December 12, 2019

A cluster of patients in Wuhan, Hubei Providence, China begin to experience shortness of breath and fever.

* Timelineicon

December 31, 2019

The World Health Organization China Country Office is informed of a number cases of pneumonia of unknown etiology (unknown cause) detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province. All cases connected to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan.

eicon

January 2, 2020

The World Health Organization activates its incident management system across the three levels of WHO (country office, regional office, and headquarters).

* Timelineicon

January 5, 2020

Chinese public health official share the genetic sequence of the unknown pneumonia virus (Wuhan-Hu-1) through an online database.

* Timelineicon

January 5, 2020

CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) activates a Center Level Response for novel pneumonia of unknown etiology.

* Timelineicon

January 7, 2020

Chinese authorities identify and isolate a novel coronavirus as the causative agent of the outbreak

* Timelineicon

January 7, 2020

CDC establishes a 2019-nCoV Incident Management Structure to guide the response. It follows previously established MERS-CoV preparedness plans for developing tests and managing cases.

* Timelineicon

January 10, 2020

CDC publishes information about the novel coronavirus on its website.

* Timelineicon

January 13, 2020

The Thailand Ministry of Public Health confirms the first imported case of lab-confirmed novel coronavirus from China.

* Timelineicon

January 15, 2020

The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare reports an imported case of laboratory-confirmed novel coronavirus.

* Timelineicon

January 17, 2020

CDC begins screening passengers on direct and connecting flights from Wuhan, China at San Francisco, California, New York City, New York, and Los Angeles, California and plans to expand screening to other major airports.

* Timelineicon

January 17, 2020

CDC deploys a team to Washington state to assist with contact tracing efforts in response to the first reported case of 2019-nCOV in the U.S.

* Timelineicon

January 20, 2020

CDC confirms the first U.S. laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the U.S. from samples taken on January 18 in Washington state.

* Timelineicon

January 21, 2020

CDC transitions from a Center-led Incident Management Structure to an Agency-wide Structure and activates its Emergency Response System

* Timelineicon

January 21, 2020

CDC artists Alissa Eckert and Dan Higgins create “an identity” for the novel coronavirus by designing the iconic red and white virus image.

* Timelineicon

January 22, 2020

The World Health Organization International Health Regulation Emergency Committee meets. The Emergency Committee decides to not declare the novel coronavirus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. The Committee decides instead to monitor the situation and reconvene in 10 days to re-discuss.

* Timelineicon

January 22, 2020

The World Health Organization confirms human-to-human spread of the novel coronavirus.

* Timelineicon

January 27, 2020

The United States Food and Drug Administration announces that it will take “critical actions to advance development of novel coronavirus medical countermeasures” with interagency partners, including CDC.

* Timelineicon

January 29, 2020

The White House Coronavirus Task Force is established with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex Azar, as the head of the Task Force.

* Timelineicon

January 31, 2020

The World Health Organization International Health Regulation Emergency Committee reconvenes and declares the coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

* Timelineicon

January 31, 2020

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, declares the SARS-CoV-2 virus a public health emergency and the White House 2019 Novel Coronavirus Task Force announces the implementation of new travel policies to be effective at 5:00 PM EST on February 2, 2020.

* Timelineicon

February 3, 2020

CDC submits an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) PACK to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to expedite approval for the CDC developed SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic test.

* Timelineicon

February 4, 2020

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approves the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) PACK for the CDC developed SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic test. CDC distributes 200 test kits through its Influenza Reagent Resource program to laboratories across the U.S.

* Timelineicon

February 8, 2020

One of the first CDC test kits arrives at a public health laboratory in east Manhattan, New York City, New York. The laboratory reports that the test produces “untrustworthy results.”

* Timelineicon

February 11, 2020

The World Health Organization announces the official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak: COVID-19. The new name of this disease is an abbreviated version of coronavirus disease 2019.

