

## COVID-19

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There has been a significant amount of information being spread through social media regarding COVID-19, including some misconceptions and misunderstandings. Over the past week, I have felt the need to decipher some of this. Sadly, misinformation has had a detrimental effect on the minds of many – with some concerned of an approaching apocalypse. We have seen people clearing grocery store shelves, amplified racist attitudes, a significant global economic down turn along with many cancelled public gatherings. By no means am I minimizing the threat or potential issues associated with COVID-19.

The frail, elderly and those who are immune-compromised or those with cardiovascular, diabetic or respiratory issues are at the highest risk. We need to do the best to protect them. “Flattening the Curve” by reducing exposure will prove prudent to saving lives. Recent measures in Canada to shut down public events, schools and other mass gatherings is the right thing to do.

Epidemiologists predict that in the next three to four years, you or someone you know will be infected with COVID-19. When it happens – be calculated, be properly educated, and most importantly, be aware that the vast majority of symptoms will be mild in nature.

Abdul Sharakaway, a physician and Infectious Disease Specialist, says it best in his post on March 5, 2020.

*“COVID-19 is nowhere near over. It will be coming to a city, a hospital, a friend, even a family member near you at some point. Expect it. Stop waiting to be surprised further. The fact is the virus itself will not likely do much harm when it arrives. But our own behaviors and “fight for yourself above all else” attitude could prove disastrous.”*

Samuel Paul Veissiere, Ph.D., Interdisciplinary Anthropologist and Cognitive Scientist uses a numbers game to explain his viewpoint.

*“Ask yourself the following: Would you feel confident taking an over-the counter medication if you were 98% sure it would work safely? Would you dare to gamble all your savings in a one-off scheme in which you had 98% percent change of losing it all? The coronavirus is a similar no-brainer. As a generic member of the human species, you have about the same odds of dying of the coronavirus as winning in the gambling scenario. These are overall rates, meaning that unless you are already in poor health, are very old, or very young, the odds for you are much lower or next to nil.”*

## What are the symptoms of coronavirus?

The coronavirus can remain latent anywhere from 2-14 days meaning people who are infected may not show signs or symptoms immediately. Symptoms can also be very similar to the flu. Please keep in mind that many cases of COVID-19 are mild and most people will make a full recovery.

Symptoms can include the following primary symptoms; however, secondary symptoms may also exist:

Primary Symptoms	Secondary Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fever</li><li>• cough</li><li>• shortness of breath</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• headache</li><li>• muscular stiffness and pain</li><li>• loss of appetite</li><li>• malaise</li><li>• extreme fatigue</li><li>• chills</li><li>• confusion</li><li>• dizziness</li><li>• rash</li><li>• night sweats</li><li>• stomach upset / nausea and diarrhea</li></ul>

## How can you protect yourself from COVID-19?

**The best thing in defending yourself is to avoid contact with the virus and to support your body's natural ability to fight infection** There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illness. Take these steps every day to reduce exposure and protect your health.. I recommend the following:

### Hygiene Practices:

- Wash hands often with soap and water or alcohol based sanitizer – can alternatively use an all natural ingredient-based tea tree / aloe compound such as Nature's Aid Gel. Always wash your hands before eating or before / after touching your face.
- Sneeze and cough into your sleeve or into a tissue and dispose the tissue.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay at home if you are sick (cough, fever, runny nose, sinus congestion, body aches)
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or immuno-compromised.
- Avoid travelling to areas that are known COVID-19 hot spots.

## Lifestyle Practices:

In addition to these hygiene practices it is also important to build a strong immunity from the inside through a healthy lifestyle. Remember, it takes large amounts of resources and energy for the body to fight infection. We need to give it all it can to support its ability to fight and reduce things that weaken the body.

- **Reduce or eliminate sugar** (including high fructose corn syrup, brown sugars, cane sugars, date sugar, palm sugar etc.) – honey and maple syrup are okay to consume in small amounts.
  - A single teaspoon of sugar can severely depress the immune system for 1-3 hours.
- **Drink approximately 2000ml water / day** (for adults) as water helps to hydrate the body and also push viral compounds and bacteria into the stomach where they will be destroyed by stomach acid.
  - Staying hydrated can also provide the body with a natural dilution factor and also assists the body to eliminate toxins and other bacteria that may cause illness.
- **Avoid all processed foods** (foods with ingredients that you cannot understand) - These will not provide the necessary nutrients to strengthen the immune system and will often suppress the immune system from working at its optimal level.
- **Reduce or avoid dairy products** as they are mucous and phlegm forming and provide a breeding ground for germs to live within the body (and mucous membranes) (Note: yoghurt, butter and ghee are acceptable) –reduce or avoid wheat / gluten containing products
- **Eliminate fruit juices and pop drinks** (all types even freshly squeezed due to the high sugar content)
- **Reduce as much as possible coffee and alcoholic beverages** as these reduced immune organ function and often include sugars which also suppress the immune system.
- **Do not use the microwave** to re-heat or cook food as this destroys most nutrients in the food.
- **No gum or mints** since this reduces stomach acid affecting digestion and reducing the body's ability to kill viruses and bacteria once they enter the bowel.
- **Eat protein** 2 servings (2-3oz each) per x day as they are essential to building a strong immune system.
- **Eat vegetables** with each meal (50% of the meal) as they are loaded with vitamins and minerals to support immune tissue within the body.

