

OCTOBER 2026

ISSUE 27

WORLD HEALTH NETWORK

KIDS' ZONE

COVID-CONSCIOUS MAGAZINE



COZYING UP WITH MENTAL HEALTH EDITION

**HALLOWEEN COSTUMES TO
WEAR WITH YOUR MASK**

**CHECK US OUT ONLINE AT:
[WHN.global/KidsZone](https://whn.global/KidsZone)**

COVID AND MENTAL HEALTH

THERAPIST SPOTLIGHT

SHORT STORIES FROM OUR READERS

... AND MORE INSIDE!



EXPLORE | SHARE | CONNECT

*Masked person in bat shirt art by FrenchieBoops



Art by Grae Salisbury

COVID-conscious: Keeping COVID risks in mind when exploring, sharing and connecting with others.

Synonyms: COVID-cautious, COVID-aware, COVID-informed, Still COVIDing, COVID-safe, COVIDing-inclusive

ABOUT US

KIDS' ZONE COVID-CONSCIOUS MAGAZINE IS A FREE PUBLICATION CREATED BY THE WORLD HEALTH NETWORK'S PSYCHOSOCIAL CHILDREN'S GROUP.

OUR MISSION IS TO FEATURE MATERIALS FOR KIDS THAT HIGHLIGHT STORIES, ART, SCIENCE, AND LIFESTYLE OF COVID-CONSCIOUS FAMILIES.



FEATURING WORKS FOR AND BY KIDS OF ALL AGES. ADULTS CAN SUBMIT THEIR OR THEIR CHILD'S WORKS AT WHN.GLOBAL/KIDSZONE



= ARTICLES WRITTEN IN US-ENGLISH



= ARTICLES WRITTEN IN UK-ENGLISH

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WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



The Month Ahead

Here's our pick of October's main events!

ALL MONTH:

NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

NATIONAL BOOK MONTH



5 OCTOBER WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

25 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER SUKKOT

10 OCTOBER WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

12 OCTOBER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

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Halloween costumes to wear with your mask and a spooky recipe



PUBLIC HEALTH DETECTIVES!

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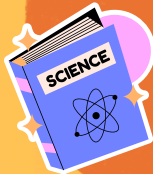
Learn what carbon dioxide detectors tell you!



SCIENCE

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The prefrontal cortex, interesting animals, and fall colors!



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First-rate resources from a COVID-conscious therapist!



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Explore art outlining an artist's Long COVID journey



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A book review about a meaningful novel!



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Make a ghost and a bat!



GAME ZONE

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Would you rather, a maze and a fill-in game!



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Problems can be slow to appear!



SHORT STORIES

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Read a short story from Greek myths!



Editor's Note:

Cozying Up to Mental Health

by: TRak 



As the leaves change colors and we enter the cozy seasons, we invite everybody to join us by reading our October issue of Kids' Zone: Cozying Up with Mental Health Edition.

World Mental Health Day is on October 10. In this issue, we write about mental health vocabulary, COVID's impact on mental health, thoughts from a therapist, safer fall holiday celebrations, and other tools from our readers and editors.

Here are some ideas to support mental health for COVID-conscious individuals:

- Find COVID-conscious therapists at <https://www.covidconscioustherapists.com/>
- Communities exist online for COVID-conscious individuals to connect.
- Connect with like-minded friends at <https://www.covidmeetups.com/>
- Join the WHN Kids Connect Call on
 - Tuesdays at 10am ET ([join here](#))
 - Sundays at 6pm ET ([join here](#))

We hope you enjoy this issue and would love to hear from you!

What are tools that are supporting your mental health during the ongoing pandemic?

Do you have resources to share with the Kids' Zone Community? Submit them at: <https://whn.global/kidszone/>

MENTAL HEALTH VOCABULARY



Acetylcholine: A brain signal chemical. It helps you move, remember, and learn.

Affirmations: Things you say to yourself to build confidence and helpful thoughts.

Anxiety: A feeling of worry or nervousness that's too big. It's so big that it gets in the way of daily life.

Boundary setting: Sharing what you are willing to do and how others should treat you.

Cognitive fatigue: Being out of energy to think and remember because of illness or stress.

Cortisol: A chemical the adrenal glands make. It helps control your stress response.

Depression: A mental health condition where your sadness is too big. It gets in the way of daily life, and fun things stop feeling fun. Your eating and sleep can change.

Dopamine: A brain signal chemical. It helps with motivation and enjoyment.

Mental Health: Emotional, social, and psychological wellness and how it affects how we act, think, and feel.

Neurotransmitters: Messengers in the brain that send signals between cells.

Psychiatrist: A type of medical doctor. They can diagnose, treat, and give medicine for mental health conditions.

Psychologist: An expert who uses therapy to make mental health better.

PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder): A mental health condition that comes from witnessing or living through something really scary or dangerous. You might have anxiety or flashbacks.

Self-care: Things people do to take care of their mental health.

Serotonin: A brain signal chemical. It guides how you feel, eat, and sleep.

It's okay to have big feelings. It's not okay for them to harm your daily life. If you are worried about your mental health or feel that you might hurt yourself, ask for help! Tell a trusted adult like a parent or doctor right away.

