodies able to neutralize the deadly SARS-CoV-2 virus surged weeks after delivery. "We evolved this to build on the original scratch technique used to deliver the smallpox vaccine to the skin, but as a high-tech version this is more efficient and reproducible affected person to patient," stated co-senior writer Louis Faló, professor and chair of dermatology at Pitt's School of Medicine, in the statement. Before beginning human trials, the researchers are currently awaiting drug approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. [Tech Times](#)

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### The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book

The Surgeon General Weekly Read Book is available with articles classified up to the **SECRET** level on the APHC SIPRNet site:

<https://intelshare.intelink.sgov.gov/sites/medcom-g2/SitePages/Home.aspx>

To access this version, you will need a **SECRET** clearance and a SIPRNet account.

## COVID-19 antibody test: Mayo Clinic to release test Monday

5 April- Officials with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota announced that they will be releasing a coronavirus serology test Monday, April 6. The antibody test will determine whether a person has been infected. Testing currently available, known as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, can pick up the presence of viral nucleic acid. This involves collecting cells from the back of the throat or nasal passages of patients to detect genetic material from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. So what is a coronavirus serology test, or antibody test and why are they important? This kind of testing involves looking for the patient's immune response to the virus in blood samples. Specifically, these tests track down antibodies, which are small proteins created by the immune system in the process of fighting off a disease. Antibodies can be particular for one kind of disease or sometimes a disease-type, and can provide a window into a patient's infection history. The ability to detect antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 can reveal whether a patient has had COVID-19, even if they were never diagnosed or never felt sick. Sometimes called a "game-changer", Mayo's Dr. Eliza Theel says "Bottom line, it's able to tell us whether or not an individual has developed this immune response for the virus". [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## No more going to grocery! Coronavirus officials say people should avoid grocery stores as much as they can

7 April- According to BGR, the U.S. and public officials are now encouraging everyone to stop going out and even avoid going to the grocery store and pharmacies as much as possible, even though they are essential. That is because the country is preparing for a sudden and significant increase in coronavirus cases, reaching the peak of the pandemic. "The next two weeks are extraordinarily important," Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, said in a press conference held last Saturday, Apr. 4. "This is the moment not to be going to the grocery store, not going to the pharmacy, but doing everything you can to keep your family and your friends safe." U.S. President Donald J. Trump affirmed, saying that this will likely be this period will be the toughest--between this week and the next--and warned the public that "unfortunately, there will be death." [Tech Times](#)

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## Red Cross seeks plasma donations from recovered COVID-19 patients

6 April- The Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from COVID-19 and may be able to donate plasma to help current patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening disease. People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients seriously ill with COVID-19. Historically, convalescent plasma has been used as a potentially lifesaving treatment when new diseases or infections develop quickly, and no treatments or vaccines were available yet. The Red Cross has been asked by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to help identify prospective donors and manage the distribution of these products to hospitals treating patients in need. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## The mystery of why the coronavirus kills some young people

6 April- ...It is true that Covid-19 seems to most seriously affect older people, particularly those with pre-existing conditions such as heart disease, lung disease and diabetes. It could be that an elderly person's immune systems may not be able to fight off the disease as well, and the virus can more easily replicate, overwhelming the body and causing multiple organ system failure. And yet, as we start to look deeper and hear more stories, it is becoming apparent there are many people like Ben, who are younger and still get very sick and die. I recently heard the story of 39-year-old Conrad Buchanan, a healthy, vivacious Florida DJ, who also died after having coronavirus despite having no underlying conditions, according to his wife. We have known for some time that this new disease, Covid-19, was not only an older person's disease. It has become clear that the young and healthy are by no means immune to this infection and could become sick enough to require hospitalization. In an early snapshot from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for 2,449 patients whose age was known, 18% were between age 45 and 54, and 29% were between 20 and 44 years old. Among those who were hospitalized, 18% were ages 45 to 54 and 20% were ages 20 to 44. Younger people are far less likely to die, but there is an unusual pattern that seems to be emerging. As Dr. Anthony Fauci told me, it is what makes the coronavirus such an "unusual disease." [CNN](#)

