

CORONAVIRUS: A GUIDE

FROM A SPANISH MED STUDENT

NOT A DOCTOR YET



@ondasdeltas

With SARS-CoV-2, or COVID-19, misinformation is everywhere. Now, more than ever, it's important to be well-informed to keep ourselves safe. There is a lot of confusion and plain false rumors that can actually worsen the impact of the outbreak.

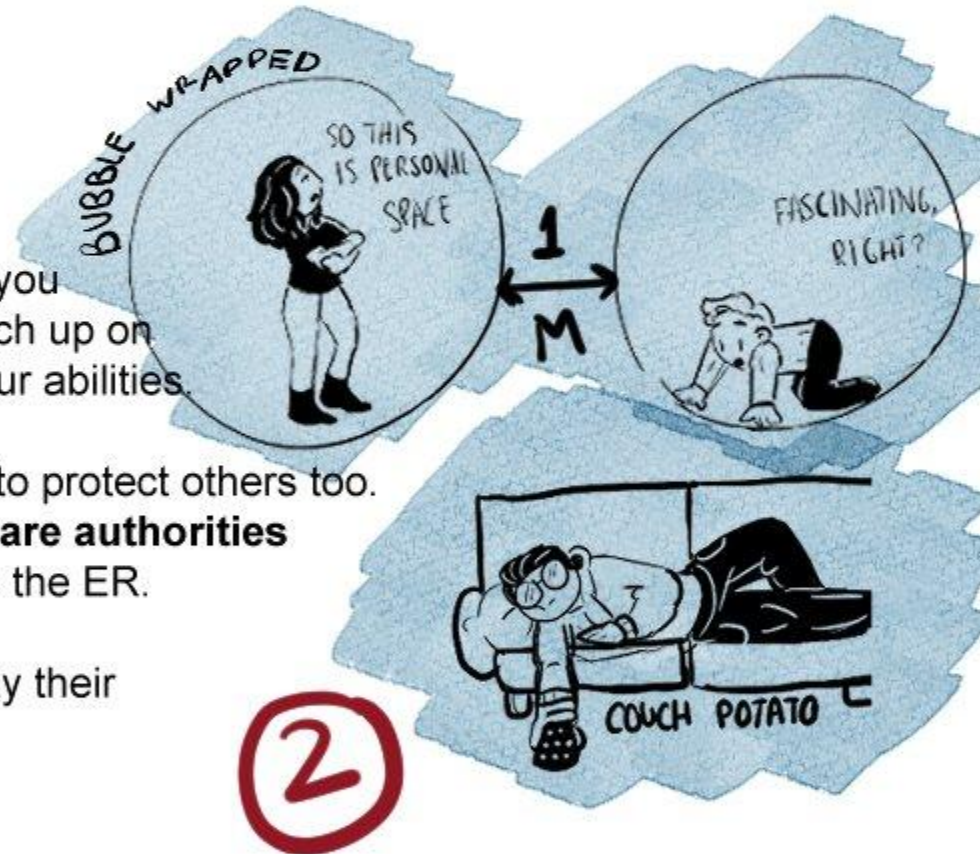
So, here is a brief research-based guide touching upon misconceptions, preventive measures and general data from your friendly not-so-local med student.

→ PREVENTIVE MEASURES



1. How to sneeze or cough

Remember to **cough into your elbow or a disposable tissue!** This way your hands don't get covered in saliva, protecting those around you.



2. Social distancing

The less you expose yourself to potential cases, the less likely you are to get sick. This is an excellent time to stay indoors and catch up on your favorite show to **avoid conglomerations** to the best of your abilities.

If you have respiratory symptoms, you should **self-quarantine** to protect others too. If you believe you **might have been infected**, **contact healthcare authorities** through the proper channels. Don't use public transport to go to the ER.

Also, when interacting with others, **stay 1 meter away**. This way their droplets of saliva are less likely to reach you. This includes **no kissing or hugging!**



3. Hand hygiene

See the common theme? This virus is **transmitted through saliva**, and our hands play an important role in getting us sick.

They are how we interact with the world, so they pick up all the nasty stuff along the way. This is why it is so important to **avoid touching your face**. Don't give Coronavirus an easy way in through your mouth or nose.

Similarly, **proper hand washing techniques are a must**. Wash your hands with soap or hand sanitizer when you enter or leave a room, or are going to eat. The more you wash them, the less likely you are to accidentally touch your face with a dirty hand.

Go to https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/ for more info on how to wash your hands.

Most common symptoms of SARS-COV-2 are:

- **Fever** ($\geq 37,3^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- **Coughing**
- Difficulty breathing
- Tiredness
- Productive cough

→ SYMPTOMS



Up to 94% of patients in a Wuhan-based study had a fever on admission
Around 80% had a cough.

IMPORTANT: NOT ALL INFECTED CASES HAVE SYMPTOMS.

Keep yourself and others safe by practicing good hygiene.

Age is the most important risk factor.

Mortality rates go up significantly amongst the elderly.

