



## A GUIDE TO SURVIVING POST-LOCKDOWN PANDEMIC, COVID-19 MYTH BUSTERS, AND A SHORT SUMMARY OF COVID-19.

### Epidemiology

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to provide a realistic guide to surviving the post-lockdown pandemic, address certain misconceptions and myth busters about the pandemic and the vaccines, and also to provide a brief summary of the covid-19 Pandemic. This articles is primarily intended to combine & gather facts from trustworthy sources and opinions from medical professionals and to present them in a simple summarized manner which can be applicable and useful to the readers in practical day-to-day life situations. The links to many of the references used in this article will be listed at the end of the article. It is important to note that even though many of the points discussed below are from genuine sources and backed by research and evidence, this article does contain some of our own opinions as medical professionals, and it is never harmful to do due diligence when it comes to import subjects like this pandemic.

### KEYWORDS

#### INTRODUCTION

The SARS-COV-2 (Severe acute respiratory syndrome related Coronavirus-2) also known as “**Covid-19**” was first reported to have affected a human in Wuhan, china Around November 2019. The Chinese authorities notified “WHO” in December 2019 about the disease that was quickly spreading in their communities, but soon enough within the next few weeks, the virus had already spread to multiple other countries, and the number of infected people started to double in a short amount of time. The virus is named “Corona virus”, because when looked at microscopically its outer structure looks like a “CROWN”.

There have already been other forms of Corona virus's which have existed in animals, and birds, but they have not been able to infect humans because it requires an intermediate host before it can infect the humans. So far we have no concrete knowledge or proof regarding the intermediate host of the virus from “bats” to humans, this is why there are many conspiracy theories and discussions about the possible Laboratory origins of the virus. However at this point in time we have no concrete evidence to prove either sides of the argument regarding its origin.

So what is special about this particular virus that has created havoc in this short amount of time? The main two reasons as to why the SARS COV-2 is extremely dangerous are:

1. The mode of spread of the virus is through aerosol Droplets, meaning that it can be expelled from a person's oral/nasal cavity into the air and spread to another person through the droplet on their bodily surface.
2. It can also exists on surfaces from anywhere between 2-6 hours depending on the nature of the surface.

This makes the virus extremely mobile and easy to spread from one person to the other. Also after it enters the body it attacks the epithelial cells of the Lungs by connecting to the cell membranes via ACE2 receptors and injects the genetic material into the cells, which then carries out the function of copy and paste of that genetic material within the cell up to a point where the healthy cell is overpowered by the virus cells and eventually the healthy cell shuts down. After the cell dies, all the virus cells attack the adjacent healthy cells and this process is multiplied rapidly into millions of other cells.

Now when it completely overpowers the lungs and destroys a large amount of cells, the human body's own immune system gets overwhelmed and activates an extreme destruction mode. Now when the immune cells get infected with the virus, it triggers thousands of “Neutrophils” and “Killer T cells” which start killing all the cells including the healthy ones, and this causes permanent scarring of lung tissue which may be irreversible. When you add other co-morbidities and old age into the mix, it's a recipe for disaster.

The reason why even many first world countries are unable to control

the spread of the virus is because the only real way to stop the virus is to be in a lockdown until everyone is vaccinated, and this is not feasible in many ways.

#### Covid-19 Myth busters

When facing a pandemic of this magnitude, it is extremely important to be aware of the essential facts regarding the virus and to have complete clarity. Misconceptions and misinformation can be fatal. Addressed below are certain myth busters/misconceptions regarding the virus and the pandemic?

**1. Why am I testing positive even after getting the vaccine?** It is possible that you may already have been infected by the virus many days before you receive the vaccine, also the incubation period for the virus is quite long (up to 14 days or more in recent cases). Also even a few months after receiving the vaccine, your body can still be infected by the virus, but you will have the antibodies through the vaccine to fight the virus, hence you can still test positive to the virus, but that does not mean that the vaccine doesn't work.

**2. Can I infect others after I have had both the doses of the vaccine?** **YES**, even though you may not have any symptoms you can still be infected by the virus after receiving the vaccine, and can easily spread to others in the family and community. So it is extremely important to take precautionary measures, such as regular hand washing/sanitizing, masking and double masking, regular change of used masks, regular washing of clothes, social distancing etc.

