

Friday Night [under the] Lights...

2019



Happy Friday...

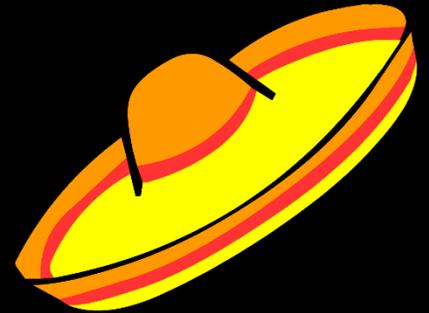
Hope everyone's doing well. Wishing you a happy National Heterochromia Day (whether it's a complete, partial, sectoral or central heterochromia, by the way). We share this special day with Dan Aykroyd, David Bowie and Jane Seymour. It has / had special meaning to them... (Heading to Google, aren't you?).

▪ *A lesson from Real Life...*

So... Have you ever had one of those moments in life where you see something, and your mind takes you down this trail of thoughts that are *kind of* related to what you see but your kids would say "dad, that's so random..."?

Well, here we go. *Dad's going random.*

I was traveling through DFW airport earlier this week. I had a morning flight and I had just entered the TSA line (with all the other happy early morning travelers). As I made my way through the ropes and lanes, I noticed a family of 4 - what appeared to be a mom, dad and two sons about 12 / 14 ish (I don't normally guess age, weight or whether something is "going to make it" or not, but I'm probably close on this one).



But it wasn't a normal travel day for two of them.

I guess they were going somewhere on vacation and mom & dad were wearing these HUGE colorful Loud Sombreros as they made their way up to the TSA agent. They were happy, laughing and kept making this loud, bizzarro "Yee Haw" type noise and looking at their kids with a penetrating "I'll make you laugh" look.

Mom & dad were clearly ECSTATIC about this trip. They had vacation on the brain. You could feel (through the awkwardness) the beginnings of their unwinding process unfolding right there in line.

The kids? *Not so much.*

Horrified. Embarrassed. Petrified. Constantly looking at each other. You knew exactly how they felt (in large part, because you felt that way yourself with every new utterance of a bizarre Yee Haw)...

Everyone in that TSA area was looking at them. *Everyone.*

The kids would have probably left the line with a Charles Manson look alike just to get away from their parents.

So, my mind began to wander.

How does that happen? How can someone be so totally unaware of how their behavior or appearance or actions make others around them feel? Of course, I'm excluding the possibility that the parents were purposely torturing their children or had an evil sense of humor (I think we've all had some of those moments).

But it really makes you think about how often that kind of stuff happens.

"That guy has no idea that... (fill in the blank)..."

So, I started thinking about how the "Loud Sombrero Syndrome" actually applies to us in our world.

Most of what we do, we do in pairs (careful). We have a partner, but we work together as a team of "one" entity.

If one of us is wearing that "Loud Sombrero", it has a substantial impact on the other. In fact, it impacts the perception of the whole team (remember the entire TSA entry area?).

Have you ever wondered how people perceive you? It's important. It will impact the entire experience for our patients and communities.

Sometimes, it helps to just ask your partner. *How do you perceive me in what I do and how I do it?* The response may surprise, shock or please you – But it gives you some good scoop about your impact and presence. It's nice to know if other people see your "Loud Sombrero" and cringe when they work with you...

Try it sometime (not the Sombrero – an honest request for someone to tell you how they perceive you when you interact with patients or others).

Of course, there are 4 people sitting on some beach somewhere laughing at all of us who thought the Loud Sombrero was bizzarro...

As Geneva Whitmore would say – "so, there's that..."

- **The importance of making decisions based on sound science...**

Remember a couple of weeks ago when we talked about the phenomenal pace of innovation in the EMS technology world? It's really exciting. The more we learn about disease and injury, the more we can facilitate the development and implementation of technology to address it.

