



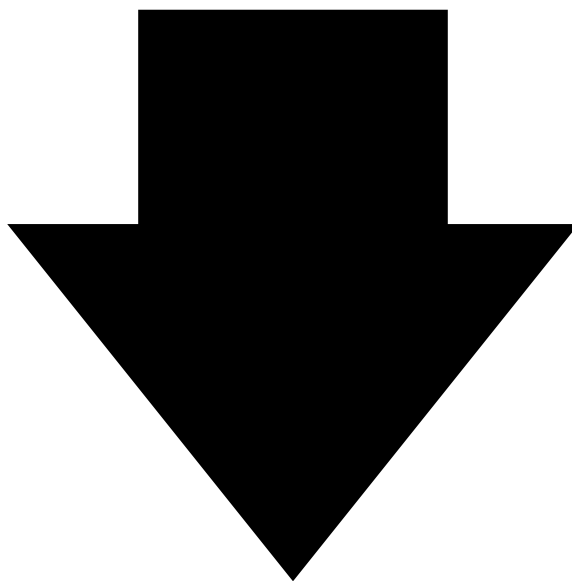
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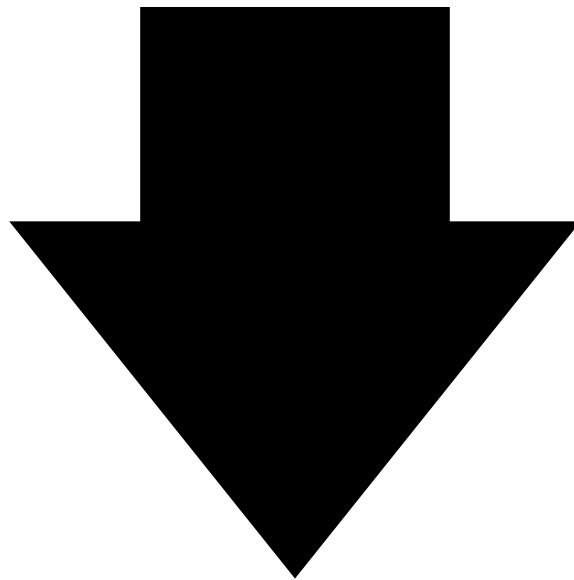
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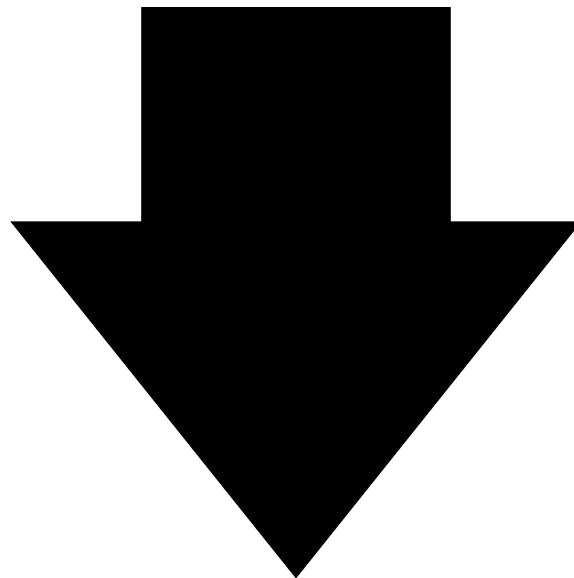
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MEDICAL NEWS | PHYSICIAN'S FIRST WATCH

April 16, 2020

COVID-19: Smoking / Convalescent Plasma / Asthma / Poison Control Center Calls

The logo for NEJM CareerCenter, featuring the letters "NEJM" in a red serif font and "CareerCenter" in a black sans-serif font.

PHYSICIAN JOBS

April 22, 2020

Neurology[Neurology -Sleep Medicine in Charlotte, NC with Novant Health](#)

By Kelly Young

Edited by [André Sofair, MD, MPH](#), and [William E. Chavey, MD, MS](#)

Here are some of the latest developments on novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19):

Smoking: Past or current smokers with COVID-19 have double the risk for severe disease outcomes as people who've never smoked, according to a meta-analysis on the preprint server medRxiv. Researchers examined 12 studies that included 9000 COVID-19 patients. Roughly 18% of those with a history of smoking experienced disease progression, compared with 9% of never-smokers. The authors write: "Smoking history should be part of clinical management of COVID-19 patients and cessation should be added to the list of practices to blunt the COVID-19 pandemic."

Convalescent plasma: The FDA is now encouraging people who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate their plasma to help others who are ill. Each donation could be given to as many as four patients through convalescent plasma or hyperimmune globulin. People should be fully recovered for 2 weeks before donating.

Asthma: Asthma may be less of a risk factor for developing severe COVID-19 than previously thought, the *New York Times* reports. Asthma has been underrepresented in patients who were sick enough to get treated in New York, and only 5% of those who died from COVID-19 in the state had asthma. The *Times* quotes one expert as saying, "If you have mild or moderate disease, you're probably not going to behave much differently than someone who doesn't have asthma, particularly if you're a younger person." Officials say there are not yet enough data to draw any conclusions.

Hand sanitizer exposure in kids: In March 2020, calls to U.S. poison control centers related to hand sanitizers were 79% higher than they were the previous March, the FDA reports. Most were unintentional exposures in children aged 5 years and younger.

LINK(S):

[Smoking article on medRxiv \(not peer-reviewed\) \(Free PDF\)](#)

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Question of the Week

An 82-year-old woman presents with a 4-cm by 5-cm area of erythema and warmth on the dorsal aspect of the right forearm with fluctuance, tenderness, and a small area of central necrosis. She has had recurrent purulent skin lesions over the past 6 months and has had household contact with a child who was recently hospitalized for a skin infection. Which one of the following conditions is the most likely cause of her recurrent skin lesions?

- ☐ Pyoderma gangrenosum
- ☐ Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* infection
- ☐ Pemphigus
- ☐ Brown recluse spider bite
- ☐ Group A streptococcal infection

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