

EDITOR'S NOTE: AAHPO has previously published comprehensive information on novel coronavirus COVID-19. A report released last week, prepared by AAHPO Board Member Tsoline Kojaoghlanian, MD, a pediatric infectious disease specialist, is available by [clicking here](#). Many thanks, as well, to the other AAHPO Board Members who have collaborated on our COVID-19 coverage: Kim Hekimian, PhD, Debra Ferman, MD, Lynn Cetin, MD and AAHPO President Lawrence V. Najarian, MD. Today's newsletter shares additional helpful information regarding COVID-19 and how it may be affecting your family. Additional outstanding sources of information are:

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
[Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center FEMA](#)
[Coronavirus Response](#)

QUESTIONS?

CALL AAHPO: 908-914-5549

info@aahto.org WITH "COVID-19" IN THE SUBJECT LINE

Debunking Coronavirus Myths

There is a lot of information about COVID-19, and not all of it is true. Fortunately, we have experts like **Tsoline Kojaoghlanian, MD** a pediatric infectious diseases specialist and an AAHPO board member, plus the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) as resources to update us and help us sort it out.



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MYTH: I hear testing for COVID-19 is readily available now, so I will go to my doctor if I start feeling ill.

FALSE.

If you are a healthy person who becomes sick with mild illness, such as fever, aches, cough, sore throat but still drinking well and breathing normally - **please stay home and isolate yourself** from other members of your family. If you go to your doctor's office with mild symptoms, chances are you will:

- a) BE TURNED AWAY, as testing is still mostly reserved for the hospitalized in New York and New Jersey
- b) CATCH the virus if you don't have it
- c) SPREAD the virus if you have it

- **If you are a person in the high risk group** (age > 65 years, or with chronic medical conditions) **with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 OR if your symptoms worsen to shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing, call your health care provider, nearest emergency room or 911 and let them know of your symptoms** so that the health care providers can take appropriate precautions before your arrival. **DO NOT WALK IN** your doctor's office without calling them.
- Of note, it can be hard to distinguish influenza, which is still circulating in our area, or even common colds from COVID-19 because some symptoms overlap. For people with seasonal allergies that may kick in the spring, clues that indicate allergies rather than COVID-19 are itchy or red eyes, scratchy throat and frequent sneezing. However, at this point, **BEHAVE LIKE YOU HAVE THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS DISEASE COVID-19 AND PRACTICE GOOD INFECTION CONTROL AT ALL TIMES** ([click here for the list of infection control preventive actions](#)).

MYTH: I am young and healthy, so I am not at risk of becoming too sick from the novel coronavirus COVID-19 disease.

FALSE.

Now that the virus is spreading in US communities, US data shows that **half the people getting the disease are between 18 and 50 years old, and they are as likely to be hospitalized**, but less likely to die, compared to the previously defined vulnerable populations. In addition, individuals under 18 years old are also getting infected as much as adults but tend to have mostly milder symptoms; therefore, they are big spreaders of the virus from one person to another.

Hence, an urgent appeal has to be made to your teens and youth – please educate them about their crucial role in preventing spread of the virus, reinforcing their **strict social distancing and avoiding ANY and ALL gatherings** with friends which will certainly lead to sickening their parents and grandparents ([Learn more about social distancing](#) #TogetherApart #TogetherAtHome #SocialDistancing). Similarly, now that most children are home from school, all playdates and get-togethers should be strongly discouraged and avoided.

MYTH: Once I get the virus, I am good, I will never get it again.

WE DON'T KNOW that to be true. Studies are ongoing to determine if infection provides long-term immunity or not.

MYTH: I need to wear a face-mask at all times to protect myself from novel coronavirus.

FALSE.

Masks are NOT effective for protecting the general public from viruses. You only need to wear a face-mask if you have novel coronavirus AND need to leave your house to go to the emergency room, so that you don't make others sick. The widespread buying of masks has led to shortage and limited the supply for healthcare workers who desperately need to wear the masks to treat the sick and infected. **If you bought masks in bulk, please donate them to a hospital near you.** Home-made DIY or designer cloth masks as advertised and sold online are also NOT medically certified and will not protect you from COVID-19. Your best protection from COVID-19 is staying home and out of contact with other people.

MYTH: Store-bought products are not enough to disinfect my house from the novel coronavirus.

FALSE.

The virus has been detected for several hours on material such as copper, steel, plastic and cardboard, thus virus spread from such surfaces and packaging is plausible, and every effort should be made to clean such surfaces frequently. Common household cleaning products are enough to disinfect commonly touched surfaces, including packaging you receive or bring in from outside, especially those exchanged in person; table tops, doorknobs, cell phones. Disinfectants which are effective:

- **Diluting your household bleach.** To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water, OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Never mix household bleach with ammonia, vinegar, rubbing alcohol or any other cleanser. Make sure you label these appropriately so it is not accidentally ingested. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date.

- **Alcohol solutions.** Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol
- **Clorox wipes**

[Learn more about disinfection.](#)

MYTH: Spraying alcohol or chlorine all over my body prevents and kills the new coronavirus.

FALSE.

Spraying alcohol or chlorine all over your body will not kill viruses that have already entered your body. Spraying such substances can be harmful to you.

MYTH: Vaccines against pneumonia and influenza protect me against the new coronavirus.

FALSE.

Vaccines such as pneumococcal and influenza vaccines, do not provide protection against the new coronavirus, but they are highly recommended to protect your overall health because they prevent other types of pneumonia. The novel coronavirus virus is a new virus and needs its own vaccine, and researchers are actively developing one, which will NOT be ready until year 2021.

MYTH: Taking colloidal silver will protect me from COVID-19.

FALSE.

Colloidal silver isn't considered safe or effective for any of the health claims manufacturers make, including prevention or treatment of COVID-19. Silver has no known purpose in the body, nor is it an essential mineral.

MYTH: Taking chloroquine or azithromycin will protect me from COVID-19.

FALSE.

These and other medications are being actively studied in clinical trials for use in hospitalized and vulnerable people with COVID-19 and have NO role in preventing COVID-19 infection in people with no illness or sickness.

MYTH: Taking ibuprofen or other similar drugs will make COVID-19 worse.

WE DON'T KNOW THAT to be true. You can start with acetaminophen (Tylenol, Paracetamol) if you feel ill, and you may take ibuprofen, once or twice a day maximum, if needed. Do not exceed recommended doses for either medication.

MYTH: COVID-19 virus cannot be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climates.

FALSE.

COVID-19 virus can be transmitted in all areas, including areas with hot and humid weather. Similarly, there is no reason to believe that cold weather or snow can kill the new coronavirus. The normal human body temperature remains around 36.5°C to 37°C, regardless of the external temperature or weather.

MYTH: Ultraviolet disinfection lamps kill the new coronavirus.

FALSE.

UV lamps should not be used to sterilize hands or other areas of skin as UV radiation can cause skin irritation and does NOT prevent COVID-19.

MYTH: Thermal scanners detect people infected with the new coronavirus.

Thermal scanners are effective in detecting people who have developed a fever (i.e. have a higher than normal body temperature). However, they cannot detect people who are infected with COVID-19.

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