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## WHO warns against easing coronavirus measures too early

7 April- The World Health Organization has no blanket recommendation for countries and regions for easing measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, but urged them not to lift them too early, a spokesman said on Tuesday. "One of the most important parts is not to let go of the measures too early in order not to have a fall back again," said WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier in a virtual briefing. "It's similar to being sick yourself if you get out of bed too early and get running too early you risk falling back and having complications," he added. [Reuters](#)

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### INFLUENZA

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## AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary

Week 13 (22 March 2020— 28 March 2020):

NORTHCOM- ILI activity remained high. Influenza A accounted for over half of the positive influenza specimens. Among subtyped influenza A specimens, A(H1N1) has predominated.

EUCOM- ILI activity remained high. Among positive influenza specimens, the majority continued to be influenza A.

INDOPACOM- ILI activity remained high. The majority of positive influenza specimens continued to be influenza A. Among subtyped influenza A specimens, the majority were A(H1N1).

SOUTHCOM- ILI activity increased to minimal. The majority of influenza specimens continued to be influenza A (not subtyped).

CENTCOM- ILI activity decreased to moderate. [DHA -Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch](#)

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## APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

Week ending 28 March 2020 (week 13): During week 13, 4,843 specimens were submitted for testing, which represents a 14% decrease from week 12. Influenza B represented the majority (36%) of positive specimens submitted for testing. Public Health Command (RHC)-A accounted for the greatest number of positive influenza A specimens (n=12). Eighty-six percent of positive influenza A specimens were from non-AD beneficiaries. Beneficiaries between 18 and 29 years old comprised the majority (n=16) of total positive respiratory specimens, and was followed by individuals younger than 18 years of age (n=15). No influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported. [APHC](#)

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## VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

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### Recall of Fromagerie Blackburn Le Mont-Jacob cheese for listeria

6 April- The recall of Fromagerie Blackburn semi-soft cheese in Canada for possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination has been updated to include more information. The first recall was for Le Napoléon cheese. Now, Fromagerie Blackburn Le Mont-Jacob cheese is also recalled. No illnesses have been reported to the company to date in connection with this issue. The recalled product is Fromagerie Blackburn Le Mont-Jacob semisoft cheese in several different sizes and with different UPC numbers. The first recalled product is sold in 130 gram packages, with the UPC number 6 28504 56408 0. The codes on the cheese are Best Before 05JN20, 16JN20, and 25JN20. The lot numbers are 20007, 20020, and 20028. Also recalled is Fromagerie Blackburn Le Mont-Jacob semi-soft cheese in variable weight size cheese wheels. The UPC number is 6 28504 56403 5. All products with a best before date up to and including 15JN20 are recalled. The lot numbers on this cheese are 20007, 20008, 20014, 20015, 20016, 20020, 20021, 20022, 20028, 20036, 20042, 20043, 20044, and 20050. Finally, the cheese, also sold in variable weight packages, with UPC numbers that begin with 0 200007, are recalled. All units sold up to and including April 5, 2020 are recalled. There are no lot numbers on this product. [Food Poisoning Bulletin](#)

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## WELLNESS

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### Change in routine, forced isolation can lead to depression, suicidal thoughts

3 April- When someone hears, reads or watches news about an outbreak of an infectious disease, like COVID-19, the amount of stress they feel can go off the charts, according to the Substance Abuse and Health Services Administration. The counselors of the U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz Army Substance Abuse Program wholeheartedly agree. Add to the 24-hour news cycle the unique conditions brought on from living overseas during a worldwide pandemic, and many employees working from home, experts say it's not surprising depression and dark thoughts can set in. Kristin James, garrison ASAP chief, said someone working from home or homeschooling their children must understand the situation is not their fault. "We don't have much control, if any, of the policies being implemented to control the spread of the virus. However, we can certainly control our own reaction to the situation," James said. "Keeping the focus on what you control enhances your sense of empowerment. It's also important to understand it is normal to feel stressed or anxious and it is healthy to verbalize your feelings and ask for help." Unlike any other nationwide or worldwide crisis, James said we're all just a keystroke away from each other. She advises anyone feeling themselves slipping into depression, missing their co-workers or

