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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Consumption and Risk of Cardiovascular Disease: A Study of 400,000 Adults in UK Biobank

Frontiers In Nutrition | 21 February 2022

Qi Feng, Jean Kim, Wemimo Omiyale, Jelena Bešević, Megan Conroy, et al

Higher levels of vegetable consumption have been associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), but the independent effect of raw and cooked vegetable consumption remains unclear. The study found that higher intakes of raw, but not cooked, vegetables were associated with lower CVD risk. Residual confounding is likely to account for much, if not all, of the observed associations. This study suggests the need to reappraise the evidence on the burden of CVD disease attributable to low vegetable intake in the high-income populations.

Population Immunity and Covid-19 Severity with Omicron Variant in South Africa

The New England Journal of Medicine | 23 February 2022

Shabir Madhi, Gaurav Kwatra, Jonathan Myers, Waasila Jassat, Nisha Dhar, et al.

The B.1.1.529 (omicron) variant of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was first identified on November 25, 2021, in Gauteng province, South Africa. The World Health Organization designated omicron as a variant of concern because of its predicted high transmissibility and its potential to evade immunity from neutralizing antibodies induced by vaccination or natural infection with wild-type virus. The omicron variant contains mutations that indicate that it could be more infectious, more transmissible, and possibly better able to evade innate immunity and neutralizing antibody activity than wild-type virus. In addition to having at least 32 mutations affecting the spike protein,⁶ the omicron variant harbors 3 mutations involving the membrane protein and 6 involving the nucleocapsid protein, whereas the antibody-evasive B.1.351 (beta) variant has only 7 spike-protein mutations and 1 nucleocapsid-protein mutation.

Aging in a rural area in southern Brazil: designing a prospective cohort study

Remote and Rural Health | 23 February 2022

Meucci RD, Farias CP, Paludo CD, Pagliaro G, Soares MP, et al

This article presents the methods used to design a prospective cohort study with older adults from a rural area in the far south of Brazil (EpiRural Cohort Study), as well as to describe the cohort profile. The cohort

study began in 2017 and evaluated older adults (≥ 60 years) living in rural area. The first follow-up of the cohort was carried out between September 2018 and March 2019. Data collection at baseline and first follow-up was performed through an electronic questionnaire containing demographic, socioeconomic and health-related questions, such as alcohol and cigarette consumption, morbidities and self-perceived health status. With a reasonable follow-up rate, it was possible to transform a cross-sectional study into a prospective cohort study. However, new strategies will be needed to help locate participants more successfully and ensure a good response rate in future follow-ups.

Ageing with HIV

The Lancet | 24 February 2022

Advances in antiretroviral therapy mean more people are living – and ageing – with HIV. However, challenges exist, from the biological interplay of HIV and ageing, to the impacts of stigma, and delayed presentation for care on health-related quality of life for older people with HIV. This Series aims to explore these issues and how healthcare systems can adapt to the evolving needs of people ageing with HIV.

Transmission of and Infection With COVID-19 Among Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Attendees of an Indoor Wedding Reception in Minnesota

JAMA Open Network | 25 February 2022

Haley Wienkes, Kelley Vilen, Alexandra Lorentz

What are the characteristics of SARS-CoV-2 infection and transmission among vaccinated and unvaccinated attendees of a large indoor gathering? In this cohort study of 75 individuals, nearly half of attendees at an indoor wedding reception who were tested were infected with the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2. Unvaccinated attendees had a higher risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection than vaccinated attendees, secondary transmission from vaccinated attendees to vaccinated and unvaccinated contacts was observed, and the index case was identified as an unvaccinated symptomatic child. These findings suggest that unvaccinated people are at increased risk of contracting SARS-CoV-2 compared with vaccinated people in large social gatherings.

Navigating Clinical and Business Ethics While Sharing Patient Data

JAMA Network | 25 February 2022

Kelly Michelson, James Adams, Joshua Faber

The primary function of electronic health care data is to enable the provision of health care services to individuals. Sharing these data for public health and research purposes are important secondary uses. The regulatory safeguards applied to health care organizations for such uses are clear. As secondary use has expanded to corporations with business interests (separate from and sometimes in conflict with patients' interests), the adequacy of ethical and regulatory frameworks for the secondary use of data by corporations becomes less certain.