MENTAL HEALTH WORD SEARCH

Find the mental health terms in the word search below:

A	H	S	M	U	Q	Z	R	U	E	Y	Q	W	X	B
D	Y	T	N	N	G	E	N	O	M	T	T	H	W	Y
E	N	I	L	O	H	C	L	Y	T	E	C	A	R	V
P	D	R	A	A	I	E	J	X	S	I	Z	A	D	D
R	C	S	O	R	E	T	W	R	O	X	D	F	O	N
E	C	D	T	S	D	H	A	Z	H	N	Y	P	X	I
S	L	M	N	P	J	C	S	M	U	A	A	R	R	N
S	G	X	O	Z	V	I	C	O	R	M	Y	F	J	O
I	L	A	T	N	E	M	B	O	I	I	E	M	P	T
O	E	Y	K	I	O	F	P	N	R	R	F	K	G	O
N	I	O	W	K	Q	H	E	E	A	T	D	F	R	R
G	L	Y	L	F	H	Z	U	C	Y	I	I	Z	A	E
P	S	Y	C	H	I	A	T	R	I	S	T	S	Z	S
T	S	I	G	O	L	O	H	C	Y	S	P	Q	O	R
B	I	F	K	A	G	F	A	T	I	G	U	E	H	L

Acetylcholine

Affirmations

Anxiety

Boundary

Care

Cortisol

Depression

Dopamine

Fatigue

Health

Mental

Psychiatrist

Psychologist

PTSD

Serotonin

*puzzle generated using <https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/word-search>

October 5th is World Teachers' Day. We asked our readers:

Who is your Favorite Teacher and Why?

I homeschool. My Nana teaches English and my Mémé teaches French lessons.
-Simon

My favorite teacher is my mommy because she is my only teacher!
-Fox

My favorite teacher is my mom.
-Camille, age 13



My favorite teacher is Wemmbu who taught me Elytra Mace in Minecraft.
-Leo



My favorite teacher is from a creative writing class because they made chaotic stories and they let you do whatever you like. I wrote a story about gigantic dogs invading the U.S. The teacher's story was about a cat that fell into the core of the earth and it tasted like cookies and creme!
-Dorothy



"I am homeschooled by my grandmothers. They are both my favorite teachers. One teaches French and advanced math like long division. The other teaches language arts and English."
-Heather, age 10



My favorite teacher was my third grade teacher. She was very fun and playful. She would share Pokémon games.
-Namii's Mom



My favorite teacher is my mom. She is my homeschool teacher.
-Namii





HALLOWEEN



5 COSTUMES THAT GO GREAT WITH YOUR MASK

MOVIE CHARACTERS



ANIMALS



EVERYDAY HEROES



BOO!

CARTOONS



MUSICIANS





HALLOWEEN



MASK SAFELY WITH COSTUMES



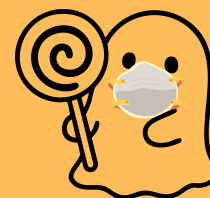
WEAR AN N95 MASK



**WEAR AN N95 MASK
UNDER A COSTUME**



**DON'T DECORATE OR
ALTER AN N95 MASK**



**BE CREATIVE WITH
YOUR COSTUME**

HAVE FUN!



SPOOKY GUACAMOLE RECIPE



What You'll Need:

- 3 ripe avocados (they should feel soft when you gently squeeze them)
- 1 lime
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion (ask a grown-up to help!)
- 1 small tomato, chopped into tiny pieces
- 1 clove of garlic, minced (grown-up job!)



Let's Make Guacamole:

Step 1: Cut the avocados in half and take out the big pit in the middle. Ask a grown-up to help with the knife part.

Step 2: Scoop out all the green avocado with a spoon and put it in a bowl.

Step 3: Use a fork to mash up the avocado. You can make it as chunky or as smooth as you like!

Step 4: Cut the lime in half and squeeze the juice into your mashed avocado. This keeps it from turning brown!

Step 5: Add the salt and mix it in.

Step 6: Add the chopped onion, tomato pieces, and garlic. Stir everything together.

Step 7: Taste it! Does it need more salt or lime? You decide!

Step 8: Serve with tortilla chips and enjoy your homemade guacamole!

*Pumpkin art by FrenchieBoops

Fun Tips:

- If you don't like onions, you can leave them out
- Some people like to add a tiny bit of hot sauce, but ask first!
- Guacamole tastes best when you eat it right away

Avocados have many health benefits:

- Heart-healthy fats: Avocados have healthy fats that are good for your heart. These fats help lower swelling in your body. They also lower the "bad" cholesterol in your blood.
- High fiber content: One cup of avocado has about 10 grams of fiber. Fiber helps food move through your body. It keeps your blood sugar steady. It also helps you feel full.
- Nutrient powerhouse: Avocados are packed with vitamins and minerals your body needs. They have potassium (more than bananas!), folate, vitamin K, and vitamins C and E. They also help your body take in vitamins from other foods.
- Disease protection: The healthy fats, fiber, and antioxidants in avocados may help protect you from long-lasting illnesses. They can also help keep your eyes healthy as you get older.





PUBLIC HEALTH DETECTIVES:

WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS TELLING US?

By: Naomi Bar-Yam



A week after Ms. Rachel introduced the class to the CO₂ monitor, the students brought their Public Health Detective Notebooks back to school. Ms. Rachel drew the table from their first **investigation** on the board.

Location	CO ₂ Reading
Near the window	450 ppm
Classroom	700 ppm
Cafeteria	950 ppm



"Last week, we collected these measurements," she said. "What did we notice?"



"The cafeteria had the highest number," said Luke.



"And near the window had the lowest," said Ifrah.



Luke looked at the table. "But what do the numbers actually mean?"



Ifrah nodded. "Is 700 high? Is 950 too high? How high is too high?"

"Those are important questions," said Ms. Rachel.

She pointed to the letters after each number. "First, does anyone know what ppm means?" No one raised a hand.

"It means **parts per million**. It is a way scientists describe how much of something is mixed into something else. A CO₂ monitor tells us how many parts of every million parts of air are carbon dioxide."

Luke looked at the table. "So near the window, about 450 parts out of every million parts of air were CO₂?"



"That's right."



"Is that a lot?" asked Ifrah.

"Outdoor air usually has a little more than 400 ppm of CO₂," said Ms Rachel. "So the reading near the open window was close to the outdoor level."