feeling disconnected during social distancing should start tapping away, using the positive aspects of social media. "If an individual is currently in an administrative leave or telework status, there are still ways they can be a part of the community. If they have a skill or a talent to share with others, the garrison can use them to build virtual content for the community," James said. "If nothing else, jot down the steps necessary to help reopen your work center and how you will contribute to the community's return to routine operations, when that happens." Experts say during these uncertain times stress levels can become unbearable as information changes daily, due to many factors. Not to mention the added stress of increased workload on home life and work situations. The SAHSA says to acknowledge the added stress on daily life. Enlist help to learn or build upon existing coping, problem-solving and communication skills. There are many resources in the USAG RP community, available via virtual or telephone counseling/coaching. Military Family Life Counselors, Employee Assistance Program coordinators and personal financial counselors are here locally, ready to connect with any employee, family member or Soldier. [Army.mil](#)  
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## **It's complicated: Our relationship with social media**

3 April- We're in the midst of a challenging, emotional time as most of the nation is working from home and many service members are deployed in support of the COVID-19 pandemic. Scrolling through social media posts about COVID-19 may intensify negative feelings, especially for those struggling with depression or loneliness. Impact of Social Media on our Mental Health. It's true that social media can help connect and reconnect people. However, it may increase feelings of isolation or remind people of what they don't have and what they feel they're missing out on. Many states are experiencing mandatory stay-at-home orders, parents are teleworking and children are participating in virtual schools. The impact can be taxing; understanding how to cope with the stress and anxiety of this "new normal" is critical. Turning to social media is an obvious way to stay connected with the outside world, family, and friends. Finding the right dose of social media is the key.

Social Media Pros and Cons:

Researchers discovered that social networking sites, such as Facebook, have psychological benefits like connection, communication, and a sense of belonging. At the same time, several studies indicate that prolonged use of the internet might be associated with signs and symptoms of depression and low self-esteem and loneliness. So, what's a social media user to do? There are ways to navigate tricky times. The key is awareness. [Health.mil](#)

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**USAFRICOM**

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## **DRC measles cases top 42,000 in 2020**

6 April- The measles outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continues from 2019's large outbreak. During the first 12 weeks of 2020, a total of 42,143 suspected

cases have been reported, with 527 deaths (case fatality ratio 1.3%). As of 22 March 2020, there has been a total of 353,551 cases and 6,558 deaths (case fatality ratio 1.9%) since the 31 December 2018. The under-five age group remains the most affected across the country from week 1 to 12 of 2020, with 62.3% of cases. The outbreak is still active in western and southern provinces in the health zones of Mongala, South and North Ubangi, Equateur, Maindombe, Kongo Central, Kasai, Kwilu and Sankuru. Some eastern provinces, including Haut Ulele, North and South Kivu and Tanganyika are also affected. The World Health Organization says the ongoing measles outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo is of grave concern, particularly as some vital response measures may be disrupted by lockdown measures during the COVID-19 outbreak, particularly in Kinshasa Province. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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#### **USCENTCOM**

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## **Extreme medical shortages in rebel-held Idlib city in Syria**

8 April- Aid groups are concerned about the possibility of the coronavirus pandemic reaching rebel-held Idlib city in Syria. Fears continue in the rebel-held Idlib city of northwest Syria as the pandemic sweeps the world. Its population lives under extreme shortages of medicine, and supplies in its hospitals have been depleted by nearly 10 years of war. Some in Idlib city have taken matters into their own hands, producing masks. The production provides jobs for the locals, and for some of them, a hope for a better future. [Aljazeera News](#)

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#### **USEUCOM**

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## **Coronavirus: Paris bans daytime outdoor exercise**