**3. Can antibiotics help kill the virus/symptoms?** **NO**. Covid-19 has been confirmed to be a virus multiple times by many experts in various countries. An antibiotic drug can only work on bacteria, and not viruses. Some people infected by the virus may be given Prophylactic antibiotics based on their comorbidities and medical History to prevent super infections (additional infections apart from the primary virus), but antibiotics cannot be used as a treatment to COVID-19.

**4. Can Ayurveda formulations and natural home remedies be useful against the virus?** A simple answer to this question at this point in time is **NO**. There has not been enough research done yet to prove or disprove the role and effectiveness of natural and other remedies against Covid-19 and therefore we should not take a risk with those until we have any concrete proof.

**5. Can lying on your stomach (Prone position), improve breathing in covid-19 patients having difficulty breathing?** **YES**, there have been many studies done which state that lying on your stomach can facilitate better breathing, but it should be done under supervision and in consultation with your doctor if possible.

**6. Is Remdesivir effective against COVID-19 for all patients?** **NO**, Remdesivir is a broad spectrum antiviral drug given intravenously to mainly hospitalized patients. The fact is that there is still not enough

research and study done to categorically form a guideline for the use of Remdesivir in COVID-19 Patients. There have been cases where patients mildly/moderately affected by the virus have shown 31% more improvement than others and the hospital stay has also been reduced. This may be because the primary function of Remdesivir is to stop the replication of the virus into the body, hence when used in some patients at a moderate stage of disease progression, it can be beneficial. Having said that it is extremely important not to self-use Remdesivir, especially when bought from unauthentic sources as it can seriously be fatal. The use of Remdesivir is of greatest benefit when limited to hospitalized patients and under Doctor's supervision.

**7.Can I die from the Coronavirus vaccination?** There are many misconceptions regarding the Vaccines. The corona virus vaccines are not live vaccinations, meaning that the vaccines do not contain any live antigens of the virus, hence it will not infect you with the virus. There have been rare cases where individuals have passed away after taking the vaccine due to many complications, but this is a very minute percentage of people well less than 0.0001%. There have been no facts to suggest that the vaccine is harmful or fatal. The fact is that there is far greater risk of dying from corona virus than from the vaccines.

**8.Can large amounts of oral alcohol consumption kill the virus in the body?** NO, it has been proven many times now that oral consumption of alcohol will not kill the virus, and can cause severe life threatening conditions if done so. The alcohol used for recreational consumption is very different to the alcohol used in hand wash and sanitizers. There may be up to 80% alcohol in the hand sanitizers and is not advisable to consume it or the commercial consumption of alcohol as a remedy against the virus.

**9.Can a mother diagnosed with COVID pass the virus onto the newborn?** NO, so far there have not been many cases where there has been a transmission of the virus from mother to the newborn during pregnancy. However it can be transmitted to the baby after birth if the mother is infected.

**10.Can a mother diagnosed with COVID-19 breastfeed the newborn?** YES, so far the virus has not been observed to be present in the breast milk. A mother infected with Covid Should be encouraged to breastfeed the child after taking regular precautions such as double masking, thorough hand hygiene with alcohol based rub etc.

#### **A guide to surviving post-lockdown Pandemic**

As we have seen recently how difficult it has been to contain the spread of coronavirus, and many countries briefly free from the virus have constantly been having to switch in and out of short lockdowns. Long term lockdowns are not feasible and many people will and already are having to step outside their homes for work and survival despite having coronavirus cases in their city/suburbs.

So here below we will discuss what steps can be taken to minimise the risk of getting infected when having to manoeuvre around in a city with active covid-cases. All the steps discussed here are evidence based and from credible sources.

It is extremely important to note that Vaccination is the best possible cure we have against the virus and whenever it is available to you, you should get vaccinated immediately. The steps mentioned below are as protective measures for people to practice on top of the vaccination, and for those who have not had any vaccination.

**1. Double-Masking:** According to the CDC (Centres for disease control and prevention), double masking can significantly improve your protection against the virus. But it has to be practised in a specific manner

- The inner mask should be a surgical mask, and fitted properly covering above the nose and below the chin at all times. The wire at the top end of the mask should be gently pressed to fit around the curvature of the nose, and make sure there is no loose end from where air/Droplets and easily enter your mask.
- Then the second mask on top of the surgical mask should be bigger mask with up to 2 ply's of protection and covering a greater surface than the inner surgical mask. Ideally a cloth mask could be used as the second mask on top and again should be fitted tightly enough to not have any spaces or pockets of easy penetration, but not too tight to cause breathing difficulties.
- Thorough hand wash and hand hygiene should be performed

before applying the masks, every time you touch it, and after discarding it.