"And the cafeteria was 950, more than twice as high," said Luke.



"So 950 is unsafe?" asked Ifrah.



"Not necessarily," said Ms Rachel. "A CO₂ monitor cannot tell us whether a room is safe or unsafe."



"Because CO₂ is a proxy measure," said Luke.

"Exactly. The numbers are clues. To understand the clues, we need to ask what was happening when we collected each measurement."

Ms. Rachel turned to the class. "Let's look at your Detective Notebooks."

Luke raised his hand. "I measured our living room in the morning before anyone else came downstairs. It was 520 ppm."

"What happened later?" asked Ms. Rachel.

"When everyone was in the room, it went up to 840."

Ms. Rachel wrote the numbers on the board.

"What do you notice?" she asked.

"The number went up when more people came into the room," said Ifrah.

"Why?"

"Because people breathe out CO₂," said Luke.

Ifrah opened her notebook. "My kitchen was 1,100 ppm. When we opened the windows, it went down to 650."

Ms. Rachel added the numbers to the board.

"The CO₂ went down when fresh air came in," said Luke.

Other students shared their findings.

"My bedroom was 1,300 ppm when I woke up."

"Our family room went from 600 to 900 when we had visitors."

"The reading next to my window was lower than the reading across the room."

520 ppm → empty living room

840 ppm → family in the room

1,100 ppm → kitchen, windows closed

650 ppm → windows open

Soon the board was covered with numbers and observations.

Ms. Rachel turned to the class. "What patterns do you notice?"



"The numbers usually went up when there were more people," said Luke.



"And they went down when fresh air came in," said Ifrah.

"Why?" asked Ms. Rachel.

"Because people breathe out CO₂," said the class.

"Exactly."

Ifrah looked at the board. "But I still have a question. Last time you said CO₂ is a proxy measure. We know that means it's a clue about something else."



"That's right."



"So what are we actually trying to learn?"

Ms. Rachel nodded. She wrote two words on the board:



"Every time you breathe out, air from your lungs goes into the room," she said.



Luke looked around the classroom. "And then others breathe some of it in?"

"Yes. We are always sharing some air with the people around us." A few students looked surprised.

"If fresh outdoor air is coming into a room, the air people breathe out mixes with the fresh air and some of it leaves the room."



"And the CO₂ level goes down," said Ifrah.



Usually, yes."



"But if fresh air isn't coming in fast enough," said Luke, "the air people breathe out builds up."



"Exactly. And so does the CO₂."

Ifrah looked at the monitor. "So the monitor helps us learn how much air people are sharing."

"That's one important thing it can help us understand," said Ms. Rachel.

Luke thought for a moment. "But people don't only breathe out CO₂."

"What else do we breathe out?" asked Ifrah.

"Water vapor," said one student.

"Odors?" suggested another.

"And tiny particles called aerosols," said Ms. Rachel.

"Aerosols are tiny particles that can float in the air. Some are so small that we can't see them."



"Can there be germs in them?" asked Luke.



"Yes. When a person has an infection, some of the aerosols they breathe out can contain viruses or other pathogens."

The class grew quiet.

"So, if someone is sick," said Ifrah slowly, "the air they breathe out contains CO₂ and can also contain aerosols with viruses in them."

"Yes."

"And the CO₂ monitor can tell us how many viruses are in the air?" asked Luke.

"No," said Ms. Rachel. "That is very important. A CO₂ monitor does not measure viruses."

Luke nodded.

"That's why it's a proxy measure."

"It measures one thing that can give us clues about something else," said Ifrah.

Ms. Rachel pointed to the numbers on the board. "If CO₂ is building up, what might that tell us?"

"That more of the air people breathe out is building up, including their germs," said Luke.



"That's the clue," said Ms. Rachel.



Luke looked again at the numbers. "So lower CO₂ is safer?"



"Not necessarily," said Ms. Rachel. "A low CO₂ reading does not mean there are no viruses in the air. And a high reading does not mean that someone in the room is sick."



"So we have to think about what the monitor can tell us—and what it can't," said Ifrah.



"Exactly. Public health detectives have to understand the limits of their tools."

Ifrah opened her Detective Notebook. "So now that we know what the numbers can tell us, what do we do with them?"

Ms. Rachel smiled. "What do you think?" The students began raising their hands.

"We could compare different classrooms."

"We could measure the cafeteria when it's empty and when it's crowded."

"We could see what happens when we open a window."

"We could measure the same room at different times of day."

Luke raised his hand. "I think we should change one thing at a time?"



Ms. Rachel looked at him. "Why would you do that?"



"So we could figure out which change caused the numbers to go up or down."



Ifrah grinned. "That sounds like an experiment."



"It does," said Ms. Rachel. She wrote a question on the board:

How can we design an investigation to find out what changes the CO₂ level in a room?

Ifrah looked at Luke. "Last time we collected observations."

Luke opened his notebook. "This time we figured out what some of the numbers can tell us."

"And next time," said Ifrah, "we design an investigation." Their next case had begun.

Public Health Detective Glossary

- 1. Parts per Million (ppm):** A way to describe how much of one substance is mixed into another. CO₂ monitors measure how many parts of every million parts of air are carbon dioxide.
- 2. Shared Air:** Air that has been breathed out by people in a room and may be breathed in by other people.
- 3. Aerosol:** A tiny particle or droplet that can float in the air. People breathe out aerosols, and some aerosols can contain viruses or other pathogens.
- 4. Evidence:** Information collected through observations and measurements that helps us answer a question.
- 5. Investigation:** A careful process of asking a question, collecting information, and using evidence to learn what is happening.

DETECTIVE CHALLENGE: WHAT ARE YOUR NUMBERS TELLING YOU?

Do you have some CO₂ measurements in your Public Health Detective Notebook?

