

MIND & BODY



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Does Everyone Over 60 Need To Take The Same Coronavirus Precautions?

As we weigh the costs of self-isolation against the risks of COVID-19, personal health become an important consideration **2**

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DOES EVERYONE OVER 60 NEED TO TAKE THE SAME

Coronavirus Precautions?

As we weigh the costs of self-isolation against the risks of COVID-19, personal health become an important consideration

JUDITH GRAHAM

She knew it wasn't a good idea and her daughter would disapprove. Nonetheless, Barbara Figge Fox, 79, recently went to four stores in Princeton, New Jersey, to shop for canned goods, paper towels, fresh fruit, yogurt, and other items.

"I was in panic mode," said Fox, who admitted she's been feeling both agonizing fear and irrational impulsivity because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Susannah Fox, Barbara's daughter, had been warning her exceptionally healthy mother for weeks of the need to stay inside as much as possible and limit contact with other people. Everyone age 60 and older is at high risk of complications from COVID-19 and should adopt these measures, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends.

"At one point, when I was pushing her to limit her activities, my mother said defiantly, 'Well, I'm going to die of something,'" said Susannah, an adviser to health care and technology companies. "And I said, 'Well, that's true, but let's not rush it.'"

Are precautions of the sort the CDC has endorsed really necessary, even in areas where the new coronavirus doesn't yet appear to be circulating widely? What about disease-free adults in their 60s and 70s? Do they need to worry about going to a restaurant or a friend's house for dinner? Are all outside activities ill-advised?

I asked several geriatricians for their advice. All cautioned that what they told me could be upended by unforeseen developments. Indeed, over the past week, the governors of about a dozen states—including California, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington—have told residents, and not just older adults, to stay inside, in an aggressive effort to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

Here's what geriatricians think is reasonable, and why, at the moment:

Know the odds. Current warnings were originally based on data from China,

which has reported that 80 percent of deaths from COVID-19 occurred among people age 60 and older.

The latest data from the United States was published by the CDC last week. Of 4,226 known COVID-19 cases at the time, people 65 and older were responsible for 80 percent of deaths, 53 percent of intensive care unit admissions and 45 percent of hospital admissions. Those 85 and older suffered the worst outcomes.

Data from China, the U.S., and other countries also indicates that people with illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, and lung disease, and those with compromised immune systems, are more likely to become critically ill and die if they become infected. The CDC recommends that these patients stay inside and practice strict precautions.

What's not yet known: lots of details about the underlying health status of older adults in China and other countries who've died from COVID-19. "We just don't have this kind of information yet," said Dr. Carla Perissinotto, associate chief for geriatrics clinical programs at the University of California-San Francisco.

As a result, considerable uncertainty about the true nature of risk remains. What's clear, however, is that older adults have less robust immune systems and are less able to mount a protective response against the coronavirus.

Exercise more caution. Uncertainty also surrounds the degree to which the coronavirus is circulating in communities across the country because testing has been so limited.

Some people don't develop symptoms. Others won't realize they've contracted the coronavirus until becoming symptomatic. Both groups may unwittingly transmit the virus, which can live on hard surfaces such as door handles or store shelves for up to 72 hours.

Given how little is known about the extent of the virus's community spread, most physicians suggest erring on the side of caution.

Dr. Michael Wasserman's 82-year-old mother, Fern, called him several times recently with questions. Could she go

out to dinner with his brother? "No," Wasserman said he told her, "restaurants are one of the most dangerous places right now for old people." Could she go pick up a prescription at the pharmacy? "No," he said, "the last place you want to go is a pharmacy or a doctor's office where there are sick people next to you." What about the grocery store? "No," get deliveries, he urged.

But Wasserman, who's 60 and a triathlete, isn't as strict with himself. "Would I go for a walk? Yeah. The way I see it, I'm in a gray zone. I can go out, but I have to be careful."

Consider your health. Wasserman isn't alone in making a distinction of this kind. "What a number of physicians are saying is, you should consider whether you're frail" in assessing your personal risk, said Dr. John Morley, a professor of geriatrics at Saint Louis University School of Medicine.

He ticked off the questions with an acronym of frail. "F: Are you consistently fatigued? R, for resilience: Can you climb a flight of stairs? A, for aerobic: Can you walk a block? I, for illnesses: If you've got five or more, that's bad. L, for loss of weight: That's not good."

"I've been telling people, this is about how healthy you are, not how old you are," said Dr. William Dale, director of the Center for Cancer and Aging Research at City of Hope, a cancer center in Duarte, California.

But even healthy people are becoming sick and, "honestly, I think we're all trying to figure out how worried to be," Dale said.

Assess risks. Of course, older adults should follow guidance from state and local health departments, as well as the federal government. But the advice varies widely, adding to people's uncertainty.

"I don't think it's as simple as 'Don't go out' for all older adults. Social contact is still really important," Perissinotto said. "If you're healthy and over 60, with prudence, hand hygiene and being aware of your surroundings, you should still be able to go about some activities," such as taking a walk or visiting with a neighbor



What's not yet known: lots of details about the underlying health status of older adults in China and other countries who've died from COVID-19.

If you're going to the store, consider wearing cloth gloves, because viruses don't survive as well on soft surfaces.

while maintaining a safe distance. Leslie Kernisan, a San Francisco geriatrician and the founder of the geriatrics advice website BetterHealth-WhileAging.net, offered several concrete suggestions. If you're going to the store, consider wearing cloth gloves, because viruses don't survive as well on soft surfaces.