* Timelineicon

February 23, 2020

As Italy becomes a global COVID-19 hotspot, the Italian government issues Decree-Law No. 6 of February 23, 2020, containing Urgent Measures to Contain and manage the Epidemiological Emergency Caused by COVID-19, effectively locking down the country.

* Timelineicon

February 26, 2020

CDC’s Dr. Nancy Messonnier, Incident Manager for the COVID-19 Response, holds a telebriefing. During the telebriefing she braces the U.S. for the eventual community spread of the novel coronavirus and states that the “disruption to everyday life may be severe.”

* Timelineicon

Feb 29 2020

CDC updates its Criteria to Guide Evaluation and Testing of Patients Under Investigation (PUI) for COVID-19 to any patients with a severe respiratory illness even in the absence of travel history to affected areas or known exposure to another case to prepare for possible additional person-to-person spread.

* Timelineicon

February 29, 2020

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announces a “new policy…for certain laboratories that develop and begin to use validated COVID-19 diagnostics before the FDA has completed review of their Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) requests,” allowing laboratories to create tests to address testing shortages in the U.S.

* Timelineicon

March 1, 2020

CDC creates COVID-NET by modifying existing respiratory virus surveillance networks that monitor for hospitalizations associated with influenza and Respiratory Syncytical Virus (RSV) to monitor for hospitalizations associated with COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

March 11, 2020

The World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic.

* Timelineicon

March 12, 2020

Confirmatory testing for COVID-19 by CDC is no longer required by the U.S, Food and Drug Administration

* Timelineicon

March 13, 2020

President Donald J. Trump declares a nationwide emergency.

* Timelineicon

March 14, 2020

CDC issues a “No Sail Order” to all cruise ships. The order calls for all cruise ships in waters that the U.S. has jurisdiction over to cease activity.

* Timelineicon

March 15, 2020

U.S. states begin to shut down to prevent the spread of COVID-19. New York City public schools system (the largest school system in the U.S., with 1.1 million students) shuts down, while Ohio calls for restaurants and bars to close.

* Timelineicon

March 16, 2020

CDC launches Clara bot, a COVID-19 symptom checker, on its website.

* Timelineicon

March 17, 2020

First human trial of a vaccine to protect against pandemic COVID-19 begins in the U.S. at Kaiser Permanente research facility in Seattle, Washington. Moderna Therapeutics is the biotech company behind the vaccine.

* Timelineicon

March 26, 2020

U.S. Senate passes the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act providing $2 trillion in aid to hospitals, small businesses, and state and local governments while including an elimination of the Medicare sequester from May to December 31, 2020.

* Timelineicon

March 28, 2020

White House extends social distancing measures until the end of April 2020.

* Timelineicon

March 28, 2020

U.S. Food and Drug Administration issues an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to allow hydroxychloroquine sulfate and chloroquine phosphate products donated to the Strategic National Stockpile to be distributed and used for certain hospitalized patients with COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

March 28, 2020

CDC distributes a Health Alert Network (HAN) warning against using chloroquine phosphate without the recommendation of a doctor or pharmacy after one person is seriously ill and another dies from ingesting non-pharmaceutical chloroquine phosphate (a chemical for aquarium use that is commercially available for purchase at stores or online) to prevent COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

March 31, 2020

At a White House Press Briefing, Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Brix announce that 100,000 to 240,000 deaths in the U.S. are expected even if social distancing and public health measures are perfectly enacted.

* Timelineicon

April 3, 2020

At a White House press briefing, CDC announces new mask wearing guidelines and recommends that all people wear a mask when outside of the home.

* Timelineicon

April 3, 2020

CDC launches COVIDView, a weekly report that summarizes and interprets key indicators from a number of existing surveillance systems

* Timelineicon

April 6, 2020

Hundreds of doctors and civil rights groups urge CDC and U.S. government to release race and ethnicity data on COVID-19 cases in order to ensure the proper response in black communities.

