

MailOnline

Home | News | Royals | U.S. | Sport | TV&Showbiz | Femail | Health | Science | Money | Travel | Shopping | Discounts

Strep A Covid-19 Cancer NHS Cold Flu Dementia Fertility UTI Diabetes Weight Loss Diet

Login

Chinese scientists 'create' a mutant coronavirus strain that attacks the BRAIN and has a 100% kill rate in mice - as they admit there's a 'risk it spills over to humans'

- Eight rodents infected with the pathogen 'surprisingly' died within eight days
- Critics of the study said: 'This madness must be stopped before [it is] too late'
- **READ MORE:** World leaders meet to thrash out plan to protect against 'Disease X'

By CAITLIN TILLEY, HEALTH REPORTER FOR DAILYMAIL.COM

PUBLISHED: 17:59 GMT, 16 January 2024 | UPDATED: 16:16 GMT, 18 January 2024

8.7k shares

2.3k comments

Chinese scientists have been experimenting with a mutant **coronavirus** strain that is 100 percent lethal in mice — despite concerns such research could spark another pandemic.

Scientists in Beijing — who are linked to the Chinese military — cloned a Covid-like virus **found in pangolins**, known as GX_P2V, and used it to infect mice.

The mice had been 'humanized', meaning they were engineered to express a protein found in people, with the goal being to assess how the virus might react in humans.

Every rodent that was infected with the pathogen died within eight days, which the researchers described as 'surprisingly' quick.

The team were also surprised to find high levels of viral load in the mice's brains and eyes - suggesting the virus, despite being related to Covid, multiplies and spreads through the body in a unique way.

Writing in a scientific paper that has not yet been published, they warned the finding 'underscores a spillover risk of GX_P2V into humans'.

Site Web Enter your search

TOP STORIES

Our millionaire neighbours from hell turned their home into Disneyland: Locals' fury at property developer whose 'Bond villain-style home is lit up like Cape Ca...



Britain braces for Storm Isha: Met Office places ENTIRE country under 24-hour weather warning on Sunday with 80mph gusts and four inches of rain set to hit afte...



What DID happen to the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World...and did the Hanging Gardens of Babylon ever exist at all? As tourists continue to flock to Giza's Gl...



The 20 best European cities for solo travellers revealed: Rhodes is No1, London comes fifth - and Paris and Rome do not make the list. Are YOU surprised?



It's a nation where just 4pc are very overweight thanks to compulsory weigh-ins at work... How a trip to Japan shocked this group of obese Brits



Stunning scenery, incredible food and adventure around every corner! Discover the hidden gems of France and Spain - and a stress-free way to travel AD FEATURE

Dog walker finds newborn baby girl wrapped in a towel and dumped in a shopping bag on London street in minus 6C temperatures - as police appeal for mother to co...

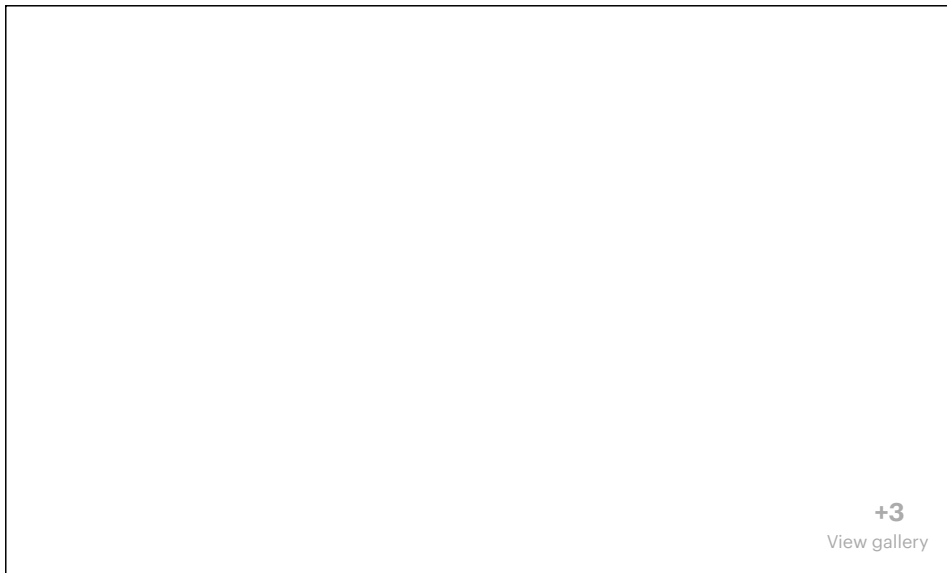


RICHARD KAY: Charles's slimmed down monarchy is coming apart at the seams - just as Anne predicted