Choose one pattern you noticed. For example:

- CO₂ was higher when more people were in the room.
- CO₂ was lower when a window was open.
- CO₂ changed at different times of day.
- Moving the monitor changed the reading.

My Observation

What did you notice?

My Evidence

Write down at least two CO₂ measurements that support your observation.

What Was Happening?

For each measurement, think about and record in your notebook:

- How many people were in the room?
- Were windows or doors open?
- What time of day was it?
- Where was the monitor?
- What else might have affected the measurement?

My Explanation

Why do you think this pattern happened?

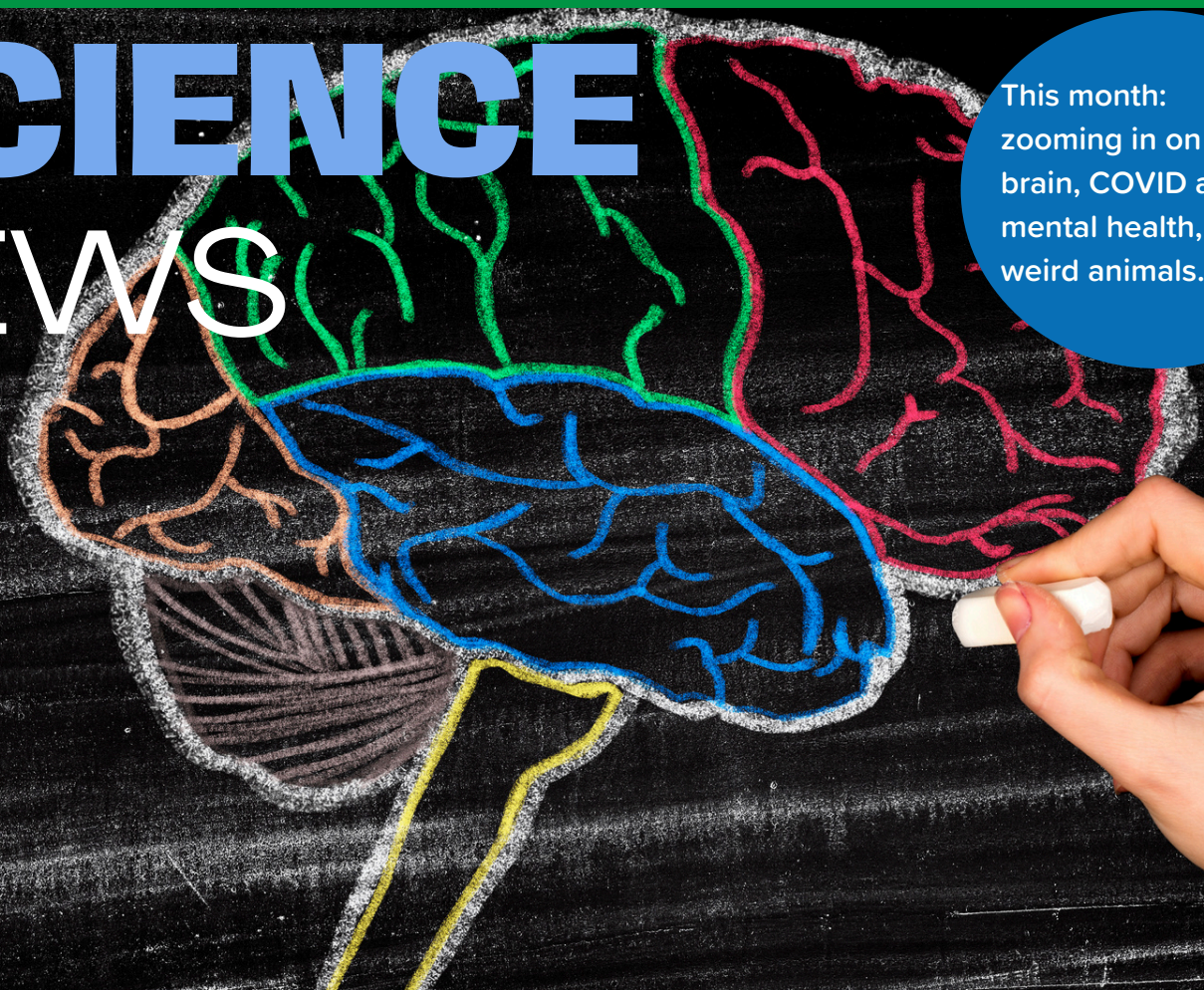
My Next Question

What could you investigate to learn more?

SCIENCE NEWS

by TRak

This month:
zooming in on the
brain, COVID and
mental health, and
weird animals.



Let's take a look at one important part of the brain. It helps you think, solve problems, and make decisions.

The prefrontal cortex is in the very front of the brain, right behind your forehead. It is one of the slowest parts of the brain to develop. It's not fully grown until you are an adult in your mid-20s.

Humans have the most unique and complex prefrontal cortex.

This part of the brain is still growing in kids, so it is extra important to protect the prefrontal cortex from COVID-19.

You need the prefrontal cortex for:

- 💡 **Decision-Making:** Considering options before you make a choice.
- 🧑 **Self-Control:** Thinking before you act.
- 📌 **Planning:** Putting together your steps to a goal.
- 🧩 **Problem-Solving:** Working through puzzles and things that are difficult.
- 📢 **Social Skills:** Being kind, clear, and helpful to others.

Have a science project or experiment you would like highlighted? Or a science question you'd like answered? Submit it to us at [WHN.global/KidsZone](https://www.whn.global/KidsZone)

The Science of COVID and Mental Health



It's World Mental Health Day on October 10. It's a good time to talk about COVID and mental health!

What is mental health? Mental health is our emotional, social, and psychological wellness and how it makes us behave, think, and feel. Mental health matters because it impacts how we see the world, ourselves, and others.