Disparities in breast cancer survival between women with and without HIV across sub-Saharan Africa (ABC-DO): a prospective, cohort study

The Lancet HIV | 1 March 2022

Steady Chasimpha, Valerie McCormack, Herbert Cubasch, Maureen Joffe, Annelie Zietsman, et al

Studies have shown increased mortality among women living with HIV diagnosed with breast cancer compared with HIV-negative women with breast cancer. We aimed to examine how this HIV differential varies by patient or breast tumour characteristics.

Daily steps and all-cause mortality: a meta-analysis of 15 international cohorts

The Lancet Public Health | 1 March 2022

Amanda Paluch, Shivangi Bajpai, Prof David Bassett, Prof Mercedes Carnethon, Prof Ulf Ekelund, et al

Although 10 000 steps per day is widely promoted to have health benefits, there is little evidence to support this recommendation. We aimed to determine the association between number of steps per day and stepping rate with all-cause mortality. The study found that taking more steps per day was associated with a progressively lower risk of all-cause mortality, up to a level that varied by age. The findings from this meta-analysis can be used to inform step guidelines for public health promotion of physical activity.

Effects of delayed versus immediate umbilical cord clamping in reducing death or major disability at 2 years corrected age among very preterm infants (APTS): a

multicentre, randomised clinical trial

The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health | 1 March 2022

Kristy Robledo, Prof William Tarnow-Mordi, Ingrid Rieger, Preeti Suresh, Andrew Martin, et al

Very preterm infants are at increased risk of adverse outcomes in early childhood. We assessed whether delayed clamping of the umbilical cord reduces mortality or major disability at 2 years in the APTS Childhood Follow Up Study.

Prevalence of hypoxaemia in children with pneumonia in low-income and middle-income countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis

The Lancet Global Health | 1 March 2022

Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman, Aniq Tasnim Hossain, Harish Nair, Mohammad Jobayer Chisti, David Dockrell, et al

Pneumonia accounts for around 15% of all deaths of children younger than 5 years globally. Most happen in resource-constrained settings and are potentially preventable. Hypoxaemia is one of the strongest predictors of these deaths. We present an updated estimate of hypoxaemia prevalence among children with pneumonia in low-income and middle-income countries.

The role of small airway dysfunction in asthma control and exacerbations: a longitudinal, observational analysis using data from the ATLANTIS study

The Lancet Respiratory Medicine | 2 March 2022

Prof Monica Kraft, Matthew Richardson, Brian Hallmark, Dean Billheimer, Maarten Van den Berge, et al

Although small airway disease is a feature of asthma, its association with relevant asthma outcomes remains unclear. The ATLANTIS study was designed to identify the combination of physiological and imaging variables that best measure the presence and extent of small airway disease in asthma, both cross-sectionally and longitudinally. In this longitudinal analysis, we evaluated which small airway parameters studied were most strongly associated with asthma control, exacerbations, and quality of life.

The risk of mental illness in people living with HIV in the UK: a propensity score-matched cohort study

The Lancet HIV | 3 February 2022

Tiffany Gooden, Mike Gardner, Jingya Wang, Joht Chandan, Abi Beane, et al

Prevalence of mental illness is higher in people living with HIV than in the general population, but the incidence of composite mental illness and its components is unclear. We aimed to identify the risk of incident mental illness along with individual conditions of depression, anxiety, and severe mental illness in people living with HIV in the UK.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Like COVID, TB is a pandemic and must be treated as an emergency

The Conversation | 27 February 2022

In 1993, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared tuberculosis (TB) a global public health emergency. It urged nations to coordinate efforts to avert millions of deaths. In January 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19, another airborne infectious disease, a public health emergency of international concern. The similarity between the global responses to these two pandemics ends there. The scientific, public health, medical, and pharmaceutical communities' responses to COVID-19 in the past two years has been spectacular.