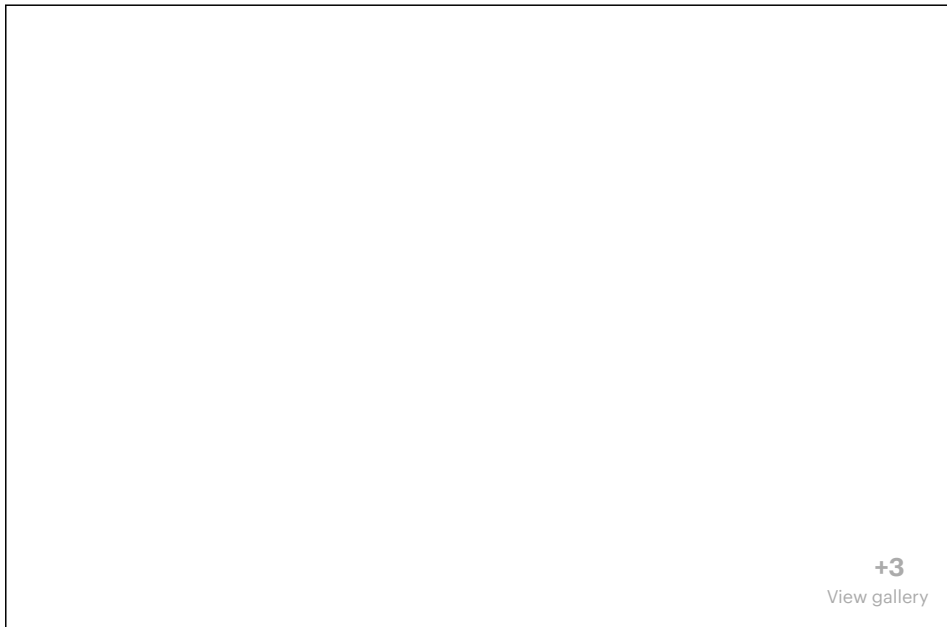
What REALLY lies beneath: Incredible interactive graphic reveals the weird and wonderful creatures and shipwrecks that lurk in the deep sea - as experts admit w...





+3
View gallery

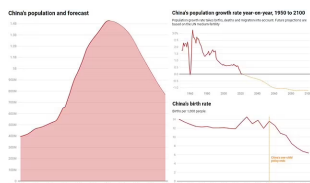
Scientists in Beijing — who are linked to the Chinese military — cloned a Covid-like virus found in pangolins , known as GX_P2V, and used it to infect mice. Every rodent that was infected with the pathogen died within eight days, which the researchers described as 'surprisingly' quick



+3
View gallery

The virus was discovered in pangolins in Malaysia - scaly mammals that are known harborers of coronaviruses and were heavily speculated to be the intermediate host that passed Covid from bats to humans

TRENDING



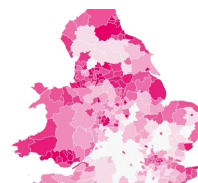
Inside China's impending population disaster

8.4k viewing now



REVEALED: The ideal penis size and pubic hair style women really want

136.7k viewing now



England and Wales's 'bad health blackspots' REVEALED

39.7k viewing now

Professor Francois Balloux, an infectious disease expert based at University College London, wrote on Twitter (X): 'It's a terrible study, scientifically totally pointless.

'I can see nothing of vague interest that could be learned from force-infecting a weird breed of humanized mice with a random virus. Conversely, I could see how such stuff might go wrong...'

Computer says NO! The dos and don'ts of using AI to write your CV, from including industry-specific keywords to proofreading ADVERTISING

The heartwarming story of the Dragons' Den hopeful who was first to get an offer from SIX judges: Ex high-flying advertising exec who was left housebound with M...



Pregnant Annie Kilner keeps her bump under wraps as she hits the gym while estranged husband Kyle Walker's Lauryn Goodman scandal rages on



Cruel trolls target William for looking after Kate Middleton: Anti-monarchist groups and critics use royal health crisis to criticise King Charles and Prince an...



