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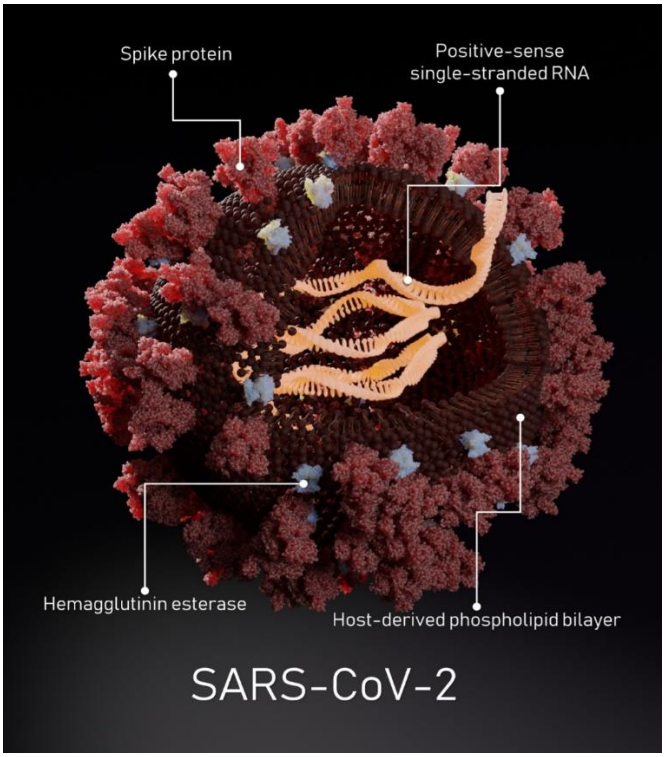
CORONAVIRUS QUICK FACTS: BRACING FOR A PANDEMIC



As all of you know, an outbreak of “Coronavirus” has gripped the world, causing panic and chaos throughout much of the planet. I wanted to take some time and create a “memo” to dispel some rumors or myths that many of you may have heard over the last few weeks. Since we can’t hold large meetings at this time, I will be distributing the weekly safety topics in the form of a “memo”, and discuss these topics in a one-on-one type of setting. What better way to get this process started than covering the cause of all these changes, the Coronavirus.

First of all, many of you may be upset that people are overreacting or panicking due to the Coronavirus. I personally have been following the spread of this virus since early January, and I will admit I have become a bit obsessed about it. Unless you were alive during the Spanish Flu of the early 20th Century, then this is the first true pandemic we are all experiencing in real time. There have been many threatening viruses in recent memory, such as Ebola, HIV, SARS, or H1N1 (Swine Flu), BUT none of them caused this much **immediate** change in our daily lives. Let’s start by taking a look at why the Coronavirus is such a threat to our community.

The “Coronavirus” is actually SARS-CoV-2. As you can see from the picture above, it’s a single strand R.N.A. (Ribonucleic Acid) virus. SARS stands for Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome. CoV stands for Coronavirus. The 2 stands for exactly what you would think, 2. Basically, what we have is a second version of SARS, very similar to the one that caused an outbreak in China and Canada in 2002 and 2003. There are many names that people are using, with Coronavirus being the most common. For scientific purposes, the virus itself is known as SARS-CoV-2, and the disease it causes the body is CoVid-19 (the 19 means it was discovered in 2019). If you were to become infected with SARS-CoV-2, then the disease that you now have is CoVid-19 (Coronavirus Disease-2019). You could compare that analogy with HIV and AIDS. If you become infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), you now have Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Other terms used to name the virus include the Novel Coronavirus (novel = new) or the Chinese Coronavirus. I’m not going to dig in to the origin of the actual virus, but as of now, most scientists believe it originated in the metropolis of Wuhan, China, around November of 2019. To summarize, the “Coronavirus” is a general term being used to describe SARS-CoV-2, or SARS 2, with CoVid-19 being the name of the disease it causes.