7 April- Authorities in Paris have banned exercise outside during the day, as the fight against the coronavirus outbreak continues. The new rules are in force between 10:00 and 19:00 local time, and come into effect on Wednesday. Mayor Anne Hidalgo and the chief of police said this would restrict people to exercise "when the streets are generally at their quietest". France has one of the highest death tolls in the world from the virus. In total, 8,911 people have died there, and the number of confirmed cases is almost at 100,000. On Tuesday, Health Minister Olivier Véran said the outbreak had yet to reach its peak, telling broadcaster BFMTV, "We are still in a worsening phase of the epidemic." France has been under strict lockdown measures for almost a month. Anyone who goes outside is required to carry a document stating their reason for leaving home: shopping for necessities, visiting a doctor, or exercise within 1km (half a mile) of their address. [BBC News](#)

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## Germany: COVID-19 cases top 100,000

5 April- Today, German health authorities reported that the number of COVID-19 cases in the country has exceeded the 100,000 mark, reaching 100,123, the fourth country to do this. Federal states reporting the most cases include Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Wuerttemberg. 1,584 deaths have been reported, a 1.58% fatality rate. A total of 37 million protective masks had arrived in Germany by the end of the week. "We managed to get and distribute protective equipment," said Federal Minister of Health Jens Spahn while visiting the FIEGE logistics center in Apfelstädt / Thuringia. Here, the medical protective equipment that we need to cope with the corona epidemic is delivered and delivered centrally. The German pharmaceutical and chemical industry has promised Federal Minister of Health Jens Spahn to join forces to supply the healthcare system with disinfectants. For this purpose, the platform "Emergency Disinfectant Supply" will be activated shortly. Above all, help for hospitals, care facilities and medical practices is to be efficiently coordinated nationwide via a digital marketplace. This is intended to support supply chains, facilitate contacts between actors and bundle information. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Spain reports 7000 COVID-19 cases in past 24 hours

4 April- Spain's Ministry of Health reported an additional 7026 COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, bringing the country's epidemic total to 124,736 cases. The Autonomous communities of Madrid and Catalonia have reported the most cases with 36,249 and 24,734, respectively. The Minister of Health, Salvador Illa, assured this week in his appearance at the Health and Consumption Commission that "the best thing at the moment is to do the maximum number of possible diagnostic tests on people who have symptoms " Therefore, it has stated the objective of maximizing the performance of PCR and rapid tests. With regard to the latter "this week," he explained, "we have received a million of them who have a sensitivity of 80% after the person has been infected for 7 or more days, according to the analyzes carried out by the Carlos III Health Institute; in patients who have just started symptoms, the sensitivity is 64% ". These rapid tests allow tests to be carried out in high-prevalence settings such as hospitals or residences, where there is a high probability of contagion, and to detect which people are infected if they test positive. If negative, they must perform a PCR. "Rapid tests detect an important part of positives, but those that give a negative require a PCR to rule out a false negative," said the minister. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Turkey COVID-19 death toll now 725, 'bed occupancy rate has not reached 50 percent yet'

7 April- Today, Turkey Minister of Health Fahrettin Koca announced there were 76 additional COVID-19 fatalities in the past 24 hours, bringing the total fatalities to 725. He also announced that of the more than 20,000 tests performed in the past day, more than 3,000 were positive. To date, 34,109 total coronavirus cases have been reported. Minister Koca made the following statement regarding intensive care and bed occupancy rates: "The total intensive care occupancy rate for Covid-19 and other patients is 62 percent. 38 percent is still empty. Our bed occupancy rate has not reached 50 percent yet. However, I would like to say that we are planning to construct a hospital with a thousand beds on two sides of Istanbul for precautionary purposes and to use it for other purposes tomorrow". "Any success achieved against the coronavirus is owed to isolation", said Koca and continued, "This is how we were able to prevent the importation of the disease into Turkey. Our primary weapon of defense has been isolation. Isolation becomes more and more important every day. The main objective is to prevent the spread." Underlining that we were going through times of patience and endurance, Koca continued, "These days are going to pass. The more effort we put in today, the more we will be proud of ourselves tomorrow. We will succeed, undoubtedly. This is a battle of public health. Our goal is to come out of this battle with minimum casualties and contain transmission early. Let's not give the virus the upper hand in this battle. I invite you to be the heroes of a public health battle. You will achieve this by isolating and protecting yourselves." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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**USINDOPACOM**