She's a professional girlfriend who rakes in \$30,000 wooing 'lonely men' online... but can YOU figure out what's so special about Lexi Love?



Center Parcs rapist, 29, carried out 'cruel and cynical' sex attack on underage girl after kind family welcomed him in after he was kicked out of his own Sherwo...



BBC Bargain Hunt's Natasha Raskin Sharp announces birth of first child following secret pregnancy



What are the safest countries in the world if World War 3 starts? Map reveals the places most likely to survive if conflict breaks out



TOM UTLEY: If any of our sons installs a camera to spy on Mrs U's childminding skills (as happened to a friend of ours), they'll need to find a new babysitter!



How Paul became the ultimate Traitor: From studying American Psycho every night to practise reality TV stints and thinking about his Playboy model wife and baby...



Barron Trump, 6'7", towers over his father as he tenderly guides him as they both attend funeral of Melania's mother in Florida



Chanelle Hayes proudly flaunts her 'wobbly bits' in a swimsuit as she

Professor Richard Ebright, a chemist at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, told DailyMail.com he wholeheartedly agreed with Professor Balloux's assessment.

He added: 'The preprint does not specify the biosafety level and biosafety precautions used for the research.'

'The absence of this information raises the concerning possibility that part or all of this research, like the research in Wuhan in 2016-2019 that likely caused the Covid-19 pandemic, recklessly was performed without the minimal biosafety containment and practices essential for research with a potential pandemic pathogens.'

According to the study, carried out by the **Beijing** University of Chemical Technology, the virus was discovered in 2017 prior to the Covid outbreak.

It was discovered in Malaysia in pangolins - scaly mammals that are known harborers of coronaviruses and were heavily speculated to be the intermediate host that passed Covid from bats to humans.

The researchers cloned the virus and stored multiple copies in the Beijing lab, where it continued to evolve.

It is unclear when the newly surfaced study was conducted. But the researchers said it was possible the virus had undergone a 'virulence-enhancing mutation' in storage, which made it more deadly.

For the new research, eight mice were infected with the virus, eight were infected with an inactivated virus and eight were used as a control group.

All mice infected with the virus died. They succumbed to the infection between seven and eight days after being infected.

Symptoms included their eyes turning completely white, rapid weight loss and fatigue.

Researchers found 'significant amounts' of the virus in the rodents' brains, lungs, noses, eyes and windpipes.

By day six, the viral load had 'significantly decreased' in the lungs, but the animals' brains had shrunk and there were 'exceptionally high' virus levels in their brains.

The results suggest that the virus infects via the respiratory system and then migrates to the brain - unlike Covid which causes lower lung infections and pneumonia in severe cases. However, there have been examples of Covid being found in brain tissue of severely sick patients.

'Severe brain infection during the later stages of infection may be the key cause of death in these mice,' the researchers said.

EXCLUSIVE **Researcher whose work may have created COVID is STILL receiving \$50m in US Government grants**

A research group whose work is feared to have started the Covid pandemic is being funded by the US Government to do similar experiments in other parts of the world.

ADVERTISEMENT



▶ **vows to 'keep it real' after breast lift surgery and nine stone weight loss**



▶ **The ideal penis size, shape and pubic hair style most attractive to females, according to science**

▶ **Kyle Walker breaks his silence after 'claiming relationship with Laurny Goodman meant nothing' - despite fathering TWO children with her**



▶ **Megyn Kelly says Lauren Sanchez 'looks like a hooker' in rant about plastic surgery and risqué clothing: 'You're dating the richest man in the world...try to b...**



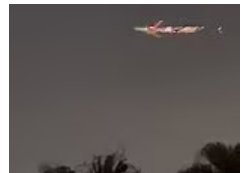
▶ **Social worker, 64, will lose her job after her 'pleasant and playful' elderly pet terrier who was on a lead bit a businessman on the leg**



▶ **I was also a victim of the Pompeii curse! I got divorced.. AND developed breast cancer just like mystery woman who sent back stolen stones (and I've returned mi...**



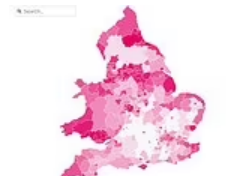
▶ **Terrifying moment flames shoot out from Atlas Air Boeing 747 jet after 'suffering engine failure' shortly after take-off from Miami International Airport**



▶ **Brave Orthodox Christians plunge into icy water for Epiphany celebrations across Europe despite temperatures as low as -41C**