But something really interesting happened a few weeks ago.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration warned the public *not to use* medical devices marketed to consumers that claim to help assess, diagnose or manage head injury, including concussion, traumatic brain injury (TBI) or mild TBI.

Concussion has been a huge public health issue (that's a really good thing) with significant efforts to target school athletes. The idea is (again a good thing) to raise awareness about the importance of concussion in young athletes and engage the general public and parents in assessing for the potential risk.

In a new safety communication, the FDA warned that such tools — such as apps on a smartphone marketed to coaches or parents for use during sporting events — have not been reviewed by the FDA for safety and efficacy and could result in an incorrect diagnosis, potentially leading to a person with a serious head injury returning to their normal activities instead of getting medical care.

The insult of a second injury (Secondary Impact Syndrome) could be devastating.

To date, there are a limited number of medical devices that have been cleared or approved by the FDA to aid in the diagnosis, treatment, or management of concussion, and all of them require an evaluation by a health care professional.



In the safety communication, the FDA explains that the products of concern include those that claim to assess and diagnose any changes in brain function by having an injured person perform tests on a smartphone or tablet-based app to determine a change in physical or mental (cognitive) status including vision, concentration, memory, balance and speech.

It makes sense, right? It's important to be able to identify the potential for injury, but it's also really important to make sure a test doesn't provide a false negative result that may have substantial implications.

I am absolutely certain that more reliable assessment tools for concussion will emerge that are supported by the evidence and a comprehensive review. But right now, that's not the case.

The message for us? App based assessment tools may provide additional evidence, but should not be considered definitive – Despite what the coach or eager parents may tell us...

Fascinating times...

▪ **Measles (Rubella) update...**

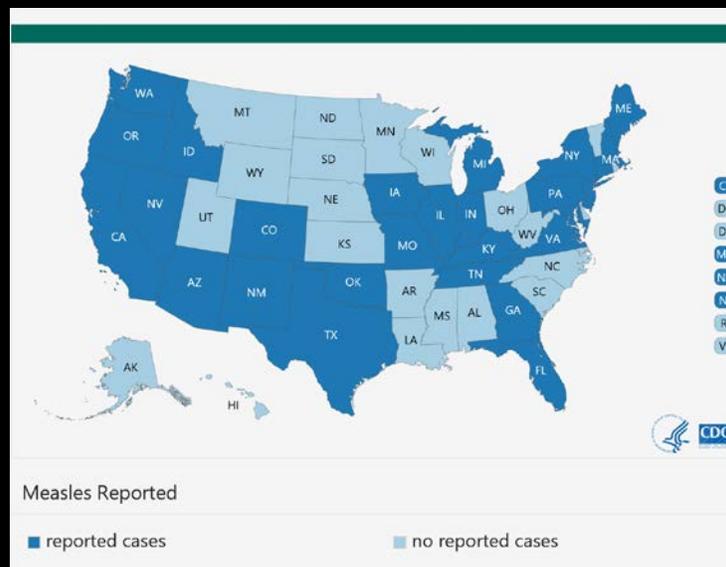
This stuff is getting more & more important. *I have a request.*

First – The background. Measles was considered to be eliminated in the United States in 2000. Cases of measles in the US are now most likely the result of a traveler being exposed elsewhere and bringing the disease into the US.

What's important is the rapid spread of the disease once it starts to infect unvaccinated individuals. It can spread through large numbers of unvaccinated very rapidly.

That's exactly what's happening now. Big time.

Look at the increase in states reporting measles as of last week:

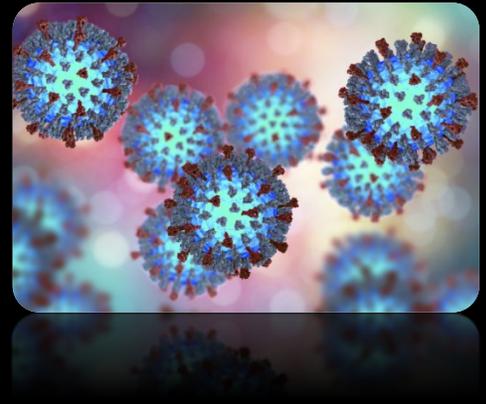


1,109 cases of Measles have been reported in 28 states. That's the greatest number of cases reported in the US since 1992.

