

Global Health Newsletter

August 2022

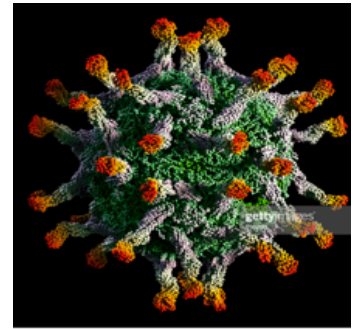
Staten Island University Hospital

Madi Lindauer, MD MPH

Americas

Polio Detected in New York

On July 31st an unvaccinated 20 year old male was confirmed with vaccine-derived polio-induced paralysis. The United States does not currently use the oral polio vaccine; therefore, he was exposed abroad. As of August 4th polio was found in Rockland County and Orange County wastewater, and by August 12th, New York City detected the polio virus in its sewage system.

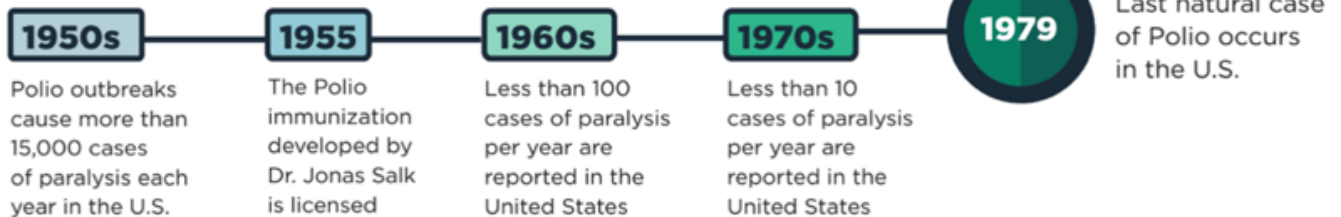


<https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/polio-virus>

In the United States, children receive an inactive four dose vaccine between the ages of 2-months and 6-years-old. After completion of this vaccine series a person is 99 percent protected against the disease. There has been an increased trend of people who are unvaccinated which has created a more vulnerable general population to these preventative diseases. The WHO recommends that populations achieve at least 80 percent vaccination status against Polio. As of August 1st, 2022, according to the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS), Rockland County has a polio vaccination rate of 60 percent and Orange County 58 percent which is below recommended rates. Overall in New York state the rate is 79 percent.

As for the potential impact of the disease, three in four people infected with polio will be asymptomatic, but can still shed the disease. One in 200 will become paralyzed. Since the majority of those with polio will remain asymptomatic, it is imperative to increase vaccination rates. As a result the CDC has sent community workers to give the vaccine to those who are unvaccinated.

The Polio immunization is proven highly effective



<https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/11/health/polio-cdc-rockland-county/index.html>

Further Reading

Refer to Global Newsletter May 2022

https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2022/2022-08-04_polio_detected_nys.htm

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/11/health/polio-cdc-rockland-county/index.html>

Middle East/Northern Africa

Yemen has one of the Lowest COVID Vaccination Rates in the World

According to the World Health Organization less than 2 percent of Yemenis have been vaccinated against COVID. The UN states that Yemen has administered 864,544 COVID vaccines (Yemen has a population of almost 30 million people). Due to a failed healthcare system, and lack of testing kits, the actual number of COVID infections and deaths is unknown. Half of Yemen's healthcare facilities have been destroyed by the civil war that started in 2015. Many healthcare professionals have died or fled the country. Due to the war, the road infrastructure has been largely destroyed making transportation of samples, COVID vaccines, and medicines difficult. Another difficulty is that the Northern government has banned all COVID vaccines entering or being distributed in the Northern part of the country.



<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/3/war-and-doubts-slow-covid19-vaccination-in-disputed-yemen-city>

Further reading

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/covid-vaccine-yemen-less-two-per-cent>

Asia/Pacific

One Year Since the Taliban Seized Power in Afghanistan

The Taliban resumed power of Afghanistan on August 15th 2021, one year ago. Since this takeover there have been many changes to the country. Here are some key events that have occurred over the past 12 months:

Women and Girl Rights

Girls are banned from attending secondary school and are required to wear a hijab and cover their faces while in public. Women are also banned from making long-distance journeys alone and only allowed to visit public parks during women only times.



<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/afghanistans-taliban-order-women-to-cover-up-head-to-toe/>

Government

All women are excluded from governmental positions. Men who work for the government are required to grow beards. Female lawyers, judges, and prosecutors were fired from their jobs and forced into hiding due to possible reprisals from those they convicted and imprisoned for gender based violence who were later freed by the Taliban.

Media

Nearly half of news media outlets have been closed. Female news presenters must wear hijabs and cover their faces.

Environmental

On June 22 2022, a 6.2 magnitude earthquake struck and killed more than 1,000 people, injured more than 6,000 and left thousands homeless. The organization and coordination of humanitarian aid has always been a challenge in Afghanistan, since the Taliban resumed power it has become even more difficult. The Taliban have blocked NGOs and caused many NGOs to flee the country.

Humanitarian/security

Western aid has been cut off and thousands of clinics closed due to lack of funding. According to the UN, 18 million Afghans are food insecure, representing about 50 percent of the population and almost 4 million children are malnourished. At the time of Taliban takeover it was estimated that 72 percent of the population was living below the poverty line, that figure has now increased to 97 percent.

