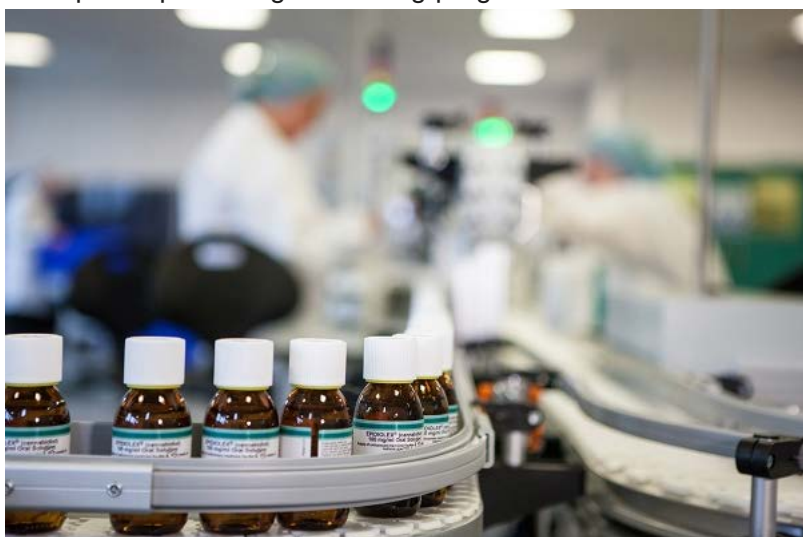


## News Highlights:

- Because of significant variation in **how and whether drug side effects are reported** in clinical trials, **tested drugs may seem safer or less safe than they really are**. University of Colorado School of Medicine researchers dug into the side effects data for 209 recent clinical trials for lung cancer drugs and found wide-ranging variation in the ways trial investigators report drug side effects.

<https://coloradocancerblogs.org/drug-side-effects-reporting/>

- GW Pharmaceuticals announced that **Epidiolex**, its prescription **cannabidiol (CBD)** medication approved for treating two rare kinds of **epilepsy** in children, has been **taken off of the DEA Controlled Substances list**. It had been classified as a Schedule V drug, the least restrictive classification. Now that it is completely declassified, prescriptions will more easily be transferred between pharmacies and will be free of requirements of state prescription drug monitoring programs.



Bottles of Epidiolex Source:Greenwich Biosciences

<http://ir.gwpharm.com/news-releases/news-release-details/gw-pharmaceuticals-plc-and-its-us-subsiary-greenwich-1>

- Check out AskaPatient's article on **CBD (cannabidiol) oil**, including definition, uses and health claims, regulatory issues, cost, and a side-by-side comparison of prescription **CBD Epidiolex** with retail CBD oil.

<https://www.askapatient.com/news/cbd-oil-drug-comparison.asp>

- FDA approved Deciphera Pharmaceutical's Qinlock (ripretinib) tablets as a fourth-line treatment for advanced gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST), an advanced **stomach/intestinal cancer**. Approval was based on a small study of 129 patients with advanced GIST who had received prior treatment with other FDA-approved targeted therapies.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-drug-fourth-line-treatment-advanced-gastrointestinal-stromal-tumors>

- Many children lack **internet research skills**, at least for finding health-related information, according to this study. In a small study involving 25 children (age 9 – 11) and their parents, only three children could correctly say

how many food groups there are and name them. On one question, "How much physical activity or exercise should you get each day?" the number of correct responses actually went down after the children used the internet to find the answer. Researchers were also surprised about how the children searched for the information; most of them used Google image search.

[https://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2020-05/e-cdk050620.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-05/e-cdk050620.php)

- An experimental **Parkinson's treatment** involved reprogramming a patient's skin cells into dopamine-releasing nerve cells that were then inserted deep into the patient's brain. The 69-year-old man with Parkinson's can now tie his shoes again and resume swimming and biking. The study, which began two years ago, was financed partly by the patient himself.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-parkinsons/reprogrammed-skin-cells-inserted-in-brain-help-parkinsons-patient-regain-function-study-idUSKBN22P37V>

## COVID-19 News

- The U.S. FDA announced it will be investigating concerns about the accuracy of **Abbott Lab's** rapid 15-minute **ID Now COVID-19 test**, because of evidence that the test can produce false negatives. An NYU team comparing rival **Cepheid's** test with Abbott's found that the Abbott test missed between one-third and one-half of the infections that Cepheid detected. NYU's comparison study was on only about 100 samples and has not been peer reviewed yet.

<https://www.latimes.com/science/story/2020-05-15/fda-probes-accuracy-issue-with-abbotts-rapid-coronavirus-test>

- The FDA approved another at-home **COVID-19** testing kit. With **Everlywell's diagnostic test**, patients self-swab to collect a nasal sample, then ship it overnight to a specific CLIA-certified lab. Patients are approved for the test by filling out an online questionnaire that is then reviewed by a healthcare provider.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-first-standalone-home-sample-collection-kit-can-be-used>

- The FDA announced it has issued guidelines for **drug developers** to more efficiently receive agency feedback for prospective COVID-19-related investigations and separate guidance on **how to design later stage clinical trials** for COVID-19 drugs.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-takes-new-actions-accelerate-development-novel-prevention-treatment>

- A World Health Organization expert said that the COVID-19 virus may never go away, and may become endemic in the population, like the HIV virus.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/14/health/coronavirus-endemic-who-mike-ryan-intl/index.html>

- "For some seniors, this is their greatest fear: being hooked to a machine, helpless, with the end of life looming. For others, there is hope that the machine might pull them back from the brink, giving them another shot at life." Kaiser Health News reports that some seniors are **updating their living wills to specify their wishes about the use of respirators** if they become critically ill with COVID-19. While it is known that patients needing respirators (ventilators) for COVID-19 spend considerably longer on them (two weeks or more) than is the case with other critical illnesses, the data is mixed about survival rates on ventilators: they range from 14% (Wuhan, China) to 34% (early data from the United Kingdom), to a discouraging early report from New York with survival listed at only 11.9%.

<https://khn.org/news/no-intubation-seniors-fearful-of-covid-19-are-changing-their-living-wills/>

- University of California Irvine researchers are beginning a **large-scale antibody (serology) study** to help understand how widespread COVID-19 is in Orange County. A representative sample of the population, consisting of 5,000 volunteers, will be tested at 10 drive-through sites. In similar studies (smaller scale), the infection results varied: in Santa Clara, about 2.8% of people tested had antibodies to the virus; in Los Angeles, it was about 4.1 percent; in New York City, 21.6% of people tested had antibodies.

<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/05/14/rigorous-coronavirus-antibody-testing-coming-to-o-c/>.

[https://www.eurekaalert.org/pub\\_releases/2020-05/uoc--uac051520.php](https://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2020-05/uoc--uac051520.php)

- Test results for almost 3,000 eastern shore **poultry plant workers** in Virginia (Tyson's and Perdue) showed about an 18% COVID-19 infection rate. Perdue released a statement saying it has hosted virtual town hall webinars at more than 15 locations to answer questions from community leaders and explain safety measures.

<https://www.dailypress.com/news/health/vp-nw-coronavirus-eastern-shore-poultry-plants-tests-20200516-52emfjhrerezbbbu34peu47zu4-story.html>

**Updated stats for Sunday, May 17, 2020: Worldwide:** 4.7 million cases and over 312,000 deaths. **United States:** 1.47 million cases and more than 88,000 deaths. Source: Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Dashboard:

<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>.

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