Many studies have looked at the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the brain. They have studied brain structure and how common mental health issues are.

COVID-19 is associated with anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. These effects are bigger in women, younger adults, and people with lower income. Still, they can impact anybody. Multiple studies show that people with Long COVID are a lot more likely to have depression and anxiety. Even if you don't feel sick, COVID-19 can harm the brain.

Kids also experience more psychiatric diagnoses following COVID infections.

Kids can get anxiety and depression.

Children can also have sleep problems, PTSD, memory and focus issues, and mood swings. Other, more severe concerns can happen, too.

When scientists scan the brain, they see that COVID infection is associated with changes in brain structure. They have seen lost gray matter. Gray matter sorts information, builds memories, processes our senses, and helps us move. They also see smaller brain size. Many areas of the brain are impacted by the virus. These parts control smell, memories, emotions, and more. Brain issues can also come from too much immune activity.

Researchers are learning more every day about the effects of COVID on the brain. One thing is clear. The best way to protect mental and brain health from COVID is to avoid infection and reinfection.

***Words underlined in this article link directly to research studies**

ALL ABOUT... ANIMAL ODDITIES

World Animal Day Is October 4th!

Here are fun facts about two unique and odd creatures, the Maned Wolf and the Hagfish!



Hagfish

Hagfish are jawless fish with an eel-like body and paddle-like tail.

They have a round mouth full of horn-like teeth made of keratin that grasp and pull food into the mouth.

Hagfish have barbels (whisker-like tactile organs) around the mouth and a single nostril.

They emit thick, clear slime that clogs up gills of predators.

They tie themselves into a knot, which they move from head to tail to scrape the slime off!

Maned Wolf

Resembles a fox and a wolf, but is the only species in the genus Chrysocyon.

They live in South America and are considered Near Threatened.

The tallest canid, they stand about 3 feet (90cm) at the shoulder.

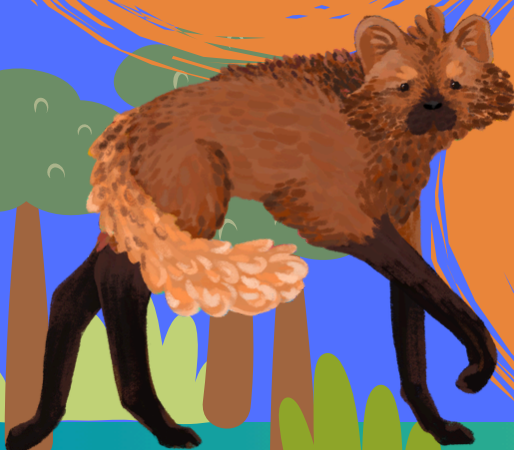
They have very long legs, which help them move through forests and savannas.

As omnivores, they eat meat, fruit and vegetables.

Maned wolves mate for life, and have extremely smelly urine to mark territory and communicate.

Scientists believe maned wolves have a mutually beneficial relationship with lobeira berries.

The fruit may help protect them from giant kidney worms. They spread the plant's seeds while traveling.



Why Are the Leaves Leaving?

Why do trees' leaves turn colors and fall down?

Do you live somewhere with four seasons? If so, you've probably seen fall colors! As winter gets close, some trees turn yellow, orange, purple, and red. Then their leaves fall off! Some trees keep their green needles all year.

Trees and other plants make their own food. They use **photosynthesis**. This means turning carbon dioxide and water into oxygen and sugar. It is a way to store light energy.

Then plants, and the people and animals that eat them, turn the sugar back into carbon dioxide. This gives them energy.

Photosynthesis happens deep in plant cells. It uses a type of colored chemical, also called a **pigment**. This pigment is **chlorophyll**. Because it doesn't use much green light, green light bounces into our eyes. That's why plants look green!

Then winter comes. There's less sunshine now. So the trees make less sugar. They use what they've saved up.

There's no reason to make more chlorophyll now. Slowly, leaves lose their green color.



Chlorophyll isn't the only pigment in leaves.

Carotenoids are yellow and orange. These pigments are also in vegetables like carrots.



The carotenoids you eat help your eyes. They protect them and make the chemicals that actually see light!

The sugar in leaves can make **anthocyanins**. These pigments make pretty red and purple colors!

Eventually, the tree doesn't need its leaves at all. They fall off and turn into crunchy leaf piles!



Trees that lose their leaves are called deciduous. These include oaks, maples, and walnut trees.

Many evergreen **coniferous** trees have long, thin needles. They are tough enough to survive winter. These trees keep most of their needles through winter!

EXPLORATION

COVID-CONSCIOUS CAREERS

This month we are highlighting COVID-conscious therapists. Therapists are mental health professionals who specialize in working with individuals, families, and/or groups of people to help them overcome struggles by using tools and practices involving thoughts, emotions, and communication.



AFFIRMATIONS

For the COVID conscious community

My voice matters

I get to set my own boundaries

It's okay to feel angry, scared or overwhelmed

I am protecting my family and my community

I'm doing my best under difficult circumstances

I can be present in this moment

I'm part of creating a better future

oliviabelknaptherapy.com

COVID-conscious Therapy

Submission by Olivia Belknap, Therapist Associate

I'm a COVID-conscious Marriage and Family Therapist Associate in California, and I love working with COVID-conscious clients. My clients find me because they know I won't make negative judgments or assumptions about them because they continue to take COVID seriously. I've been running therapy support groups for COVID-conscious people and I feel so happy to be able to create a safe space for people to share their feelings and express themselves with others who understand why they're still trying to avoid COVID.



AFFIRMATIONS

For COVID conscious kids!

I am not alone

I'm proud of who I am

My family loves and cares for me

It's okay to stand out or look different

It's okay to be sad or scared sometimes

I can do hard things

I am a health hero!