Expanding Global Research Capabilities to Prepare for Future Pandemics

Health Policy Watch | 27 February 2022

From increasing disease surveillance and developing a pan-coronavirus vaccine to 'eco-health' and public trust, participants in the COVID-19 Global Research and Innovation Forum considered ways to globally prepare for future pandemics and end the current one. The third such forum, hosted by the World Health Organization, brought together over 100 research scientists, experts, policy makers, and donors worldwide to discuss and strategize about the future of COVID-19 research 24-25 February. Along with the more technical aspects of disease tracking, diagnostics and new vaccines, speakers emphasized the

need for research to go beyond the narrow confines of laboratories and clinical trials so as to strengthen health systems to use the science well – and build public confidence in its value.

South Africans have a right to see the country's vaccine contracts and to know what they contain

Daily Maverick | 27 February 2022

Covid-19 vaccines mitigate the consequences of Covid-19 by preventing death and controlling the spread of the virus. Vaccines are essential in the global response to the pandemic and by February 2022, more than 10 billion vaccine doses had been administered worldwide. So far, at least 30.5 million vaccines have been administered in South Africa. The Health Justice Initiative (HJI) has been tracking vaccine supplies for a year. Our analysis for 2021-January 2022 indicates that South Africa had received at least 56 million vaccine doses in the past year, by directly buying from pharmaceutical companies, or through the Covax facility, or by receiving donations.

Discriminatory and punitive laws alarmingly common

UNAIDS | 28 February 2022

Criminalization of same-sex sexual relations, sex work, drug possession and use, and HIV exposure, non-disclosure and transmission have been shown to block HIV service access and increase HIV risk. Countries that criminalize key populations saw less progress towards HIV testing and treatment targets over the past five years—with significantly lower percentages of people living with HIV knowing their HIV status and achieving viral suppression than in countries that avoided criminalization. Even greater gains were achieved in countries where laws have advanced human rights protections, particularly those that protected rights to non-discrimination and responded to gender-based violence. Despite this compelling evidence, discriminatory and punitive laws remain alarmingly common.

New COVID data: South Africa has arrived at the recovery stage of the pandemic

The Conversation | 1 March 2022

A recently published South African study set out to determine sero-positivity against SARS-CoV-2 before the fourth wave of COVID-19, in which the omicron variant was dominant. Sero-positivity measures the presence of antibodies against the virus; it indicates past infection. The study focused on Gauteng, the country's economic hub. Ozayr Patel asked Shabir Madhi to unpack the results and explain why the findings suggest that South Africa has reached a turning point in the pandemic.

Support for diabetes sensor technology gathers momentum

Health-E News | 1 March 2022

In a bid to do away with outdated, painful finger sticks, the South African Diabetes Advocacy wants sensor technology made available for all those living with Type 1 diabetes. The non-profit organisation (NPO) lodged an appeal with the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) to include new non-invasive flash glucose sensor monitors as a Prescribed Minimum Benefit (PMB). Bridget McNulty, SA Diabetes Advocacy Chairperson, confirmed their campaign has plenty of backing.

CDC data suggest Pfizer vaccine protection holds up in kids 5-11, raising questions on earlier study

Stat News | 1 March 2022

Does the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine provide less protection to children aged 5 to 11 than to adolescents 12 to 17? A study from New York state released Monday suggests that's the case. But new data from 10 states released Tuesday tell a different story. The data, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suggest that two doses of the Pfizer vaccine aren't very protective against infection for either age group in the face of the Omicron variant, but that protection against severe illness appears to be holding up equally in both sets of children.

Prioritise HIV prevention injection, activists say

Spotlight | 1 March 2022

Rolling out a new HIV prevention injection should be a priority in South Africa, says Thandi Maluka, Executive Director of HIV activist group Positive Women's Network (PWN). She says an HIV prevention injection, administered every two months, is going to make life easier for many people, especially young people. This is because the injection can be taken more discreetly than prevention pills. "This one time per

two months injection will give the young people their dignity and privacy because no one will know you are on PrEP unless you tell them," she says. (PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis and refers to antiretrovirals taken to prevent HIV infection.) The only form of PrEP currently available in the public healthcare system in South Africa is a daily pill containing the antiretroviral (ARV) drugs tenofovir and emtricitabine. The pill is, however, not available at all healthcare facilities and so far uptake has been poor.