Further Reading

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>

Sub-Saharan Africa

We Care Solar

“We Care Solar envisions a world where all women survive childbirth, obtain life-saving care without unnecessary delays, and give birth with dignity in well-lit health facilities.” This is the vision of the We Care Solar organization. They provide portable solar suitcases to maternity wards in places without electricity.

The organization was established in 2008 by obstetrician Dr. Laura Stachel after she traveled to Northern Nigeria. She went there to study how to lower maternal mortality in hospitals. While in Nigeria, she witnessed difficult deliveries due to lack of electricity and insufficient lighting. This inspired Dr. Stachel to partner with her husband, Hal Aronson, a solar energy educator, to design a small solar electric system. This Solar Suitcase is a hard-shelled durable case that contains all necessary equipment for healthcare workers to have light. It includes a solar powered battery (charged by a panel on the roof of the clinic) which attaches to 2-4 solar overhead lights in the labor ward. There is also a fetal doppler, 2 headlamps, a mobile phone charger, and battery charger for the batteries used in the fetal doppler and head lamp.



<https://wecaresolar.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/childbirth-with-light-from-solar-suitcase-uganda.jpg>

The We Care Solar organization has a “light every birth initiative” which has now distributed the solar suitcase to nearly 50 countries across Africa, Asia and South America.

Our impact to date in partnership with 75+ health, technical, and government partners



7163

health centers equipped with Solar Suitcases



30606

health workers trained



10620349

mothers and newborns served in health centers using Solar Suitcases



225386478

hours of medical light available



79760

estimated tons of CO2 averted

Further reading

<https://youtu.be/oMQsJq7ZDc0>

<https://wecaresolar.org>

Europe

Search and Rescue Ships free to Proceed

On August 1st the European Union’s top court ruled that national maritime authorities are not allowed to impound ships involved in search and rescue work. The court ruled that people “must not be taken into account when verifying whether the rules on safety at sea have been complied with. The number of persons on board, even if greater than that which is authorized, cannot therefore, in itself, constitute a ground for control.”



<https://apnews.com/article/immigration-migration-sicily-c8ab420c4a3c5f736526c27c60978034>

Prior to this ruling these search and rescue ships were often impounded on suspicion they might be overloaded due to the number of migrants onboard that were rescued from the sea. Since 2016, the EU member states have processed 60 proceedings, both criminal and administrative, against these ships. The German migrant aid group, Sea-Watch, appealed to the court for this ruling after two of their ships, inspected in Italy in 2020, were caught carrying more people than authorized. This ruling will prevent port authorities from arbitrarily detaining ships and preventing them from completing their rescue missions.

Further reading

<https://apnews.com/article/immigration-migration-sicily-c8ab420c4a3c5f736526c27c60978034>

What's New at Northwell's Center for Global Health?

Guyana Joins the Daisy Foundation

The Center for Global Health will now honor Guyanese nursing leadership by nominating outstanding nurses for the Daisy Award. The Daisy Foundation has a yearly award given to recognize exceptional nurses with the goal to recognize the importance of compassion on healthcare.

The Center for Global Health also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Health of Guyana to strengthen the country's ability to provide adequate healthcare care by engaging in resident, student, and didactic exchanges. The Center has also donated over a million dollars in medical equipment and in-country support. The focus in Guyana will be on the following areas: pathology, nursing, emergency medicine, pediatrics, family medicine, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology and surgery.

Further reading

<https://youtu.be/98z9MrCHPoA>



Ukraine Gets a Hand from Northwell

Since February 2022, Northwell has been hard at work collecting money from team members and sponsors to help support the relief of Ukrainians affected by war. Northwell has raised over 1 million dollars which is being distributed by the Center for Global Health to organizations helping to support Ukraine Relief. The Center for Emergency Medical Services at Northwell have also been heavily involved in Ukraine Relief efforts, completing over 25 Ukrainian telehealth consults and setting up tele-mental health services for Ukrainians displaced by war.

Further Reading

<https://www.northwell.edu/news/in-the-news/us-doctors-helping-ukraine-medical-teams-via-telehealth-but-needs-are-staggering>

To Donate: <https://support.northwell.edu/center-for-global-health>



Upcoming Lectures/Conferences

Menstruation in a Global Context: Addressing Policy and Practice Course

Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health has FREE online course

Led by Dr. Marni Sommer, Maggie Schmitt and Caitlin Gruer.

This EdX course reviews menstrual health and hygiene research, programming, & policies from around the world, utilizing a range of learning methods: video lectures, case studies, independent reading, discussion forums, and multiple-choice question assessments. There are 7 independent modules expected to take roughly 14 weeks, averaging 2-3 hours per week. Option to audit the course for free or to select the verified track to earn a certificate for a small fee.

Registration: [https://hopkinshumanitarianhealth.us14.list-](https://hopkinshumanitarianhealth.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8861d1b14ebeb609c47010cb&id=e99a65c453&e=0fc91dccb4)

[manage.com/track/click?u=8861d1b14ebeb609c47010cb&id=e99a65c453&e=0fc91dccb4](https://hopkinshumanitarianhealth.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8861d1b14ebeb609c47010cb&id=e99a65c453&e=0fc91dccb4)



**Menstruation in a
Global Context:
Addressing Policy
and Practice**

A FREE EdX course by

 COLUMBIA | MAILMAN SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The poster features a dark blue background on the left with white and pink text. On the right, there is a stylized globe in shades of purple and blue, with a pink menstrual drop falling from the top. The globe is enclosed in a dashed pink circle.