I am brave and strong

oliviabelknaptherapy.com

Affirmations

I know how hard it can be to be one of the only ones you know still taking precautions, so I also created an affirmations series to help lift your spirits when you're feeling low or remind you that what you're doing matters. If you're a kid who is still masking, I think you're awesome! You're doing a good thing by protecting yourself and the health of your friends, family and community. It's okay to feel sad, or lonely if you're the only kid masking in your class, but I want to let you know that you're not alone and lots of people are supporting you from afar.

Helpful handouts

I've also created one-page handouts like "Why Your Patient is COVID Cautious", the "Long COVID Info Sheet", and "COVID Safety Isn't an Anxiety Disorder" to give to health care providers or loved ones to help explain why you're taking precautions and why it's important.

Why Your Patient is Covid Cautious:
A guide for healthcare workers with patients who request Covid precautions



Covid safety in the healthcare system

- As a healthcare worker, the safety and well-being of your patients is likely very important to you.
- The healthcare facility you work for may no longer require Covid safety measures, like universal masking or testing.
- When healthcare facilities don't implement Covid-safe policies, patients are more likely to avoid accessing care, leading to worse health outcomes.
- When healthcare providers adopt Covid-safe practices, it makes healthcare more accessible and helps patients feel safer in their provider's care.
- Many patients have ongoing concerns about contracting Covid while accessing healthcare services. Many of these patients already have long Covid, are considered high risk, or have high risk family members.
- The mortality rate of nosocomial COVID-19 is nearly 10%, with some studies showing higher rates (Kim et al., 2023).
- Long COVID and associated conditions (LCACs) can qualify as a disability under the ADA/Section 504, entitling patients to accommodations.

What we know about Covid & Long Covid

- 75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% had at least two, and 18.5% had three or more conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).
- CDC defines high-risk populations: "racial and ethnic minority groups," pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more
- CDC says: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong
- American Medical Association: at least 20-30% of patients will develop Long Covid
- 200+ potential symptoms, across all organ systems
- Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022)
- 70% of individuals with long Covid exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023)
- Covid is airborne, and can have in the air for multiple hours.

How you can support Covid cautious patients

- Patients have valid reasons to want to avoid Covid infections, and asking providers for safety precautions can feel scary for patients. Empathizing with patients' concerns can help them feel safer with you.
- You can support patients by: wearing an N95 mask, adding air filters to help clean the air of viruses, opening windows for ventilation, offering them first appointment of the day and permit waiting outside before appointments (Bonus: lots of these measures keep you safer too)
- Advocate for increasing Covid safety measures in your workplace.
- Learn more about Long Covid and share information with your colleagues.

Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.
All sources linked in QR code



LONG COVID INFO SHEET

- 75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% ≥ 2 & 18.5% ≥ 3 conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).
- CDC defines high risk: "racial and ethnic minority groups", pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more
- CDC: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong.
- American Medical association: 20-30% will develop long Covid
- 200+ potential symptoms
- Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022).
- 70% of individuals with long COVID exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023).
- Many LC patients meet criteria for ME/CFS (Jason & Dorn, 2022).
- Children are impacted at similar rates to adults
- Multiple potential pathogenic pathways



POTENTIAL SYMPTOMS

- Brain:** memory loss, concentration problems, dizziness/balance issues, autonomic dysfunction, depression, anxiety, increased suicidality, PTSD, psychosis, stroke, sleep issues, tinnitus, increased risk of neurodegenerative diseases
- Gastrointestinal:** GI disorders (IBS, IBD), constipation, loss of appetite, new food sensitivities, abdominal pain & heartburn
- Respiratory:** cough, breathing difficulty, hypoxia, chest burning, pulmonary embolism
- Cardiac:** myocarditis, tachycardia, atrial fibrillation, heart clots, inflammation, arrhythmias, heart attack
- Reproductive:** menstrual changes, clotting, worsened PMS, miscarriage, stillbirth, erectile dysfunction, decreased sperm count, fertility issues
- Immune system:** immune dysregulation, increased susceptibility to fungal/bacterial infections, lymphopenia
- Musculoskeletal:** musculoskeletal & joint pain, loss of muscle tissue & decreased skeletal muscle mass
- Other:** Fatigue, weakness, seizures, POTS, paresthesia, loss of vision/hearing/smell/taste, kidney problems, swelling legs/feet, rashes, hair loss, liver damage, autoimmune diseases, inflammation, pancreatic problems & more

Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.
All sources linked in QR code

Covid Safety Isn't an Anxiety Disorder:
Why Health Care Professionals should avoid pathologizing Covid precautions



What we know about fear & anxiety

- In the DSM-5 TR, Criteria D for a diagnosis of "Specific Phobia" states "the fear or anxiety is out of proportion to the actual danger posed by the specific object or situation and to the sociocultural context."
- We know that "anxiety and fear responses are necessary components of adaptive behavior" (Ahmari et al., 2009).
- So what about those who have fears about Covid?

What we know about Covid & Long Covid

- 75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% had at least two, and 18.5% had three or more conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).
- CDC defines high-risk populations: "racial and ethnic minority groups," pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more
- CDC says: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong
- American Medical Association: 20-30% of patients will develop Long Covid
- 200+ potential symptoms, across all organ systems
- Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022).
- 70% of individuals with long COVID exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023).
- Covid is still a novel virus, and while we know a lot about the harm it can cause, there are likely many health problems that may take years to come to light, much like HIV and AIDS.

Putting it all together

- With all that we know about Covid, the harm it can cause, and the potential for many negative long term health outcomes, it is very reasonable to take steps to avoid infection. The best way to prevent long Covid is to prevent infection in the first place.
- Taking safety precautions like wearings masks, avoiding large gatherings, and limiting time in indoor spaces are all rational choices that are proportional to the dangers of a Covid infection.
- We would never deter someone from wearing their seatbelt or helmet, applying sunscreen, or using condoms. Covid safety measures are no different than these other precautions many of us use on a daily basis.
- You can help support patients by wearing an N95 mask, and adding air filters to help clean the air of viruses. (Bonus: these measures keep you safer too!)

Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.



My advice for dealing with mask bullies

First of all, I would suggest telling a trusted adult about what's been happening so they can help advocate for you. Bullying is never okay, especially when it comes to things we do to protect our health and safety. I would tell kids who are being bullied or teased for wearing masks that I'm proud of them for doing the right thing, even when it's really hard, and that lots of other people are proud of them too. Doing what's best for you, even in the face of peer pressure, shows that you're a very strong person, which is an impressive trait to have. You're being a leader by protecting yourself and your community. If you can, it can be great to connect with other people who are still masking to help you feel less alone.

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Long COVID Transformation

by Grae Salisbury

A dear friend once told me that being chronically ill is like being the heroine in a "Magical Girl" anime. You secretly fight demons very few others see or even believe in. You struggle. You need special magical tools. You are lonely and yet you are not alone. There are others out there like you, although it might take some time to find them.

Like Magical Girls, we also long for a "normal" life...but we have invisible battles to fight, including a world and our very lives to protect. Or, to also make use of less aggressive language, we have peace to foster and relations to strengthen with our broken bodies that are trying their best.

Accepting that I have Long COVID might be less glamorous than having magical powers, but it's still an important step in my journey. The next step for me has been allowing myself to feel grief as I slowly collect my gear: my meds and supplements, my compression clothing, my sensory sensitivity garb, my water bottle, my cozy PJs, my heating pad. My transformation sequence will change over time, but I am more ready and more prepared now than I was before.

If you have seen any *Sailor Moon*, you might recognize many of the poses in this character's transformation sequence!





Book Review

Not Quite a Ghost by Anne Ursu



Book Review by Camille

Not Quite a Ghost by Anne Ursu is an excellent middle-grade novel. It is loosely based off of the short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Ursu also uses her own experience with ME/CFS (myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome). The main character, Violet, struggles with moving to a new house and a new school. She also develops a strange, long sickness.

Not Quite a Ghost is a good book to read. It mentions COVID testing multiple times. While it follows Violet’s sickness, it also talks about dealing with a new school, a move, and new friends joining her friend group.

I do wish that Violet’s family was more careful about sickness and airborne germs. Violet mentions that her little brother gets sick easily multiple times. But they are aware of COVID! When they go to the doctor for Violet, they mask. Altogether, *Not Quite a Ghost* is a very good and important book to read!



Craft Something New!

Ghosts

By Camille A

We're going to make some easy, cute ghost decorations for Halloween!

Materials needed:

- A piece of white paper
- A pencil or pen
- Colored pencils or markers (optional)
- Scissors (check the ghost to the right for a rule for scissors!)



Always
have an
adult help
with
scissors!

Step-by-step!

1. Our first step is to trace our ghost! We'll draw it on the white paper with a pencil or pen. When you draw the ghost, make sure that the top of the ghost is rounded and the bottom has some ruffles. Two suggestions of how to draw the ghost are down below! It's up to you if you add arms or not; it'll be cute with or without!



*Happy ghost by FrenchieBoops

2. Now, we'll give the ghost a face! We'll start by drawing the eyes on the ghost. The eyes will be up high on the ghost, but be careful that you don't put them too high on the ghost's head! The eyes can be circles or ovals, whichever you want. Just remember not to fill them in yet; that will wait for step 5.
3. Before we finish the ghost, we have to give it a smile. Draw half of a circle beneath the ghost's eyes! Once you've finished that, the ghost's face is finished!
4. In this step, we'll cut the ghost out! Make sure an adult helps you with the scissors! Be careful to trace the ghost's outline when cutting it out.
5. (Optional) This is our last step! Let's color the ghost in! Use markers or colored pencils to fill in the ghost's eyes and body, if you want to. If you do this step, be careful that you don't accidentally color the table!

Awesome job! That was a lot of work, but you just made a ghost!



***Color Pencil Ghost by FrenchieBoops**

Quick Art Lesson

How to draw a Bat!

1. M

2. 3. 4. 

Don't forget to give your bat a fun face!

WOULD YOU RATHER

By Rachel L

Mental Health Edition

always feel
understood

or

always feel
appreciated

have a
perfect memory

or

be able to forget
anything
you want at will

be recognized for
your intelligence

or

be recognized for
your kindness

sleep for an hour

or

read a book for
an hour

go for a run

or

go for a bike ride

call a friend

or

text a friend

make someone laugh

or

tell someone
"good morning"

leave a kind note
for someone

or

volunteer

play a sport

or

exercise another way
for 30 minutes

listen to music

or

watch a funny
show

watch a show on
Netflix

or

watch a show
on YouTube

do a breathing
exercise

or

color

chew gum

or

eat a healthy
snack

do a dance video

or

say one positive
thing about yourself

have alone time

or

play a board game

Halloween Maze

**START
HERE**

Find your way to the spider at the bottom!



Halloween Fill-In Story

How it works:

Step 1.

Write a list of the 8 words below before reading the story. Be silly and creative!

Step 2.

Read the story out loud using your list of words to fill in the blanks.



Use your imagination to choose words for your story!

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Adjective (Description) | 5. Animal |
| 2. Verb (Action) | 6. Adjective (Description) |
| 3. Proper noun (Person's name) | 7. Color |
| 4. Color | 8. Noun |



Fill-In Story Time!

This Halloween, all of my 1._____ friends will be joining me to 2._____ the neighborhood. Even 3._____, who will be dressed as a 4._____ 5._____!

We will look at all the 6._____ decorations and put my trick-or-treat candy in my 7._____ 8._____! I can't wait!