"An HIV diagnosis should not be a guilty verdict—it's just a diagnosis"

Spotlight | 1 March 2022

Nargis was born in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, into a large family. Life was not easy, and she was sent to a boarding school for low-income families. Her favourite subject at school was physical education, excelling at basketball and swimming. She hoped that after graduating from school in 1991 with a diploma in physical education she would continue her studies at a technical school. However, because of unrest in the country, she couldn't carry on with her schooling. "I cried for six months, I really wanted to continue my studies, but instead of going to a technical school, my parents married me off. I was not yet 16 years old then," said Nargis. When she was 17 years old, she gave birth to a son; five years later, while pregnant with her second child, she learned that her husband was involved in drug trafficking, and he was sent to prison.

"My life's mission is to end stigma and discrimination, and that starts with U = U": a story of HIV activism in Thailand

United Nations | 1 March 2022

Like any other regular day in Bangkok, Thailand, Pete went to work and was living a pretty normal life. He had a business that imported and exported fresh vegetables from neighbouring countries in South-East Asia, a family business that he shared with his sister. He was happy and in a serious long-term relationship with his boyfriend, and everything seemed perfect. That day, he and his partner went to get tested for HIV, and that's when his life suddenly began to change. "I found out about my HIV status in 2016 and soon after left my business because I didn't know if I was going to live much longer. Without guidance and mental health support, I had many misconceptions about HIV, and I started to suffer from depression," he said.

Programme provides HIV prevention pills in schools

Spotlight | 2 March 2022

One of the biggest developments in HIV in the last decade or so was the discovery that certain antiretrovirals are highly effective at preventing HIV infection. Yet, the provision and uptake of such HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) have been slow, particularly in South Africa, where HIV infection rates in young women and girls remain stubbornly high. But there are signs that the tide may be turning, both here and internationally. "It's really encouraging to see quite rapid increase in PrEP initiations over the past five years," Dr Rachel Baggaley, of the World Health Organization (WHO), told attendees at the recent Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI).

Herbal medicine practitioner fined \$2,664 for making 'miracle' claims

Therapeutic Goods Administration Australia | 2 March 2022

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued an infringement notice of \$2,664 to a NSW based herbal medicine practitioner for an alleged breach of the Advertising Code. It is alleged that the individual advertised, on their social media, the use and supply of herbal and complementary medicine products implying that those products could be used to treat and prevent coronavirus and COVID-19 infection. The advertising allegedly claimed the products were "a miracle covid treatment that no-one is speaking about". The goods themselves were advertised to "...address COVID infection by reducing viral load, ...combats cytokine storms and lowers risk of lung damage".

Orthopaedic capacity boost for Free State hospitals

Health-E News | 2 March 2022

The Free State Health Department hopes boosting orthopaedic capacity at district hospitals will help eradicate long waiting times for patients. At the moment, the Pelonomi Regional Hospital in Bloemfontein, is under severe strain due to the number of referrals. Department spokesperson, Mondli Mvambi, said an assessment of complaints of patients awaiting surgery found that delays are often caused by emergency

trauma cases that supersede scheduled procedures. “These cancellations frustrate patients who are awaiting surgeries, or those who have been prepared overnight. Some skip food for days while waiting for a new slot,” he said.

Prioritise HIV prevention injection, activists say

Health24 | 2 March 2022

Rolling out a new HIV prevention injection should be a priority in South Africa, says Thandi Maluka, Executive Director of HIV activist group Positive Women's Network (PWN). She says an HIV prevention injection, administered every two months, is going to make life easier for many people, especially young people. This is because the injection can be taken more discreetly than prevention pills. “This one time per two months injection will give the young people their dignity and privacy because no one will know you are on PrEP unless you tell them,” she says. (PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis and refers to antiretrovirals taken to prevent HIV infection.) The only form of PrEP currently available in the public healthcare system in South Africa is a daily pill containing the antiretroviral (ARV) drugs tenofovir and emtricitabine. The pill is, however, not available at all healthcare facilities and so far uptake has been poor.

Red Cross Children's Hospital continues trailblazing journey

Health-E News | 2 March 2022

Three years of fundraising has finally paid off for the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital which now boasts a newly-upgraded emergency centre. The Children's Hospital Trust's fundraising team raised a total of R122 million and the Western Cape government contributed another R1 164 193. The rest was funded by various donors. Annually, the hospital cares for over 250 000 patients and its latest addition is the only paediatric emergency centre that operates 24/7 in Southern Africa.

