

Newsroom

UCLA In the News May 11, 2020

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['Breakthrough' COVID-19 tests are not very accurate](#) | Scientific American

Birx had said that antigen tests could be used as first-pass screening tools that would be confirmed with follow-up PCR assays. Otto Yang, an infectious disease researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles, is uncertain if that goal can be achieved. "Generally, when you're doing it that way, you aim for higher sensitivity and less specificity in your screening test," he says. "It only makes sense if you're trying to save money or reagents, and you don't have the capacity [to do PCR]. The only potential benefit would be cost savings, but the loss of sensitivity is a big problem."

[Americans' views on reopening are remarkably consistent](#) | New York Times

Weekly surveys of thousands of Americans by the Democracy Fund + U.C.L.A. Nationscape Project have found that a majority of Americans wouldn't eat in a restaurant, go to the movies or return to a shopping mall even if they were now told they could. Those findings in the Nationscape surveys are remarkably consistent across different groups... "Here's this moment where almost everybody in the country agrees on a number of different things," said Lynn Vavreck, a political scientist at U.C.L.A. working on the survey, and an Upshot contributor.

[33 million have lost their jobs during the pandemic](#) | Washington Post

Typically, fewer than half of laid-off workers expect to return to their previous job, but there's hope this time could be different, since many business shutdowns are likely to be temporary, said economist Till von Wachter of the University of California at Los Angeles. "Helping workers keep attached to their prior employers could speed up the recovery," said von Wachter.

[Mental distress among Americans is on the rise during pandemic](#) | Time

Researchers unaffiliated with Twenge's study say that, on top of the loss of jobs and the obvious health risks associated with COVID-19, the element of uncertainty is causing Americans a great deal of psychological distress. "People don't know when we're going to get back to normal life, and that is quite anxiety provoking," says Dr. Gary Small, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles.

[California's budget deficit signals deep cuts ahead](#) | Cal Matters

Funding for transit, clean car rebates and urban forestry have all seen cuts during past recessions, according to a report from the University of California, Los Angeles that could foreshadow decisions to come.

[Preserving crucial moments of Mexican American religious history](#) | Hyperallergic

Documents pertaining to that historic moment are among the thousands at the Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) that will be preserved thanks to a new project focused on religion, faith, and spirituality in Mexican American social history. (UCLA's Charlene Villaseñor Black, Chon Noriega and Xaviera Flores are quoted).

[Los Angeles prepares for partial reopening](#) | KPCC-FM's "AirTalk"

"The older we are, the more likely we are to die of this virus, and young people have much lower levels," said UCLA's Dr. Richard Jackson (approx. 1:20 mark). (Jackson is also quoted in [Guardian \(U.K.\)](#))

[Keys to coping with lockdown](#) | Knowable Magazine

"Many years of psychological research has told us now that those experiences of social isolation, of loneliness, of social disconnection are a very strong risk factor for poor mental health, physical health problems and all-cause mortality," says George Slavich, a psychoneuroimmunologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, who wrote an article on the benefits of social connections in the Annual Review of Clinical Psychology earlier this year.

[A post-pandemic reality check for transit boosters](#) | Citylab

First, bus and rail ridership tends to be more sensitive to economic changes than other modes, and the financial effects of coronavirus are poised to stretch long into the future, said Brian Taylor, an urban planning professor and director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.

[What Reiki can — and can't — do for your health](#) | The Healthy

"Reiki is one of many 'fringe' topics in integrative medicine — it's controversial, but there's lots of public interest," says Elizabeth Ko, M.D., assistant clinical professor of medicine of the David Geffen School of Medicine and medical director of the UCLA Health Integrative Medicine Collaborative, in Los Angeles. "We, as a committee, recently reviewed the topic in detail and came to the conclusion that there simply isn't enough quality research to support its use. That said, the practice carries very little side effects. I don't advocate for its use, but I also don't advocate against it... there may be a benefit, even if it stems from a placebo effect!"

[What the porn industry can teach us about safety in the COVID-19 era](#) | STAT

Pamina Gorbach, a professor of infectious disease epidemiology at UCLA's Fielding School of Public Health, has studied the spread of sexually transmitted diseases in the adult film industry. She says the testing program is a step in the right direction to protect the health of performers, but thinks there is room for improvement.

[Trying out L.A.'s new coronavirus testing program](#) | California Healthline column

"That's a story in and of itself: that they have the availability and they can make this effort," Ronald Brookmeyer, dean of the Fielding School of Public Health at UCLA, told me.

[Purified, distilled or tap: Which water is best for drinkint?](#) | Business Insider

<https://newsroom.ucla.edu/in-the-news/ucla-in-the-news-may-11-2020>

The quality of your tap water will depend heavily on where you live. You should be an educated consumer and determine what type of tap water is being delivered to your place of residency to decide if you should be drinking it or not, says Catherine Carpenter, Ph.D., epidemiologist at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Usually, your water bill will provide a breakdown of the particulates and constituents found in your tap water, so be sure to take a look.

Necklace can quickly identify atrial fibrillation | WebMD

But Dr. Gregg Fonarow, director of the Ahmanson-University of California, Los Angeles, Cardiomyopathy Center, said that while the necklace's ability to accurately record EKGs was "found to be of sufficient quality," more research is needed. "Further large outcome studies are needed to determine if detection and treatment of atrial fibrillation using these types of devices can actually reduce the risk of having a stroke," Fonarow stressed.