As you probably know, there is a huge public health push to make sure people are protected against Measles.

So, here's my question for you. Are you protected? Can you prove it?

As the number of cases increase in the US, everyone should be absolutely certain that they have evidence of immunity (remember, the dramatic increase in Measles cases in the US is occurring in those that do not have immunity. As healthcare providers, our risk of exposure is significantly higher than the general population (I think it has to do with all those sick people we deal with...)).

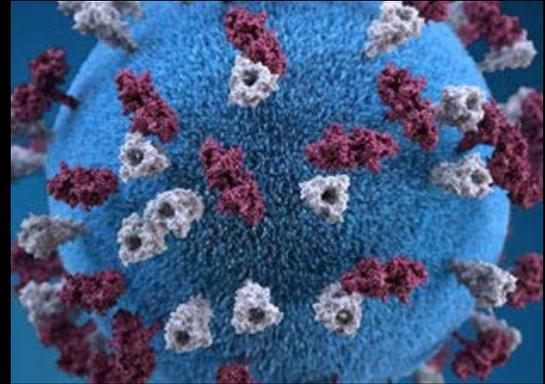


If you're reading this - You should be able to demonstrate ONE of the following *right now*:

- **Written documentation of adequate vaccination**
- **Laboratory evidence of immunity**
- **Laboratory confirmation of measles**
- **Birth in the United States before 1957**

The MMR (Measles / Mumps / Rubella) vaccine is very safe (as most vaccines are). Two doses of vaccine are 97% effective at producing immunity. One dose is 93% effective.

And remember – There is NO link between MMR vaccination and development of Autism.



So, something to take seriously. If you can't demonstrate immunity by one of the above criteria, you are considered at risk. You should contact your healthcare provider for options.

As an adult, they will suggest either:

- A blood test to ascertain immunity
- Revaccination with MMR (it doesn't hurt to get the vaccine if you are already immune – some people would rather go straight to immunization vs blood testing)
- Change your birthdate. You can try but this apparently only works with your teenage children and the only option is to select 21 years of age...

And, as a final note – I would definitely not travel internationally without demonstration of immunity.

Please consider doing this soon. The more protected we are as a community, the less the disease spreads.

And, if you haven't heard, it would really, really suck to get Measles (that's how I would say it to my kids...)



- **GMR Life...**

In support of the Washington DC 4th of July Event... (insert phrase – “Caring for the World at a Moment’s Notice”)...



- **What the...?**

I captured tonight's WTH several months ago traveling down the Interstate in Portland, Oregon...

It's subtle. But it's absolutely brilliant.



▪ Epilogue...

A child asked his father, "How were people born?"

So, his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on."

The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now."

The child ran back to his father and angrily said, "*You lied to me!*"

His father replied, "No, your mom was talking about her side of the family."

So, before I sign off tonight, please take a second to remember the people that may find themselves potentially in harm's way from the progress of Tropical Storm (soon to be Hurricane) Barry. We're all hopeful that it becomes a "non-event" but it looks like there will, unfortunately, be people who will be impacted.

Just like the Earthquakes in California last week, there is real comfort in knowing there are 10's of thousands of us in this organization that stand ready to "Care for the World at a Moment's Notice".

I love what we do. I hate that we have to do it sometimes, but it sure is comforting to know what our potential is.

So, that's it from my world. *Happy Friday.* Enjoy what's left of National Different Color Eyes Day (most of you already knew that by the time you made it this far, didn't you?).

Ed

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