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## Philippines COVID-19 update: Chinese medical experts arrived in Manila

5 April- Philippines health officials report in an update today that the COVID-19 case count has risen to 3246, including 152 deaths. Of the total confirmed cases across the country, more than half are reported from the National Capital Region (NCR). The Department of Health announced twelve Chinese medical experts arrived in Manila today to share their learnings in handling COVID-19 cases with Filipino medical professionals. "They have a lot of good practices when they managed their COVID-19 patients in Wuhan and Hubei," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, referring to the Chinese medical experts who had firsthand experience in the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak. However, Duque clarified that their tasks will be purely advisory. "It is really guiding how to improve, level-up our COVID-19 response, learn different levels of surveillance, risk-assessment, isolation strategies, detection through accurate testing, clinical case management, and non-pharmaceutical public health measures," he added. The Chinese medical experts, together with DOH staff, are scheduled to visit RITM, the Lung Center of the Philippines, San Lazaro Hospital and quarantine facilities to train Filipino medical professionals. They will be here for

15 days or until April 19. The Chinese experts also brought with them 5,000 PPEs, 300,000 surgical masks, 30,000 medical N95 masks, 5,000 medical protective face shields and 30 non-invasive ventilators from the Chinese Government. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## **USNORTHCOM**

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### **U.S.: Florida- COVID-19 11 percent of testing is positive, HHS announces more funding for states**

7 April- At the end of the day on Monday, the Florida Department of Health reported 305 additional positive COVID-19 cases (289 Florida residents and 16 non-Florida residents) bringing the state total to 13,629 cases. While Florida's testing has increased over the past week, the percent of those testing positive for COVID-19 overall is 11 percent. Of the 7,641 tests performed on April 5, there were 930 positive results, or 12 percent. State officials reported eighteen people have died who tested positive for COVID-19 in Broward, Collier, Dade, DeSoto, Lee, Manatee, Orange, and Palm Beach, Polk, St. Lucie, Sumter and Volusia counties. 254 total deaths have been reported to date. On Monday, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is announcing upcoming action by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide \$186,000,000 in funding for additional resources to state and local jurisdictions in support of our nation's response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). "Testing and surveillance is a vital piece of our efforts to beat the coronavirus, and this new funding will expand our ability to track and prevent the virus's spread across the country," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "State and local public health departments are on the frontlines of our fight against the pandemic, and these new resources will help them build the testing and surveillance capabilities needed to beat the new threat we face." "Increasing the capacity of our nation's public health infrastructure is critical to stopping the spread of COVID-19 in communities across this country," said CDC Director Robert R. Redfield, M.D. "These funds will augment core public health capabilities including surveillance and predictive analytics, laboratory capacity, qualified frontline deployers, and the ability to rapidly respond to emerging disease clusters in communities that currently have limited person to person spread of the virus." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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### **U.S.: New York- COVID-19- Tiger at the Bronx Zoo tests positive**

5 April- Nadia, a 4-year-old female Malayan tiger at the Bronx Zoo, has tested positive for COVID-19, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society's Bronx Zoo. She, her sister Azul, two Amur tigers, and three African lions had developed a dry cough and all are expected to recover. This positive COVID-19 test for the tiger was confirmed by USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratory, based in Ames, Iowa. The cat was tested out of an abundance of caution and will ensure any knowledge we gain about COVID-19 will