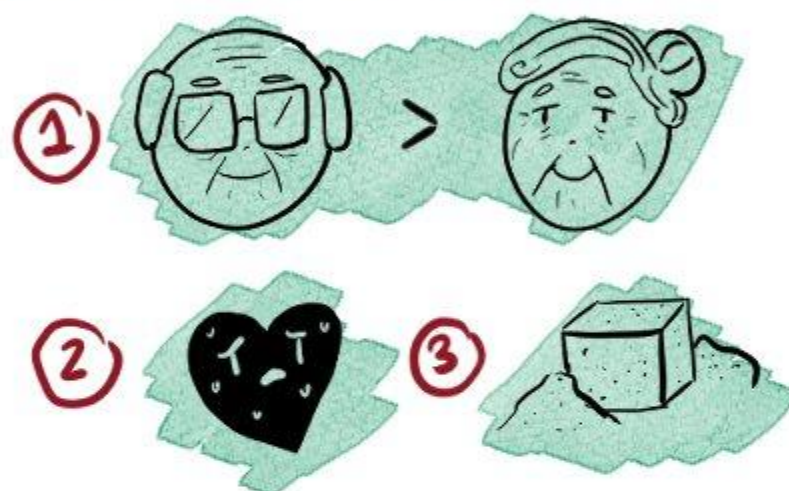
Men also seem to fall sick more often than women

Those with chronic illness also face a higher risk.

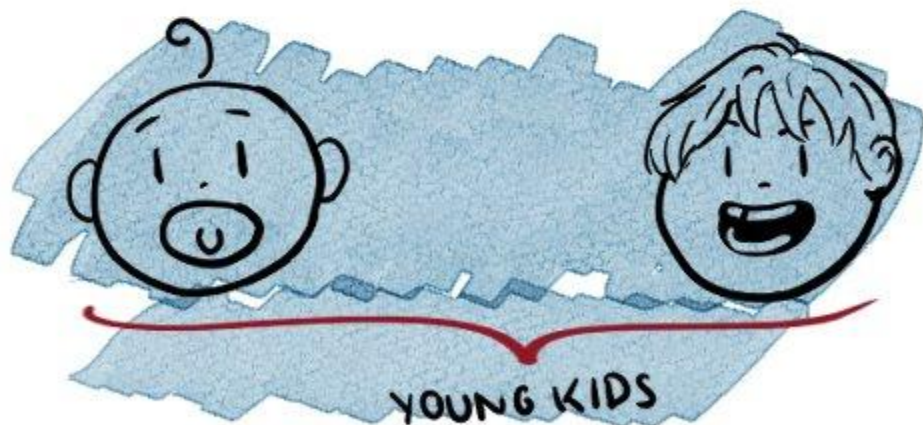
Hypertension and **diabetes** are two of the most frequent comorbidities found in patients.

If your loved one is at risk, try to limit how much contact they have with public spaces. You can deliver their groceries to them, for example.

→ AT RISK GROUPS



→ WHAT ABOUT THE YOUNG AND HEALTHY?



Children can get infected and infect others.
However, data tells us they rarely develop a serious condition.
They might have little to no symptoms.



Young healthy people generally have low mortality rates.
This does not mean that you cannot die from this, just that you are less likely to.

Don't be complacent, think of the vulnerable people.

No one is immune to SARS-Cov-2.

→ WHY IS PREVENTION IMPORTANT?

A lot of people question why countries like China have such strict measures to stop the virus if the mortality rate isn't "that high".



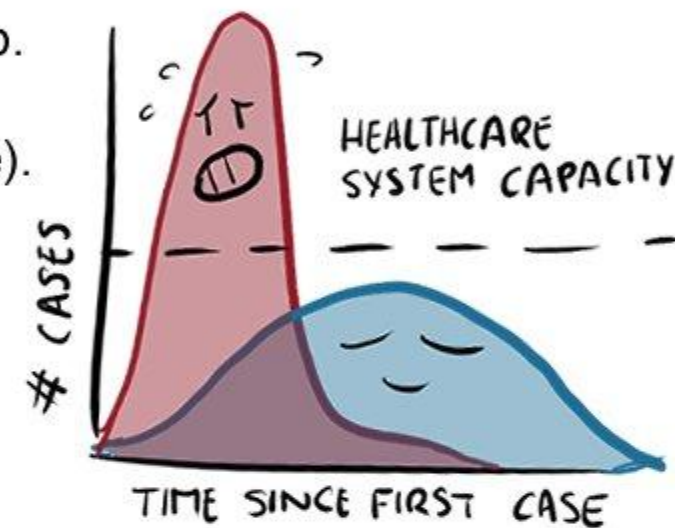
You need to understand that this is a **highly contagious new virus** we haven't fought before, with no vaccines or known treatments to help. On top of that, around **5-10% of patients need ICU care**.

Combine it all and you get **collapsed healthcare services**. That is, unless you **#FlattenTheCurve**.

