

## COVID-19 Coronavirus 2020

As you know, there is no vaccine currently for this virus. Several vaccines are being developed but won't likely be available until 2021.

First the bad news. Yes it is coming to a community near you! This virus has been in the US since December 2019. The chances of contracting the virus is pretty high. It is highly contagious and people have the virus, are contagious but don't even know they have it for nearly a week. Because of this it is spreading more rapidly through community contact than most viruses

Now the good news. Though we are all likely to come in contact with it.....over 80% who contract it will have a mild case that passes quickly. Only 20% will have moderate to severe cases and only 1% will have a fatal case resulting in death. Death so far has been associated with COVID-19 plus other immune compromised illnesses or conditions. This means the mortality is no worse than a usual flu outbreak. Most other strains of coronavirus are seasonal and with any luck this one will be as well. As late spring/summer kicks in, the virus should be in decline. The virus seems to be worst for those that are elderly and or those that have other health conditions, but not for healthy people under age 60. Children and infants seem to be pretty mildly affected by the disease.

This virus is in an early stage of Pandemic. Pandemic simply

means the virus is spread via community contact and is found in multiple countries at once. As you might guess, with modern air travel, it doesn't take much for a disease to be categorized a pandemic. It doesn't mean the end of the world, it means it's moving around the world from person to person. So do not panic when you hear the word pandemic. Lots of flu viruses share this classification.

CDC recommends several guidelines for COVID-19. The most important is the following:

- \*avoid close contact (within 5 feet) of sick persons with cold/flu like symptoms.
- \*wash your hands properly and often
- \*avoid touching your face with your hands
- \*disinfect surfaces in your home and workplace counters, door knobs, phones, chairs....
- \*if you become infected, self quarantine and avoid contact with others.
- \*if infected wear an N-95 mask. If it becomes damp, change it and discard the old one. They can be reused by the same individual if they are soaked in disinfectant and allowed to dry thoroughly. Do not share used masks. Wear the mask properly....it should be tight to your face around the outer borders.
- \*Don't panic. This is much like any flu type virus and it will pass.

These guidelines are relevant to any cold or flu virus. It is every individual's responsibility to limit passing our bugs on to other people. Protecting other people will ultimately protect you!