contribute to the world's continuing understanding of this novel coronavirus. Though they have experienced some decrease in appetite, the cats at the Bronx Zoo are otherwise doing well under veterinary care and are bright, alert, and interactive with their keepers. It is not known how this disease will develop in big cats since different species can react differently to novel infections, but we will continue to monitor them closely and anticipate full recoveries. The four affected tigers live in the zoo's Tiger Mountain exhibit. One male Amur tiger that also lives at Tiger Mountain has not exhibited any clinical signs, and a Malayan tiger and two Amur tigers at the zoo's Wild Asia exhibit have also not exhibited any clinical signs. None of the zoo's snow leopards, cheetahs, clouded leopard, Amur leopard, puma or serval are showing any signs of illness. Our cats were infected by a person caring for them who was asymptotically infected with the virus or before that person developed symptoms. Appropriate preventive measures are now in place for all staff who are caring for them, and the other cats in our four WCS zoos, to prevent further exposure of any other of our zoo cats. COVID-19 is a disease caused by the coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2. It is believed that the virus was first transferred to people at a food market that trades in wildlife in Wuhan, China. There is no evidence that animals play a role in the transmission of COVID-19 to people other than the initial event in the Wuhan market, and no evidence that any person has been infected with COVID-19 in the US by animals, including by pet dogs or cats. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## **Brazil: Updated COVID-19 case counts, risk to indigenous peoples, social distancing**

7 April- The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Brazil rose to 12,345, including 581 deaths. São Paulo has reported the most cases and deaths of all Brazilian states. Only the states of Acre and Tocantins do not have confirmed deaths from COVID-19. The BBC reports infections have now spread across the country, including to indigenous territories in the Amazon basin that are the size of France and Spain combined. The first case among indigenous peoples was recorded in Amazonas state. "There is an incredible risk of the virus spreading across the native communities and wiping them out," says Dr. Sofia Mendonça, a researcher at the Federal University of São Paulo (Unifesp). [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## Costa Rica: 435 COVID-19 cases, Private sector and NGO help

5 April- On Saturday, Costa Rica health officials reported a cumulative 435 COVID-19 cases in the country, including two deaths. There are 212 women and 223 men, of whom 404 are Costa Rican and 31 foreigners, ranging in ages from one to 87. Positive cases are registered in 55 cantons of the seven provinces. In total there are 25 people hospitalized of which 13 of them are in intensive care with an age range of 24 to 85 years. More than 300 companies and non-governmental organizations have joined the solidarity and not only have offered goods and services to support people affected by COVID-19, but also several chains of supermarkets, private associations, companies and even neighborhood groups organize campaigns and other forms of direct collaboration with those affected. Given this broad support from society, the government facilitates the coordination of these initiatives through a humanitarian support table by the private sector, an initiative that integrates the Office of the First Lady, the Ministry of the Presidency, the MEIC and the Minister of Coordination and Liaison with the Private Sector and the National Commission for Risk Prevention and emergency care. This was announced at a press conference by the president of the CNE, Alexander Solis, who also reported that a registration platform for coordinating offers for the emergency has been set up for donations. This platform is an auxiliary tool to the mail [logisticacovid19@cne.go.cr](mailto:logisticacovid19@cne.go.cr). Solis explains that it has established an expedited process that involves completing an online form from the website of the CNE [www.cne.go.cr](http://www.cne.go.cr). The objective is that, in less than 24 hours, the company or organization interested in supporting will be contacted to finalize the details and proceed with the temporary authorization of the activity, in order not to delay the initiatives. In a period not exceeding 5 business days, the CNE will sign an agreement with the company or group offering. The agreement will establish the specific terms and operational details of the campaign or donation and the control and accountability mechanisms. All the campaigns carried out and the channeled aid must be registered and authorized by the CNE as part of the transparency and accountability mechanism required by the National Emergency and Risk Prevention Law and is part of the Transparency network of the Ombudsman's Office. Campaigns and donations that are managed at the cantonal or regional level should be coordinated with the Regional and Municipal Emergency Committees (CME), which represent the organization for emergencies in the respective territories. For this, the CNE establishes the operational coordination mechanisms with the CMEs, through the logistics table of the Emergency Operations Center. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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