Game and foreground art made by FrenchieBoops

Latency: When Problems Go in Slow Motion

by Claire 

Arjun was at the zoo with his mom. They were wearing their masks and enjoying the mild weather. Arjun walked over to the sloth exhibit.

"Look, Mom! I see one," he said. "He's moving so slowly."

"That's why they're called sloths. People used to think they were lazy." His mom shook her head. "Sometimes things are meant to be slow."



Sloth by FrenchieBoops

On the drive home, Arjun had a question. "Mom, why do we still wear masks?"

"Masks help stop us from getting sick."

"And why is it so bad to be sick? My friend Emma had a virus last month. She's all better now. She said I don't need to worry so much."

His mom thought for a moment. "Sometimes things take a long time to show up."

"Like the sloths?" Arjun asked.

"Just like the sloths," his mom agreed. "Have you ever seen someone smoking?"

"Yeah, it smells awful!"

"It does. And it can make their heart and lungs very sick. But does everyone who smokes look sick right away?"

"No. It usually takes a while."

"Exactly! Scientists say that there is a long **latency period**. That just means how long it takes for an effect to show up."

"So Emma will get sicker later?" Arjun was worried.

"She might. Sometimes kids get anxiety, diabetes, or fatigue after having COVID. But Emma might be just fine. Not everyone gets those symptoms. And if she uses more of the five pillars of safety, she can avoid getting sick again."



"I don't think she will be more careful," Arjun said sadly.

"Not everyone has the tools or knows how to use them," his mom said. "Think about smoking. When your grandparents were little, a lot more people smoked. Their friends and doctors smoked, so they thought it was okay. They were allowed to smoke in shops and planes. And if they wanted to quit, there weren't many tools to help them."

"So they thought smoking was okay," Arjun said. "Because it took so long to get sick."

"Right! And even if they didn't smoke, other people smoked near them. People got sick from their choices. They also got sick from the world they lived in."

"Is that fixed now?" Arjun asked.

"It's not all fixed, but it's a lot better. People have more information and tools to avoid cigarette smoke."

"Why did it get better? It still takes a long time to get sick from smoking, right?" Arjun was confused and curious.

"It got better because doctors and scientists spoke up. It got better because of new rules where you can't smoke inside. It got better because people slowly understood that smoking can hurt you. But it took a long time."

"So the problem is a sloth, and the solution is, too!" Arjun said. "Why did it take so long?"

"Some people really liked smoking or selling cigarettes. They pretended that smoking wasn't bad for you. They said there wasn't enough evidence when there was. That's called **slothful induction**."

"So scientists and activists say that COVID can hurt you. But Emma doesn't see the problem yet."

"That's it, Arjun! Emma might not know enough about COVID. She might even choose not to think about it. She doesn't want to worry! But it's not just Emma's decision. Her pressures and tools are different than yours."

"But," his mom added, "you and I have learned enough about COVID to know that your mask is important. We're not wrong or weird. We're just early."

Just then, they arrived home. Arjun walked in and saw his favorite cartoon was starting. "No, Mom," he said. "I think we're right on time."

Latency in Real Life!

Pick a problem that takes a long time to see. It might harm health, nature, or your success. Why should you act early?

STUDY!

**EAT GOOD
FOOD!**

**SAVE
ENERGY!**

RECYCLE!

**ASK FOR
HELP!**

**SET
BOUNDARIES!**

**WEAR A
MASK!**

Stories from our Readers

The Story of Dionysus

**A Retelling of a Greek Myth
By Camille Alexander, age 13**



Once, Zeus was in love with a young princess named Semele. Hera found out, though, and then disguised herself as Semele's handmaiden. One night, she went to brush Semele's hair and told her that if Zeus really was Semele's boyfriend, he'd give her any wish she wanted. Hera told her that she should use that wish to find out what Zeus looked like underneath his disguise. Semele didn't know that the magic that gods are made of would burn away any mortal who saw it.

That night, when Zeus appeared, Semele forced him to reveal his true form to her. She burned away. When she blinked, she found herself at the banks of the River Styx. In the ashes of Semele, Zeus saw a divine spark. His child. He folded the spark into his thigh. That spark grew to be a child. Dionysus.

Hermes took Dionysus to his aunt, Princess Ino. Ino raised Dionysus with her sons. They were happy. Until a madness fell upon the family. Hermes took Dionysus away to Mount Nysa. There Dionysus grew up as the son of Zeus.

Dionysus eventually went out into the desert. His only companion was a leopard. He created a drink and decided to share it with everyone. That way, he could become an Olympian.

Once, Dionysus went to Naxos. That's where he met his soon-to-be wife, Ariadne, who had been left there by Theseus. They married, and then Dionysus went to the Underworld.

On the way to the Underworld, Dionysus and his group fought with the king of the army of Thrace. Dionysus won.

Dionysus traveled down into the underworld to find his dead family. Just when Dionysus was about to try to cross the Styx, Hades and Persephone came forward and told him he couldn't go any farther.

Dionysus's friends and family who had died had crossed the Styx and forgotten who they were. Even if they could be brought back, it would be pointless. But there was one person from Dionysus's family who had never crossed the Styx, since she hadn't been given a gold coin to pay for the crossing by her family. It was Dionysus's mother.

Dionysus brought back his mother, and with her and his wife by his side, Dionysus went up to Mount Olympus.



TO FEEL INTRIGUED ENERGIZED AND ENGAGED

Kids' Zone Magazine is a free,
volunteer-made digital publication.

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WHN.global/KidsZone

Welcome to the World Health Network Kids' Zone Magazine! Although COVID-19 is a serious topic, living a COVID-conscious lifestyle can be fun and rewarding. In this magazine, we highlight the many ways kids explore, share, and connect!

LET'S JUMP INTO THE KIDS' ZONE!