- The outer clothed mask should be washed in soap water after a full day of use before reusing it, and the inner surgical mask should be replaced ideally every 4 hours ideally.
- **When double masking is practised in the manner discussed above, it can be said to have close to 90% protection from the aerosol droplets.**
- The safest mask giving maximum protection is the N95 Mask with 95% protection, but it is very expensive and ideally recommended for healthcare workers and those dealing closely with the virus. However if available and affordable it can be used in crowded places for maximum protection, but discarded after single use.

**2. Hand Hygiene:** Hand hygiene can prove to be one of the single most effective tools for protection against the virus.

- As a general rule, perform hand wash, hand sanitization every time you touch an unknown surface outside of home, every time you touch your mask or face, every time you touch another person, before eating, after removing/discarding a mask.
- As mentioned in this article the virus has the structure and capability to adhere to a surface without being denatured for a significant period of time. So as the double masking will protect you from the virus entering through the mouth or nose, regular hand hygiene will ensure that you do not get infected via the virus particles settled on a surface you may have been in contact with.

**3. Social Distancing:** everyone has probably heard this term innumerable times recently and possibly sick of hearing it, but it is mentioned regularly everywhere for a reason. As simple as it may sound, if you are distanced from a person potentially infected with the virus, you will increase your chances of being free from the virus. Keep at least two feet distance wherever possible especially in public transport and crowded places.

**4. Regular disinfection of the house and vehicles:** It is advisable to clean the frequently used surfaces in the household multiple times a day with disinfectant wipes, or a disinfectant spray and wipe-down. Surfaces such as door knobs, dining tables, cups, utensils, common toilets, windows etc. This will ensure that if a member of the house is infected that they do not spread the virus to all surfaces making other members susceptible.

**5. Vaccination:** Vaccination is the cheapest and best option to secure maximum protection against the fatality of the virus. Depending on where you live the vaccination offered could be free or with minimal charges, and if available you should get vaccinated as soon as possible. Vaccination could save you from hospitalisations and expensive medical bills, as well as severe irreversible damage to your organs. By getting vaccinated you not only will protect yourself but eventually you're family, and everyone around you. There are many misconceptions and false fear spread on social media regarding the safety of the vaccines, however you should do your own research from credible sources before coming to a conclusion regarding extremely important subjects such as the virus and the vaccination.

#### **Positives to take from the pandemic and the near future**

We acknowledge that many lives have been lost and the destruction caused by this pandemic financially, emotionally, and in many other ways will take a long time to recover from. Our condolences go out to everyone who have lost their life to this pandemic and to their family members who have suffered the ultimate loss. It is important to take positives from any situation no matter how grave it may be and important to learn from these situations and from our mistakes so that we are better prepared for any upcoming pandemic in the future.

This pandemic has definitely reminded us of how mortal we are and how we take many basic things in life for granted. The pandemic has also forced us to unite as one, take a step back to self-reflect on our priorities and aspirations.

We need to take this horrendous pandemic as a learning curve both as individuals and as the various governments around the world to improve our health education and the efficiency of our healthcare systems.

It was reported in a recent survey that due to the public masking, the

cases of T.B have significantly decreased, we have had time to spend with our families in otherwise busy lives. We have been able to see how much unnecessary destruction we are causing to the environment on a daily basis. Now it is important to acknowledge and address these issues going forward.

It is still uncertain as to what course the pandemic will take in the near future, but all we can do is take maximum precaution as possible, get vaccinated, use double-masking, practice proper hand hygiene, social distancing, avoid eating outside, avoid unnecessary travel.

This time can be stressful and dangerous for our mental health especially children if necessary steps aren't taken. On the other hand this is a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and use this time to master new hobbies and skills. Children should be encouraged to learn skills which can be used internationally such as communication, technology, personal development etc. Let us all strive together and beat this pandemic collectively, we will definitely come out stronger on the other side when this pandemic ends.

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