▶ **England and Wales's 'bad health blackspots' REVEALED... so use this interactive map to see if your area is one of them**



▶ **Isla Fisher shows off her eye-popping assets in a plunging navy mini dress as she leaves the NBC studios for the Late Night With Seth Meyers show in NYC**



▶ **Kendall Jenner doesn't let snowy Aspen's freezing temperatures get to her as she steps out in a leggy charcoal micro mini dress for dinner**

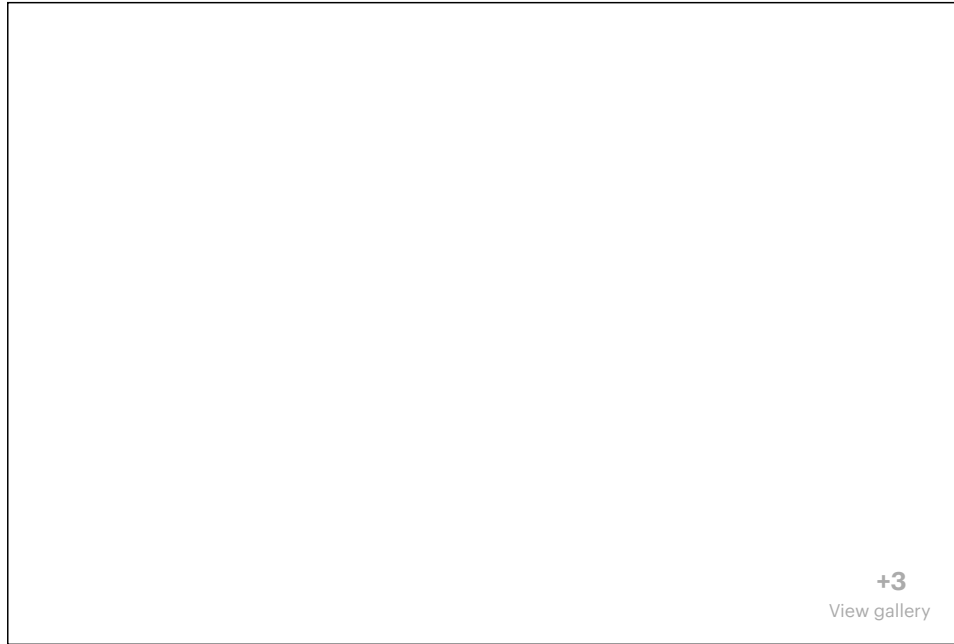


LIVE **Brooklyn Beckham hits back at troll who accused him**

They concluded: 'This is the first report showing that a SARS-CoV-2-related pangolin coronavirus can cause 100 percent mortality in hACE2 mice, suggesting a risk for GX_P2V to spill over into humans.'

However, the original strain of Covid also killed 100 percent in mice in some studies, meaning the new results may not be directly applicable to humans.

Dr Gennadi Glinsky, a retired professor of medicine at Stanford, said on social media: 'This madness must be stopped before [it is] too late.'



+3
View gallery

Dr Peter Daszak (pictured left alongside Dr Anthony Fauci) is behind EcoHealth Alliance at the center of concerns over the origins of Covid. EcoHealth, which originally focused on conservation, now works around the world to investigate the origins of viruses, map where they have spread and analyze them to find out where the next outbreak could occur

DailyMail.com exposed in 2022 how similar research virus-manipulation research was being carried out by Boston University.

Researchers were found to have created a new Covid strain that had an 80 percent death rate among mice.

It sparked nationwide debate about whether the experiments were an illegal form of research known as 'gain of function' - which involves purposefully making viruses more deadly or infectious to study their evolution.

The Biden Administration tightened rules around such research in October 2022, but the definition of gain of function remains contested.

Dr Christina Parks, a molecular biologist from the University of Michigan, said the Chinese study was 'classic gain of function, whether they tell you it is or not.'

One of the Chinese researchers was Dr Yigang Tong, who trained at the Academy of Military Medical Sciences, a Chinese military medical research institute run by the People's Liberation Army.

Dr Tong studied there between 1988 and 1991 for a master of science and then again between 1997 and 2000 for a PhD.

He also co-authored a paper in 2023 with 'bat woman' Zheng-Li Shi, who helps run the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

The WIV has been designated the most likely source of the Covid pandemic by the FBI and US Department of Energy in what has been dubbed the 'lab leak' theory.