On Wednesday, March 11th, the World Health Organization declared a Global Pandemic. Now that a strange virus is spreading quickly throughout the world, let’s take a second to look at what has been done, and why the world may not be overreacting at all. China was the first country to be hit by the virus, as it originated there. China enacted lockdowns and forced quarantines in January, but even the most draconian and far-reaching government interactions, possibly in history, were not enough to stop the spread. The truth is, by the time China admitted what was really going on, too many people had left the country and the virus began to spread pretty heavily throughout the world by the end of January. Iran and Italy have been hit hard, and now other countries, such as Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States have joined the party. It should be said that much of the data from China is simply wrong. We should look at more reliable sources, such as Italy, Spain, and The United States- because the information and data that came out of China simply cannot be trusted. China lied about their numbers, and they lied about the effects of the virus itself (especially possible long-term effects) on the human body.

Let’s take a look at Italy. According to the World Health Organization, Italy has the 2nd ranked healthcare system in the world (U.S.A. is ranked 37th and France is ranked 1st). As of Tuesday, March 17th, Italy has documented 31,506 positive cases of Coronavirus. Of those 31,506 positive cases, 2,503 people have died. Now these are just the documented cases, or positive tests. Think of all the people who could have the virus and are not able to get a test, or are not showing symptoms yet. As more people become infected, the more the virus spreads. This is exactly why the world needs to do everything it can do at the beginning of the virus spread, to slow the virus down. If everyone gets it at once, any countries medical system will get overwhelmed, and many people will end up dying that could have survived if they had received the proper medical attention. Coronavirus causes severe viral Pneumonia, and many people need a ventilator in order to survive. In Italy, older people (over the age of 80), are simply being

left to die, (often given morphine) in the hopes that some of the younger generation can be saved. This brings me to my next point, dispelling the rumor that **Coronavirus only kills old people**.

Let's take a look at this situation closer to home. As of Tuesday, March 17th, there are 4,226 documented cases of Coronavirus in The United States, with 75 deaths so far. What is actually happening here in Colorado? As of Tuesday, March 17th, there are 144 documented positive Coronavirus patients in Colorado. Again, this number is highly misleading, as many people who want to be tested simply cannot find a way to get tested. Of those 144 cases, an estimated 23 are currently said to be in "Intensive Care". A "cluster" seems to have formed in the mountain communities, due to foreigners bringing the virus to the ski slopes. Eagle County has 11 patients alone in need of intensive care. Let's take a look at data from Friday, March 13th. According to the Colorado CoVid Tracker- on that day, 23 new cases were reported in Colorado. Let's take a look at those people's ages:

Teenage – 1

20s – 3

30s – 5

40s – 6

50s – 2

60s – 3

70s – 2

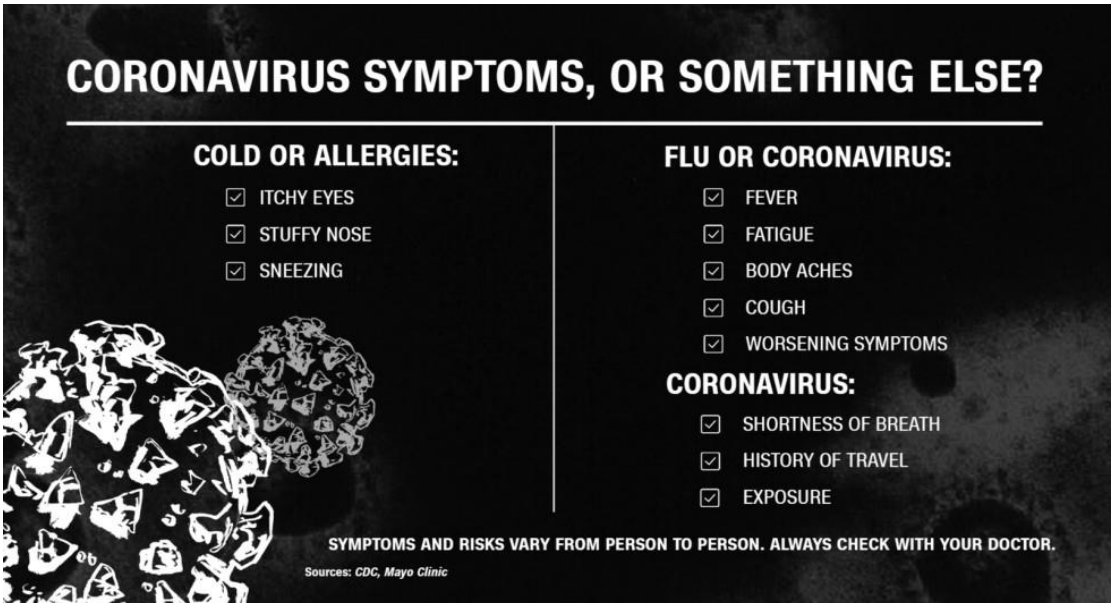
80s – 1

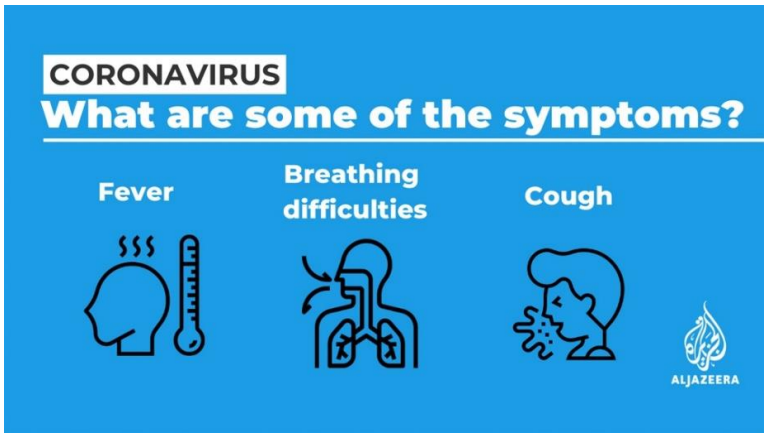
As you can see, of the 23 new cases in Colorado that day, only 1 was over the age of 80. 8 of the 23 cases were people over the age of 50. That means 15 cases, or 65% of all new Coronavirus cases in Colorado on Friday were from people under the age of 50. This is a virus that does not discriminate by age, and I think that the narrative of only "Boomers" are going to die will be proved wrong fairly quickly. The reason why older people die more often from Coronavirus is simply because their bodies are not as suited as younger people to survive infection. Of course, other factors are in play, such as underlying conditions and overall health. There are many documented cases of young people (under the age of 50) dying from Coronavirus all throughout the world. So, we are now coming to a new reality that this virus is here, and it's on our doorstep. Let's now focus on what we can do to help stop the spread of Coronavirus, and flatten the curve to avoid our medical institutions being overrun.

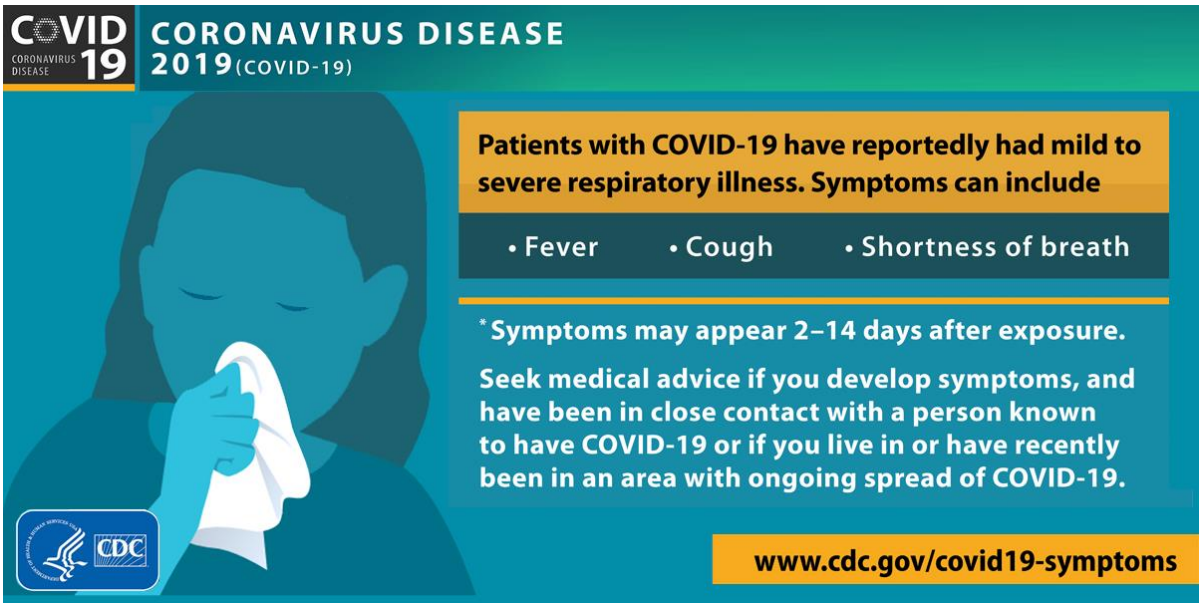
Here are my top 10 tips to help stop the spread:

1. Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer (Keep hand sanitizer in your pocket)
2. Keep your distance from each other (6 Feet)
3. Avoid going into public areas (Other than to buy food or essentials such as gasoline)
4. If you have to go into public areas, wear gloves (Latex or Nitrile) (order on Amazon)
5. Wear a mask or respirator in public areas if possible (Highly "stigmatized" in America)
6. Work from home if possible
7. Wipe down everything you can with disinfectants- **This includes your Phone!**
8. If you are sick, or have been potentially exposed to the virus- **Stay Home!**
9. Cover your coughs and sneezes to avoid droplets spreading- **Do Not Touch Your Face!**
10. Quit pretending you are immune- **Any one of us can be Infected!**

Now that you know what you can do to help stop the spread, let's take a quick look at the symptoms of Coronavirus:







The main difference between Coronavirus and the Flu is shortness of breath, and the type of cough that is produced. Coronavirus is known to produce a “dry”, or “non-productive” cough. If you have Coronavirus and develop Pneumonia, then odds are good that you will need medical attention and could end up in the hospital. I cannot emphasize this enough- **Coronavirus hits hard and it hits quick**. It is literally called **Sudden** Acute Respiratory Syndrome!

Most people and scientists are in agreement that 80% of get Coronavirus victims show mild or no symptoms, and have no long lasting effects. These people usually do not require medical attention. Most people are also in agreement that children seem to be drastically less affected by this virus, and may in fact be “vectors” spreading the disease. The problem is obviously with that other 20%. If 100,000 people in your city get Coronavirus, and 20,000 of them develop serious symptoms, with 8% of them (8,000 in our example) needing a ventilator or assisted breathing- we now have a very serious problem. You can only imagine this on a larger scale in a place like New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, or **Denver**. Tack that on to the fact that it is happening in all these cities, all across America, at the same time!

Schools are closing, people are losing their jobs, and the stock market is crashing. The C.D.C. has now recommended for the next 8 weeks, no gatherings take place in America with more than 50 people. Restaurants and bars are closing all across the U.S., including right here in Colorado! San Francisco is on “lock down”. We will not be able to look back when this is all over and say we “overreacted” or did too much. On the flip side of that, it will be pretty easy to look back and say we did not do enough. This is not fake news. The reason why I personally have been so concerned about this virus, and spreading information about it since January, is simple. I have seen the videos from Wuhan. I have seen the videos from Iran. I have seen the videos from Italy. At times, these videos seem almost fake, they are hard to look at and believe something like that could actually be happening in our world in the year 2020.

At this point, we all need to face our new reality. There is little to no chance your life will not somehow be affected by Coronavirus. If you are like me, it already has affected your life greatly. Let's come together as co-workers and friends, and do what we can to slow this thing down. Many people across America are coming into work today only to find out they have been laid off. Many more Americans will come to face the news of a job loss in the coming weeks. Plumbers cannot work from home. These job losses are only temporary. If you get laid off, **or your hours are cut**, you can apply for unemployment immediately at coloradoui.gov. Our government is doing everything they can to make sure we all get through this pandemic, at least as far as economic ramifications go. Many businesses are being forced to close- just look at any restaurant, bar, or casino in Colorado.

I appreciate in advance all your efforts in response to the Coronavirus. We need to be doing everything we can to make sure we are taking all the possible steps to not infect ourselves, so we do not infect others. Let's all take this thing seriously. At this point in time, it seems that a lot of us will contract Coronavirus in the near future. I hope I'm wrong and life continues as normal. Hopefully this will all blow over in the next few weeks or months, but at this point- that seems pretty unlikely. I will continue to put out updates on policy changes and try to spread any helpful information. It is up to you as an individual to stay in-tune and protect yourself and your family. The best possible thing you can do at this time is to stay home, if possible. That is unfortunately not possible for most of us, due to financial reasons- so be careful out there! Let's show this virus who is boss.

Thank you,

Casey