* Timelineicon

April 7, 2020

A report from the Chicago Tribune notes that 68% of the COVID-19 related deaths in Chicago occur among the city’s African American community, illuminating racial disparities of the pandemic in the U.S.

* Timelineicon

April 8, 2020

U.S. Health and Human Services announces first contract for ventilator production goes to General Motors under the Defense Production Act.

* Timelineicon

April 10, 2020

The U.S. surpasses Italy as the global leader for reported deaths due to COVID-19 (23,036 deaths)

* Timelineicon

April 13, 2020

Most U.S. states report widespread cases of COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

April 13, 2020

At a White House press briefing, President Trump announces that the U.S. will cease funding to the World Health Organization, shaking the public health community during the pandemic.

* Timelineicon

April 26, 2020

Clinicians in the United Kingdom note increased reports of previously healthy children presenting with severe inflammatory syndrome with Kawasaki disease-like features. The cases occurred in children testing positive for current or recent infection with SARS-CoV-2. This condition would later be known as Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), an inflammatory condition that affects children with COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

April 24, 2020

Georgia, Alaska, and Oklahoma begin to partially reopen their states despite concerns from health experts saying it was too early to reopen.

* Timelineicon

April 30, 2020

President Trump launches Operation Warp Speed, an initiavtive to produce a vaccine for the coronavirus as quick as possible with CDC as an integral member.

* Timelineicon

May 1, 2020

U.S. Food and Drug Administration issues an Emergency Use Authorization for investigational antiviral drug remdesivir for the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 in adults and children hospitalized with severe disease

* Timelineicon

May 1, 2020

CDC develops the PPE Burn Rate Calculator, a spreadsheet-based model that will help healthcare facilities plan and optimize the use of PPE for response to COVID-19, and publishes it on the Apple and Android App stores.

* Timelineicon

May 1, 2020

CDC launches the SARS-CoV-2 Sequencing for Public Health Emergency Response, Epidemiology and Surveillance (SPHERES), a consortium to expand the use of whole genome sequencing of the COVID-19 virus.

* Timelineicon

May 2, 2020

World Health Organization renews is emergency declaration from three months prior calling the pandemic a global health crisis.

* Timelineicon

May 8, 2020

News media outlets report that top White House officials shelve CDC “Guidance for Implementing the Opening Up America Again Framework” that include detailed advice on how to safely reopen the country.

* Timelineicon

May 9, 2020

U.S. unemployment rate at 14.7%, the worst rate since the Great Depression. With 20.5 million people out of work, hospitality, leisure, and healthcare industries taking the greatest hits. It is affecting low income and minority workers the most.

* Timelineicon

May 15, 2020

CDC distributes an alert through the Health Alert Network describing multisystem inflammatory syndrome related to SARS-CoV-2 infection in children.

* Timelineicon

May 28, 2020

United States coronavirus (COVID-19) death toll surpasses 100,000.

* Timelineicon

June 4, 2020

U.S. Health and Human Services announces new laboratory date reporting guidance for COVID-19 testing to include demographic data on race, ethnicity, age, and sex.

* Timelineicon

June 8, 2020

The World Bank states that COVID-19 will plunge the Global Economy into the worst recession since World War II.

* Timelineicon

June 24, 2020

Three weeks prior, Black Lives Matter protests broke out across the country due to the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. Experts worried that it would lead to a spike in cases, but researchers release a report saying that it did not because the protests caused more people to stay home. The protests led to CDC rethinking its pandemic response to include a health equity framework.

* Timelineicon

June 25, 2020

CDC expands list of people at risk for severe COVID-19 illness by removing the specific age threshold from the older adult classification, noting that risk increases with age. CDC also includes people with chronic kidney disease, COPD, obesity, immuncompromised from solid organ transplant, serious heart conditions, sickle cell disease, and type 2 diabetes are also at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

* Timelineicon

July 23, 2020

CDC releases new science-based resources and tolls for school administrators, teachers, parents, guardians, and caregivers for safe school reopening.