- **Get 7-8 hours of sleep per night minimum** – infection fighting antibodies and protective proteins called cytokines are lowered during periods of reduced sleep.
- **Say active** (brisk walks or other forms of exercise) as it promotes good circulation allowing the cells and substances of the immune system to move through the body and do their job more effectively.
- **Try to minimize stress** as ongoing stress makes us susceptible to illness and disease. Under stress, the brain sends signals to the endocrine system which releases an array of hormones (such as cortisol) that only prepare us for emergency situations but also severely depress the immune system at the same time. 4-5 minutes of guided meditation 2 x day can help with this.
- **DON'T WAIT** if you have symptoms – start supporting your immune system immediately with vitamins, sock therapy (below) and the lifestyle choices (above).

The best thing to come of COVID-19 is that it will make us more aware, now more than ever before, when it comes to infectious disease and prevention through lifestyle measures. The body has the capacity to heal and fight illness. We have to do our part to support it and take time to review what we are doing on a daily basis that will negatively impact our immune system. This is a great opportunity to educate ourselves, our children and friends on what we can do to support ourselves as we have direct control over this on a daily basis not only protect ourselves but especially the ones that are most at risk.

## **Naturopathic Support**

A holistic approach to health and disease prevention is very effective in building a strong immune system. For a personalized approach to immune support and dealing with COVID-19, please contact the office and one of our naturopathic doctors would be happy to provide you and your family with a strategy. Phone consultations will also be available should you choose to have one.

Some of the suggestions for building a strong immunity are below:

## **Primary Supplementation\***

### **Vitamin C 1000mg (3-4 capsules x day (to bowel tolerance))**

- immune stimulation, anti-viral

### **Vitamin D 1000IU / day**

- immune stimulation, anti-viral

### **Vitamin B12 1000mcg / day**

- immune stimulation, reduces viral replication

### **Probiotic Capsules**

- intestinal gut health which balances and supports whole body immunity

## **Secondary Supplementation\***

### **OPTIONAL: Zinc – 25mg / day**

- immune support and tissue repair

### **OPTIONAL: Selenium 200mcg / day**

- antioxidant which lowers oxidative stress on the body, reduces inflammation and enhances immunity

### **OPTIONAL: Lymphdiaral Drops – 25 drops morning and evening away from meals**

- stimulates lymphatic flow to help drain toxicity and support the immune system

### **OPTIONAL: Oil of Oregano – 5 drops in the mouth and gargle with water 2 x day (if sick can increase to 5 x day)**

- used for BACTERIAL INFECTIONS which may also come at the same time as viral infection

*\* adults only, those with pre-existing conditions or are taking medications should consult the naturopathic doctor*

## **Sock Therapy: Manual Lymphatic Drainage Stimulation**

This therapy is for any kind of cough, chest congestion, nasal congestion, fever, headache, ear ache or general body pain. Remember, the fever is the body's main defense in fighting viruses and it is important to stay warm, hydrated and perform this technique to boost the immune system and support the body's ability to fight.

*(NOTE: use discretion in monitoring the fever for indicators that you should go to Emergency such as extreme body pain, delirium, faintness, shortness of breath or if symptoms continue to get worse)*

### **Warming Sock Therapy – apply this therapy before bed**

**DO THIS THERAPY IMMEDIATELY WHEN SYMPTOMS OCCUR  
CONTINUE PROTOCOL EACH DAY UNTIL SYMPTOMS SUBSIDE**

- take a pair of thin cotton socks / dress socks
- soak them or run them under cold water
- wring them until almost dry (but still damp and cold)
- put them on feet
- take a pair of dry cotton socks (can be thicker) and place them over the cold socks
- go to bed

*By morning both the feet and the socks will be hot and dry and the congestion will be better – lymphatic drainage from the blood rushing to heat up the feet pulls debris from the head and throat area and also acts as a powerful stimulant of the immune system.*

## **Stay Informed:**

To help you stay informed on this rapidly evolving situation both the Canadian and Ontario governments are closely monitoring the outbreak. They have several online resources you should be aware of:

Public Health Ontario's coronavirus web

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

Public Health Agency of Canada's coronavirus web page for health professionals:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals.html>

CDC - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>