

## Disease X is a 'big risk' to the world

13th March, 2018



Scientists from the World Health Organization (WHO) say the world is possibly at risk from a deadly disease. However, they do not know its name or what it does and looks like. They have called it 'Disease X'. It could be caused by a virus or other micro-organism that scientists don't yet know about. The WHO said Disease X could go unnoticed until it is too late and it is quickly spreading around the world. The WHO is taking the threat of Disease X seriously. It is putting a lot of money into research and is preparing a plan for a sudden outbreak. It said: "Disease X represents the knowledge that a serious international epidemic could be caused by a [virus] currently unknown to cause human disease."

The scientists said that Disease X could come from many different sources. It could come from existing diseases changing and becoming strong enough to resist our vaccines; it could come from terrorism and bio-weapons; it could also come from scientists using DNA-changing technology to make entirely new viruses. The biggest threat could come from animals. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said: "Scientists estimate that more than 6 out of every 10 known infectious diseases in people are spread from animals." These include Ebola, avian flu and mad cow disease. Everyone living closer together in cities and increasing international travel and tourism will make it easier for diseases to spread.

Sources: [techtimes.com](http://techtimes.com) / [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk) / [nypost.com](http://nypost.com)

## Writing

Scientists will always be able to cure diseases. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / at risk / disease / virus / too late / a lot of money / outbreak / plan / sources / strong / terrorism / animals / infectious / flu / living closer / travel / tourism

## True / False

- a) WHO Scientists warned of a possible deadly disease. T / F
- b) The name 'Disease X' is because scientists don't know what it is. T / F
- c) Scientists say the disease will not be in the form of a virus. T / F
- d) The WHO is spending lots of money on researching Disease X. T / F
- e) Disease X could be an existing disease that gets much stronger. T / F
- f) Disease X will definitely not come from terrorists. T / F
- g) Over 70% of infectious diseases in humans are from animals. T / F
- h) People living in cities will reduce the spread of a disease. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>at risk</b>        | a. guess         |
| 2. <b>preparing</b>      | b. fight against |
| 3. <b>sudden</b>         | c. bring about   |
| 4. <b>knowledge</b>      | d. global        |
| 5. <b>cause</b>          | e. getting ready |
| 6. <b>resist</b>         | f. understanding |
| 7. <b>entirely</b>       | g. communicable  |
| 8. <b>estimate</b>       | h. in danger     |
| 9. <b>infectious</b>     | i. totally       |
| 10. <b>international</b> | j. unexpected    |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) How worried are you about deadly viruses?
- b) What do you know about viruses?
- c) Are you careful about keeping germs away?
- d) What do you think about Disease X?
- e) What do you think of the name 'Disease X'?
- f) What would you do if there was a sudden epidemic?
- g) How dangerous are viruses?
- h) Will scientists destroy all viruses one day?

# Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

1. the world is possibly at risk
  2. a virus or another micro-
  3. The WHO is taking the threat of Disease X
  4. preparing a plan for
  5. a serious international
  6. strong enough to resist our
  7. The biggest threat could
  8. infectious
  9. increasing international travel
  10. make it easier for diseases
- a. come from animals
  - b. and tourism
  - c. epidemic
  - d. diseases
  - e. to spread
  - f. seriously
  - g. organism
  - h. vaccines
  - i. a sudden outbreak
  - j. from a deadly disease

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What's the worst virus you've ever had?
- c) How serious is the threat from bio-weapons?
- d) How dangerous is DNA-changing technology?
- e) How can we stop animals from spreading diseases?
- f) Is it better to live in the countryside to avoid diseases?
- g) Should there be a travel ban if there is an epidemic?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

## Spelling

1. the world is ossibly at risk
2. a adedly disease
3. caused by a irvus
4. quickly aresdipng around the world
5. plan for a sudden uboertak
6. a serious international iipmeedc
7. come from many different ourcses
8. strong enough to resist our aiccnvcs
9. it could come from orrtriesm
10. scientists sieamtte that...
11. neiitcofus diseases
12. international travel and outisrm

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. f	5. c
6. b	7. i	8. a	9. g	10. d

## Role Play

### Role A – Stay Indoors

You think staying indoors is the best thing to do in an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): moving to the mountains, keeping the news on or wearing a mask.

### Role B – Move to the Mountains

You think moving to the mountains is the best thing to do in an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): staying indoors, keeping the news on or wearing a mask.

### Role C – Keep the News on

You think keeping the news on is the best thing to do in an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): moving to the mountains, staying indoors or wearing a mask.

### Role D – Wear a Mask

You think wearing a mask is the best thing to do in an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): moving to the mountains, keeping the news on or staying indoors.

## Speaking – Epidemic

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to do during an epidemic at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- boil all food
- drink lots of water
- go to the hospital
- move to the mountains
- stay indoors
- keep the news on
- close all windows
- wear a mask

### Answers – True False

a T	b T	c F	d T	e T	f F	g F	h F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.