* Timelineicon

August 19 2020

After CDC studies show that American Indians and Alaska Natives are among the racial and ethnic minority group at higher risk for severe COVID-19 outcomes, CDC provides more that $200 million in COVID-19 funding to Indian Country.

* Timelineicon

September 22, 2020

United States coronavirus (COVID-19) death toll surpasses 200,000.

* Timelineicon

October 2, 2020

President Trump tests positive for the coronavirus.

* Timelineicon

October 5, 2020

White House outbreak continues as several aides and the press secretary test positive for the virus.

* Timelineicon

October 6, 2020

Food insecurity among Americans will reach 52 million peole due to the coronavirus pandemic, a 17 million increase than prepandemic numbers.

* Timelineicon

October 7, 2020

New Zealand declares itself virus free.

* Timelineicon

November 1, 2020

CDC announces the end of the no sail order for cruise ship companies.

* Timelineicon

November 13, 2020

Increased outbreaks are reported across the country due to large gatherings for Halloween.

* Timelineicon

November 3, 2020

The U.S. presidential election occurs, with response to the COVID-19 pandemic response being one of the issues most debated.

* Timelineicon

December 3, 2020

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that health care professionals and residents of long-term care facilities be offered COVID-19 vaccine first in the initial phases of the COVID-19 vaccination program.

* Timelineicon

December 11, 2020

Food and Drug Administration issues an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the first COVID-19 vaccine – the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

* Timelineicon

December 12, 2020

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) issues interim recommendation for the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in persons aged 16 years or older for the prevention of COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

December 14 2020

United States coronavirus (COVID-19) death toll surpasses 300,000.

* Timelineicon

December 14, 2020

Sandra Lindsay, a nurse in New York, becomes the first American outside a clinical trial to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

* Timelineicon

December 18, 2020

The U.S.Food and Drug Administration issues an Emergency Use Authorization for the second COVID-19 vaccine – the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

* Timelineicon

December 19, 2020

The Advisory Committee on Immunization practices (ACIP) issues an interim recommendation for the use of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine in persons aged 18 years or older for the prevention of COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

December 21, 2020

U.S. Congress passes second COVID Relief Act which will now go to President Trump for approval or veto. This act promises $600 per individual.

* Timelineicon

December 24, 2020

It is estimated that more than 1 million people in the U.S. are vaccinated against COVID-19.

* Timelineicon

December 30, 2020

AstraZenica and University of Oxford’s vaccine approved for emergency use in the UK and will begin distribution in the New Year.

* Timelineicon

December 30, 2020

First U.S. case of UK variant reported in the U.S.in Colorado.

* Timelineicon

December 31, 2020

One year anniversary of first reported case to WHO.

* Timelineicon

January 7, 2021

One year anniversary of CDC COVID-19 pandemic response.

* Timelineicon

January 8, 2021

Amid vaccine shortages at Pfizer and Moderna, both companies, along with scientists at NIH, are looking at ways to double their supply to prevent future shortages.

* Timelineicon

January 18, 2021

U.S COVID-19 death toll surpasses 400,000.

* Timelineicon

January 20, 2021

One year anniversary of the first reported case of COVID-19 in the U.S. Snohomish County, Washington

* Timelineicon

January 25, 2021

First U.S. case of Brazil variant of coronavirus reported in Minnesota.

* Timelineicon

January 26, 2021

Worldwide COVID-19 cases surpass 100 million.

* Timelineicon

January 28, 2021

First U.S. case of South African variant of coronavirus reported in South Carolina.

* Timelineicon

February 1, 2021

At home tests to be put into distribution in the U.S.  by Australian company Ellume.

* Timelineicon

February 16, 2021

Vaccine distribution disrupted in several states, including Texas, Missouri, Alabama, and New Hampshire due to severe winter storms.