Researchers there, with US Government grants, were performing gain of function experiments on coronaviruses in the months leading up to the Covid outbreak.

▶ of 'changing his career again' to a personal trainer as he pokes fun at David with gym clip



▶ Doctor reveals genius pain-free way to remove a splinter using a medicine cabinet staple

▶ Legendary British actor famed for disturbing the nation with iconic role returns to screens with new terrifying film - but do YOU know who it is?



▶ Electric cars WILL get cheaper in 2024 with a 'price war' set to develop



▶ Are these planks of wood the same size? Mind-blowing optical illusion leaves people scratching their head



▶ How much would you pay for healthcare fit for a king? As Charles and Kate have medical treatment, all you need to know about private health insurance



▶ Gone appetit! Customers share the disappointing food fails that will quickly quell your hunger



▶ RICHARD LITTLEJOHN: Beat the Big Freeze - break out the Bacofoil



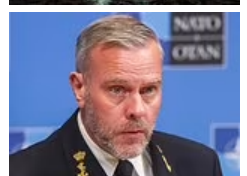
▶ The Traitors viewers rejoice as 'villain' Paul's 'reign of terror' FINALLY ends as he is banished... as fans root for Harry to win after shock betrayal twist



▶ THAT'S how you stop eco protesters! Italy brings in £50,000 fines for climate activist vandals



▶ Nato braced for all-out war with Russia in the next 20 years: Top defence chief issues starkest warning yet and says civilians and governments must brace for ca...



Ben Shephard and Susanna Reid share heartfelt tributes

The virus first emerged miles away from the WIV, where researchers were known to be working on coronaviruses found in bats.

It comes as Dr Peter Daszak, head of the New York based non-profit EcoHealth Alliance, which funded controversial experiments in **Wuhan** which some fear started the pandemic, presented the **discovery of a never-before-seen virus** with 'almost' as much potential to infect humans as Covid.

Dr Daszak, a friend of Dr **Anthony Fauci**, the ex-chief medical advisor to the US President, revealed his team have already found one bat coronavirus of considerable interest.

'We found a lot of SARS-related coronaviruses, but one in particular we found was quite common in bats where people were commonly exposed,' he told the WHO event, attended by MailOnline.

[Malaysia](#)
[New Jersey](#)
[Dr Anthony Fauci](#)
[Covid-19](#)

Share or comment on this article: Chinese scientists 'create' a mutant coronavirus strain that attacks the BRAIN and has a 100% kill rate in mice - as they admit there's a 'risk it spills over to humans'

8.7k shares

Add comment

1.4K Comments

32 Viewing

Comments are subject to our [House Rules](#)

Log in

Enter your comment...

Newest Oldest Best rated (422) Worst rated (80)

W **wafflelot** ...
 London, United Kingdom · 2 days ago
 I don't think masks will help!
 Reply · ↑ 160 ↓ 9 · Share

JF **Jimmy Fantabulous** ...
 Philadelphia, United States · 2 days ago

as Good Morning Britain colleague quits



Bronson Battersby's 'devastated' sister does not blame social services for two-year-old's starvation death as she pays tribute to her 'beautiful, sweet-natured'...



JAN MOIR: Harry and Meghan are like two eager limpets sucking nutrients off the rusty hull of the Royal Yacht Britannia Exposed



Music legend is lined up to become new coach on The Voice UK after Ollie Murs' shock axing from the panel An American country music star



Heidi Klum's eldest son Henry, 18, TOWERS over the supermodel, 50, as she larks around with husband Tom Kaulitz, 34, on family walk in NYC



Police dig up car park in Gibraltar in search for body of 'Frankenstein killer victim' who vanished from Royal Navy ship 37 years ago - as missing sailor's pare...



As Brooklyn Beckham launches a pop-up takeaway in London, how the nepo baby will try anything to forge his own path New venture



These evil monsters deserve nothing less than death: BETHANY MANDEL unleashes her burning maternal fury on the seven Texas pedophiles who filmed themselves gang...



Gary Neville gets rave reviews for appearance on Dragon's Den as some viewers label him as a 'good bloke', while others call for him to get a permanent gig



Fresh snub for Harry and Andrew as Buckingham Palace quietly sidelines princes from serving as Counsellors of State to step in for King Charles in the latest hu...



Perrie Edwards sends fans WILD as she poses with her entourage in 'behind-the-scenes music video' snap... weeks after revealing solo work is 'pending'