

Ask a Patient Health News February 5, 2023

Health News: February 5, 2023

- Diagnosing a **transient ischemic attack** (TIA), sometimes called a “warning stroke,” is challenging because symptoms often disappear within an hour. Nearly one in five people who have a suspected TIA, where blood ceases to flow to the brain, will have a full-blown stroke within three months, and two in five, given the appropriate scan, will learn they have actually had a stroke instead of a TIA. The American Heart Association released a recommendation that stroke symptoms, **even if they disappear within an hour**, need **emergency assessment** to help prevent a full-blown stroke.

<https://newsroom.heart.org/news/stroke-symptoms-even-if-they-disappear-within-an-hour-need-emergency-assessment?preview=6de1>



- Medical schools at Harvard, Columbia, Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, Mount Sinai, Duke, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Washington and others have stopped participating in the *U.S. News & World Report* **medical school rankings**, saying that such rankings work against the mission of a higher learning institution. Some schools also clarified that their decisions did not impact associated **hospital** participation in U.S. News' concurrent hospital rankings.

<https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/providers/wave-leading-medical-schools-pull-out-us-news-annual-rankings>

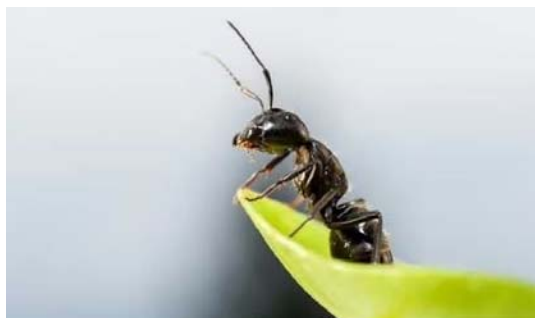
- Government audits reveal that **Center for Medicare Services** (CMS) was overbilled by insurance companies for hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars. Surprisingly, the Center for Medicare Services (CMS) recently announced that it will not impose major penalties for those overpayments made from 2011 through 2017. Instead, it will wait until the audits for payment years 2018 and beyond are conducted, which have yet to be started. **Kaiser Health News** has been investigating the issue and recently obtained, through a lawsuit and Freedom of Information Act request, results of the audits for 2011, 2012, and 2013.

<https://khn.org/news/article/cms-audits-medicare-advantage-plans-can-keep-hundreds-of-millions-in-federal-overpayments-maybe-more/>

Health Research

Scientists at the Max Planck Institute trained nearly three dozen **silky ants** to use their antennae for finding mouse **cancer tumors**. After only three "conditioning" (or training) trials, the ants were able to associate the smell of the cancer in urine with a sugar food smell that the ants are attracted to. While ant sniffing is a long way from being used as a diagnostic tool in humans, there is potential for its use, since ants are more easily and cheaply trained than dogs or other animals. The study was published in *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*.

<https://www.livescience.com/ants-smell-cancer-tumors>



- Avoiding a **severe** (requiring hospitalization) case of **flu**, **viral meningitis**, or herpes-related illness in **middle age may protect a person's future brain health**, according to a large population-based study led by the National Institutes of Health. Researchers compared neurodegenerative disorder diagnosis (NDD) to prior hospitalization with 32 common viral illnesses, and found that **12 common viral illnesses** increased a person's risk of developing any of six neurodegenerative diseases over 15 years.

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Pneumonia caused by the flu was associated with five diseases, while **viral encephalitis or meningitis** posed the greatest risk for Alzheimer's disease. Of the patients in the large population Biobanks from Finland and the U.K., 405,500 were healthy, while 44,500 had been diagnosed with an NDD. These included 11,650 with Alzheimer's, 2,750 with vascular dementia, 18,700 with all-cause dementia, 7,200 with Parkinson's disease, 840 with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and 3,500 with multiple sclerosis. The scientists suggest that vaccination against viral illnesses might protect against neurodegenerative diseases. Because Covid-19 viral illness is so new, it was not included in the study. The study was published in *Neuron*.

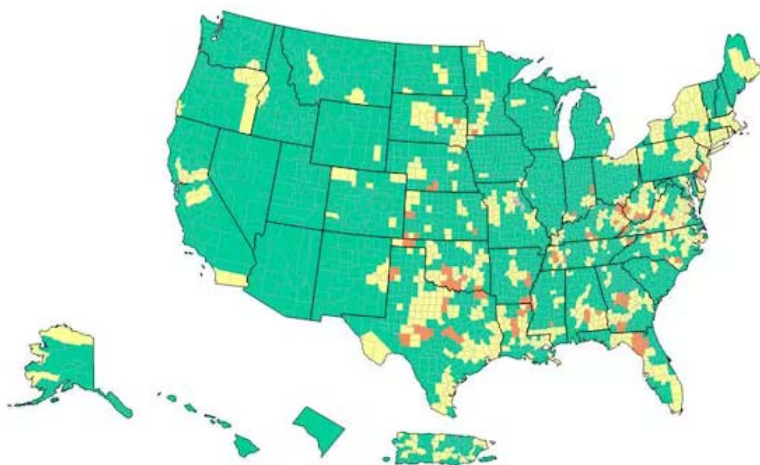
<https://www.alzforum.org/news/research-news/nothing-sneeze-viruses-raise-risk-neurodegenerative-disease>

- Researchers from Ansible Health Inc. used the artificial intelligence platform ChatGPT to learn how to take and pass various credentialing exams, including all three parts of the United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE), the exam required for **physician medical licensuring** in the U.S. The study, not yet peer reviewed, was published on preprint site [MedRxiv](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2023.01.18.23281111v1).

<https://www.digit.in/news/machine-learning-and-ai/paging-dr-ai-to-the-emergency-room-artificial-intelligence-passes-us-medical-licensing-exam-66910.html>

Covid-19 Stats

Covid-19 rates continue to decline. Two weeks ago, as of January 19, 2023, 37% of counties had "high" or "medium" community levels of Covid-19. As of Feb 2, 2023 just **30%** had **"high" or "medium"** community levels.



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● Low ● Medium ● High ● No Data

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