



Update 30 - COVID-19 – From Office of the Medical Director 26 JUN2020 1000

To: All EMS Personnel in the EMS System for Metropolitan Oklahoma City & Tulsa

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- **A Graphic Graphic – The New York Times**

This week saw relief that last weekend's politically related events in Tulsa proved in the words of The New York Times a "fizzle." While grateful in limiting heat illness, injuries and infectious disease spread that crowds of 100k+ individuals did not materialize, this week has its own concerning factor – increasing numbers of our own personnel with COVID-19 and/or in quarantine.

If you are tiring of the myriad impacts of viral pandemic in your professional and personal lives, you aren't weak, you're perfectly human. I truly wish there were faster "ways out" for all of us. Science doesn't bend to the human emotion – and we should be ever leery of "exciting new findings" that just happen to scratch the very itch we have.

By all credible accounts, we remain many months away from an effective vaccine. I cannot fully fathom the collective hours of work, literally 24/7 when including worldwide efforts, to bring us and our families a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2. While there are hundreds of millions of dollars being spent by investors with understandable hopes of making several more millions in return, I'm grateful for the humanistic outcomes possible related to those business decisions.

My personal read of available information leads me to reluctantly accept it might be another year (or more) before a truly vetted vaccine is available. Yes, you've likely heard the speculations about a vaccine before or by this year's end, too. Listen carefully to the words with those speculations; none are absolute or definitive. I hope my interpretation of timing is wrong. But here's one Dr. G truth that every piece of this week's available data points to: more than ever before, we must exercise purposeful practices of PPE and disinfection to keep us safe at work so that we can also promote our families being safe at home.

Educational Resource – The Osterholm Update – Episode 13

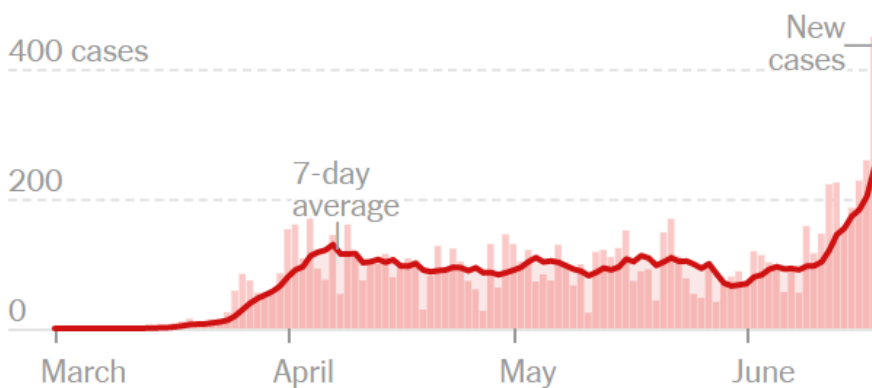
Dr. Osterholm's latest podcast, episode 13 of The Osterholm Update, What I Know and Don't Know About COVID-19, is posted on the CIDRAP website with release date 24 JUN. This is another discussion that includes wise commentary that the rising

numbers of COVID-19 cases in the United States are NOT due to only an increase in testing but moreover increases in the percentages positives among those tested. He is also sharing more certainties about a “continuous burn” of infections ahead, with hot spots moving about the country. Unfortunately, in this paradigm, you and I are the “kindling” for this burn. He isn’t saying this in a doom and gloom manner. It’s just the fact that as humans, we are the ones susceptible to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. There are concerns that remain about increasing severity with male gender, obesity, cardiovascular disease, COPD, and diabetes. There are difficult realities about disproportionate impacts racially too. You can access it at this link: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/covid-19/podcasts-webinars/episode-13> or The Osterholm Update is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or Google Play.

A Sobering Graph – Updated – The New York Times

Oklahoma Coronavirus Map and Case Count

By The New York Times Updated June 19, 2020, 8:14 A.M. E.T.



TOTAL CASES

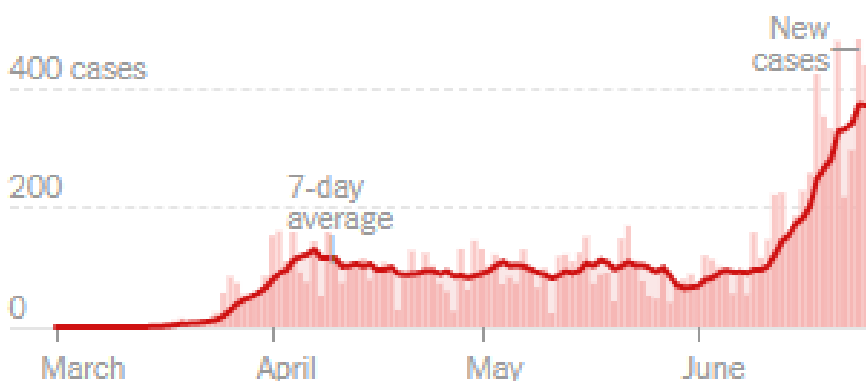
9,354

DEATHS

366

Includes confirmed and probable cases where available

By The New York Times Updated June 26, 2020, 7:53 A.M. E.T.