Magic melanin: Everything that makes Black skin unique

Bhekisisa | 3 March 2022

One of the most popular questions I get asked is, 'Is skin not just skin? Bar colour, is it that different?'

Really?

Yes, really.

There are similarities, but Black skin is physiologically different to white skin in a few ways.

There are also cultural differences in the way we treat the skin.

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TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust Bulletin

The Health Systems Trust (HST) produces a weekly bulletin on Fridays focusing on key public health news, peer-reviewed journal articles and other important primary healthcare resources.

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust 60percent

HST produces a weekly online publication, 60percent, which keeps subscribers abreast with the latest news and developments pertaining to HIV-related maternal, adolescent, child and youth health. The name 60percent signifies that southern Africa is responding to a feminised HIV/AIDS epidemic, with at least 60% of those living with HIV being women.

Subscribe to 60percent by simply visiting HST's website (<https://www.hst.org.za>), scroll to the bottom of the page, hit the SUBSCRIBE button, and follow the prompts. Let's keep you posted!

HSTi offers accredited and non-accredited short courses and full programmes

The Health Systems Training Institute (HSTi) is the training arm of the Health Systems Trust (HST), a leading force in the South African public health sector. HST was established in 1992, on the brink of democracy in South Africa, and has since played a significant role in strengthening the national primary health system through health research, informatics, clinical support, capacity-building and training.

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Remove laws that harm, create laws that empower — Zero Discrimination Day 1 March 2022

On Zero Discrimination Day this year, UNAIDS is highlighting the urgent need to take action against discriminatory laws. In many countries, laws result in people being treated differently, excluded from essential services or being subject to undue restrictions on how they live their lives, simply because of who they are, what they do or who they love. Such laws are discriminatory—they deny human rights and fundamental freedoms.

[Access the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS Publications Library](#)

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Medication Safety Webinar series: Engaging Patients and Families for Medication Safety

Date: Tuesday, 8 March 2022

Time: 13:00 – 14:30 CET

Unsafe medication practices and medication errors are a leading cause of injury and avoidable harm in health care systems across the world. WHO Patient Safety Flagship has initiated a series of monthly webinars on the topic of “WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm”,. The main objective of the webinar series is support implementation of this WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm at the country level. Considering the huge burden of medication-related harm, Medication Safety has also been selected as the theme for World Patient Safety Day 2022.

Sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 66)

Date: 14 – 25 March 2022 | Virtual

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Invitation to webinar: Nurse Case Conference - Truckin' Along with MDR-TB

Date: 16 March 2022

Time: 01:00 PM in Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Launch – One Health: approach for action against neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030

One Health is described as an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent. The approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems, while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change, and contributing to sustainable development. One Health approaches are key to sustainably prevent neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). This webinar will formally launch One Health: approach for action against neglected tropical diseases 2021-2030. This companion document to the NTD road map 2021-2030 aims to support stakeholders and countries, international organization and non-State actors to achieve the 2030 targets through transdisciplinary and cross-cutting approaches.

World TB Day 2022 - Online Talk Show

Date: 24 March 2022

Time: 12:30 – 15:00 CET

The World Health Organization (WHO) is organizing a special virtual talk show to commemorate World TB Day on 24 March. This will put the spotlight on TB under the theme - 'Invest to End TB. Save Lives' to convey the urgent need to invest resources to ramp up the fight against TB and achieve the commitments to end TB made by global leaders. This is especially critical in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that has put End TB progress at risk, and to ensure equitable access to prevention and care in line with WHO's drive towards achieving Universal Health Coverage. The event will take place in a talk-show format with speakers connected by video on WHO's interactive web-platform- End TB Forum. The main speakers will include Ministers, leaders and other high-level government representatives, Heads of Agencies, TB survivors, civil society and partners. The Show will be broadcast live, with interactive Q&A from the audience online.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no vacancies available. Please keep our eyes on HST's careers portal (<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Careers.aspx>) for all new job opportunities that may arise.

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