* Timelineicon

February 21, 2021

U.S.COVID-19 death toll surpasses 500,000.

* Timelineicon

February 27, 2021

FDA approves emergency use authorization for Johnson and Johnson one shot COVID-19 vaccine.

* Timelineicon

March 8, 2021

CDC announces that fully vaccinated people can gather indoors without masks.

* Timelineicon

March 11, 2021

President Joseph Biden announces a federal vaccine website where users can find vaccines near them. He also directs all states, tribes, and territories to make all adults eligible for the vaccine by May 1st.

* Timelineicon

March 13, 2021

U.S. surpasses 100 million vaccinations administered.

* Timelineicon

March 14, 2021

Several countries, including Ireland, Iceland, Denmark, and Norway suspend dispensing AstaZeneca COVID vaccine over concerns of blood clotting.

* Timelineicon

March 18, 2021

U.S. announces it will send 4 million doses of COVID vaccine to Mexico and Canada.

* Timelineicon

March 19, 2021

CDC announces kids in school can socially distance from 3 feet instead of 6 feet.

* Timelineicon

April 2, 2021

CDC announces fully vaccinated individuals can travel safely domestically in the U.S. without a COVID test first.

* Timelineicon

April 13, 2021

CDC recommends pausing the use of the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine because of blood clot complications.

* Timelineicon

April 21, 2021

U.S. surpasses 200 million vaccinations administered.

* Timelineicon

April 23, 2021

CDC recommends continued use of Johnson and Johnson vaccine for people 18 and older.

* Timelineicon

June 1, 2021

The Delta variant, first identified in India in late 2020, becomes the dominant variant in the U.S. The variant kicks off a third wave of infections during the summer of 2021.

* Timelineicon

July 27, 2021

After a substantial upswing in cases due to the Delta variant, CDC releases updated guidance for everyone in areas with substantial or high transmission to wear a mask while indoors.

* Timelineicon

July 30, 2021

A MMWR notes a increase in breakthrough infections in Barnstable County, Massachusetts in July 2021. This MMWR becomes the most wildly circulated MMWR in the agency’s history.

* Timelineicon

August 6, 2021

CDC study shows that among people previously infected with COVID-19, reinfection was less than half as likely among those who were vaccinated after their first infection.

* Timelineicon

August 18, 2021

CDC announces a new center, the Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics, to improve the U.S. government’s ability to forecast and model emerging health threats, such as pandemics.

* Timelineicon

August 30, 2021

ACIP recommends Pfizer-BioNTech’s vaccine for people ages 16 years and older.

* Timelineicon

October 7, 2021

A CDC study published in*Pediatrics* reveals that more than 140,000 U.S. children under the age of 18 years lost a parent, custodial grandparent, or grandparent caregiver who provided the child’s home and basic needs.

* Timelineicon

October 21, 2021

CDC endorses ACIP recommendation for COVID-19 booster shots for people who are 65 years and older, and people 18 years and older who live in long-term care settings, have underlying medical conditions, and who live or work in high risk settings.

* Timelineicon

October 29, 2021

New CDC study provides further evidence that COVID-19 vaccines offer higher protection than previous COVID-19 infection.

* Timelineicon

November 2, 2021

CDC endorses ACIP recommendation that children ages 5 to 11 years be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric vaccine.

* Timelineicon

November 10, 2021

CDC and the World Health Organization report that more than 22 million infants missed their first dose of measles vaccine in 2020, the largest increase in two decades, due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic.

* Timelineicon

November 26, 2021

World Health Organization classifies a new variant, Omicron, as a variant of concern after it was first reported by scientists in South Africa. The variant has several mutations in the spike protein that concern scientists around the world.

* Timelineicon

November 29, 2021

CDC recommends that everyone over 18 years old who received a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine receive a COVID-19 booster shot 6 months after they are fully vaccinated.