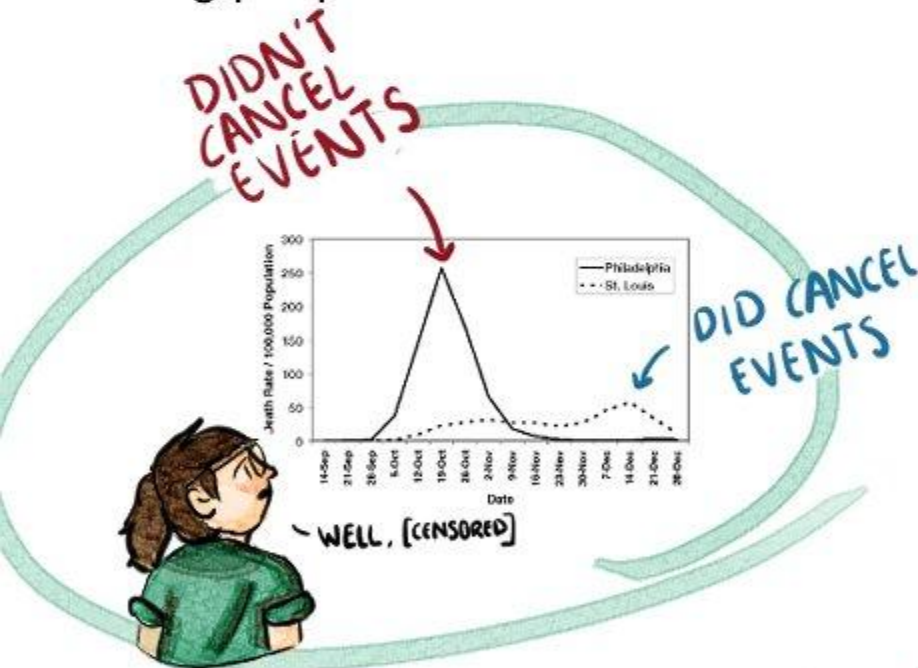
This is an epidemic curve, used to look at how epidemics develop. If a disease spreads too fast, the curve is thin and tall (red). By **slowing down transmission**, the curve becomes flatter (blue).

You give hospitals a rest and so **mortality goes down**.

Instead of facing a tsunami of patients, they face a gentler wave. They have enough available resources to take care of everyone, including people without COVID-19.



This is what China wanted to accomplish by shutting down Hubei.



Look at this graph, illustrating Spanish flu deaths in **St. Louis** and **Philadelphia** in 1918. Can you guess which city cancelled class and parades and which one didn't?

THIS IS NOT A TYPICAL FLU

Lastly, **this isn't just a regular flu**.

It's not even the same virus causing it. COVID-19 presentations can range from:

- A cold or flu-like symptoms
- Pneumonia and other life-threatening situations.
- Anything in between

You shouldn't panic.

And **you shouldn't underestimate COVID-19** either.

If hospitals collapse, more people die.

Not only from COVID-19, but also from other urgent conditions that won't receive proper care.

→ ON MISINFORMATION

You have probably heard it all, from people saying this is the end of times to others acting like this is just a funny meme.

Neither is true.

CLICKBAIT = €€€



This is a serious situation, and it has and will impact a lot of people. While we are not all going to die, we cannot say that the outbreak is blown out of proportion.

While moving forward, it is extremely important to **be critical** of what you read. Don't trust blindly anything sent to you, **investigate** for yourself and **check in with reliable sources**. Clicks get money, so online media is not shy when it comes to outlandish articles. Don't listen to influencers or celebrities, they don't know what they are talking about.

Here's a brief list of fake rumors going around

- COVID-19 will go away once it gets warmer. (No one has proven this, yet.)
- Drinking hot liquid can destroy the virus. (It'd have to be hot enough to burn your throat.)
- Surgical masks are useless. (They aren't, they are used to prevent from infecting others.)
- Surgical masks will make me not get sick. (No, they prevent a sick person from infecting others more than the other way around.)
- This is a Russian tactic to distract from US elections. (No. Just no.)

→ LONG STORY SHORT

- Prevention is key
- Isolation is key
- You have the responsibility to not get others sick
- This isn't every man for themselves. Fighting this outbreak will be a community effort.

SOURCES

- Coronavirus (CoV) GLOBAL [Internet]. World Health Organization. World Health Organization; [cited 2020Mar11]. Available from: <https://www.who.int/es/health-topics/coronavirus>
- Zhou F, Yu T, Du R, Fan G, Liu Y, Liu Z, et al. Clinical course and risk factors for mortality of adult inpatients with COVID-19 in Wuhan, China: a retrospective cohort study. The Lancet [Internet]. 2020Mar11; Available from: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30566-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30566-3/fulltext)
- Anderson RM, Heesterbeek H, Klinkenberg D, Hollingsworth TD. How will country-based mitigation measures influence the course of the COVID-19 epidemic? The Lancet [Internet]. 2020Mar9; Available from: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30567-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30567-5/fulltext)