TOTAL CASES

11,947

DEATHS

375

Includes confirmed and probable cases where available

If you are interested in following this graph over time, the link is:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/oklahoma-coronavirus-cases.html>

It’s rare that I will repeat content in these Updates, but last Friday morning’s graph right next to this morning’s shows us that we undeniably have local challenges. If you look carefully, you’ll see one day this week was “better” = relative to the other days this week, lower new case numbers. I’d be excited for any good news too, except track it closely and...

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it was Monday. This really means less testing was available, sought and done over the weekend, not that the virus is disappearing. This same pattern is seen in earlier weeks with most of the “down days” being Sundays or Mondays. This webpage has further data about COVID-19 cases in Oklahoma and discusses the data sources used by *The New York Times*. Recall that the “7-day average” line depicted above simply means the total of that day’s new cases plus the previous 6 days’ new cases then that summation divided by 7. That might or might not be obvious, though when discussing data points, it is always relevant to make sure everyone is operating with the same definition of what the data represents.

From time to time, the OMD team will be asking all organizations/departments in our EMS system for updates in numbers of members that have confirmed tested positive for COVID-19. I’m committing to making sure we have our numbers accurate before sharing with you, so we will be doing that monthly unless local catastrophic surge occurs to avoid query fatigue of our partners. Without specific numbers then released today, it is no imagination that we have a notable increase in members off work with symptomatic COVID-19 and/or on quarantine due to prolonged contacts with confirmed cases while non-PPE protected.

New Estimates – Just a Ten-Fold Change! – The Hill

Further evidence that we must be careful – at AND away from work – are these new estimates, based upon COVID-19 blood tests and other blood samples taken initially for non-COVID-19 tests, indicating a ten-fold increase in Americans infected to date. Remember, these are estimates derived from a much smaller number of confirmed positive cases. A quick, informative read about this from yesterday’s *The Hill*, is at: <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/504552-cdc-coronavirus-may-have-infected-10-times-more-americans-than-known>

What About Pregnancy? – Questions Remain – USA Today

For those of you presently or very recently with pregnancy in your household, you already know what an exciting AND ANXIOUS time this is. Add concerns about COVID-19 into that mix, and the anxiousness understandably soars past the excitement. A gentle ask from Dr. G – please be extra kind to your colleagues that are pregnant or have a pregnant spouse/significant other right now. A lot is going through their thoughts they most likely aren’t sharing. Supportive words and offers to help that can allow fewer physically/socially close errands and such can be far more welcomed than you might think.

In the earlier days of COVID-19, it was widely reported no real impacts on mother or baby. That hasn’t suddenly changed, but...here’s an article from yesterday’s *USA Today* newspaper that you must be careful to keep reading beyond its headline. Cause and effect of hospitalization is NOT firmly established per the CDC. I can share from the Emergency Department perspective that we always consider pregnancy status when evaluating whether it is just as safe for discharge home v admission to hospital. We often admit for cautious observation for day or so if doubts are present, thus the higher reported hospitalization rate does not immediately equal severe COVID-19 disease. While the headline is understandably worrisome, read this one through and more than anything, you’ll confirm the value of pre-natal care, keeping those pregnancy check-ups and promptly reporting any symptom concerns to the OB/GYN specialist.

Here’s that link: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/06/25/pregnant-women-coronavirus-hospitalized-sent-icu-more-often/3257613001/>

The Cracked Protective Shield of Youth – The New York Times

If you watched the thespians pictured below for the first time on syndicated reruns, then congratulations, you have health protections of being an age that those older (including I) had to involuntarily give up. However, you might just be interested in an article also from yesterday (yesterday proved a very busy and helpful news day on this viral pandemic) just for you: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/us/coronavirus-cases-young-people.html>



A Graphic Graphic – The New York Times

And finally (for this Update), an interesting interactive graphic from *The New York Times*. I like motion graphics like this that help me put in images the reams of papers I'm reading. Like I do, you may choose to ignore some politically biased statements in this resource. I can surmise any politics on my own, just give me some data, please. It's still a very cool graphic to scroll that might encourage you to make sure that N95 respirator mask is fitting like it should.

Here's this link: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-spread.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20200626&instance_id=19769&nl=the-morning®i_id=124174734&segment_id=31917&te=1&user_id=dec09bd022377f1e560dd9bc6f6c521c

Vigilance. Safety. Evidence-Based Service to Others.

Let's be careful out there. (BTW, The Toronto Star newspaper agrees with what we've been saying for the past 2 months. Front Page June 25, 2020):



Dr. Goodloe

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