Try not to handle your smartphone when you're out of the house. "A phone is a hard plastic surface that can easily get contaminated," she said.

If you're worried that older parents aren't following rigorous enough precautions, don't lecture them, Kernisan advises. Instead, ask how they're feeling about the coronavirus. What do they know about it? What plans have they made?

Foster well-being. Asked what was safe for older adults, Dr. Paul Tatum, an associate professor of medicine at the University of Texas-Austin's Dell Medical School, focused on factors that

contribute to well-being. "It is safe to exercise, and, in fact, it's very important to keep exercising," but not at the gym or in large groups," he said. "It's safe to get plenty of sleep"—but avoid sleeping pills, if possible.

"It's safe to prevent worry and take a break from social media and too much news," Tatum said. "It's safe to take care of your spiritual needs in this time, but doing it at a distance is wise. Don't hesitate to reach out to your church or synagogue community and say, 'I'm not able to come in. Can I schedule a few minutes on the phone with someone?' It's safe to call your neighbor and say, 'I need some help.'"

Judith Graham is a contributing columnist for Kaiser Health News, which originally published this article. KHN's coverage of these topics is supported by The John A. Hartford Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and The SCAN Foundation.

Making Risk-Based Decisions in the Coronavirus Era

Social distancing can help us get ahead of the spread of this infection if we practice it diligently

JULIE APPLEBY

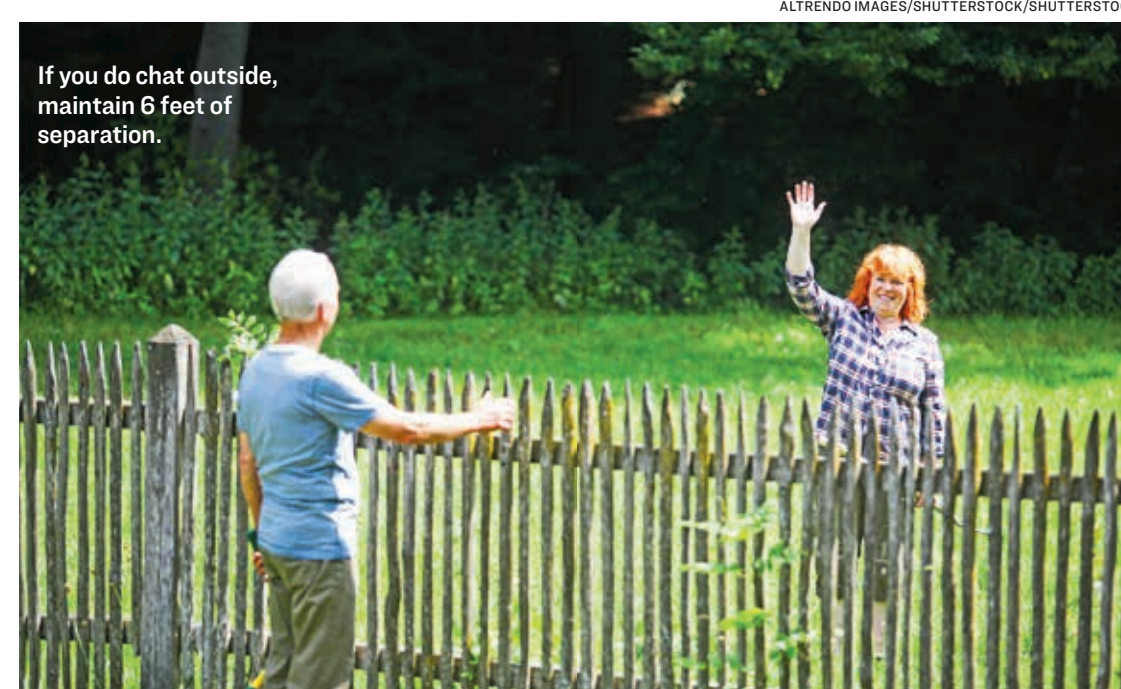
In the fast-moving world of coronavirus, one week it was okay to have lunch with friends at a cafe, and the next it isn't, as more and better social distancing is required.

But what's still acceptable? We reached out to public health experts, who, admittedly, vary in their recommendations. But their main message remains: The better individuals are now at social distancing to slow transmission of the virus, the better off we'll all be eventually.

Already, California has told everyone to stay at home. In the San Francisco Bay Area, where community spread is a growing concern, just about everyone else has been ordered to do so, too. California is also among the states that have ordered restaurants, gyms and other facilities to close. And the Trump administration has instructed Americans to temporarily avoid gatherings of more than 10 people, including sit-down meals in bars, restaurants, and food courts. More restrictions from states, localities and the federal government could follow.

In the coming days, those rules and recommendations may expand as federal, state and local health officials weigh conditions on the ground. So what to do now?

"We ought to make risk-based decisions," said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association.



If you do chat outside, maintain 6 feet of separation.

Expect change. Maybe daily. But also take a deep breath. Some things are still all right.

"At the end of the day, we have to take care of our kids, our family, we have to eat," said Benjamin. "What people ought to do is think about how best to reduce risk and do as many less risky things as they can."

So what about walking around the neighborhood?

"Yes, but not in groups," said Benjamin, who added that he would walk at his neighbors while out for a stroll but "would not have a long conversation."

If you do chat outside, maintain 6 feet

of separation. Dinner parties? Food for those shut in their homes?

"Inviting people over depends on whether or not they have symptoms, whether they have traveled overseas," Benjamin suggested. "I would not have a BBQ on my deck with a bunch of people."

If you bring food to a shut-in or a neighbor, "leave it on the porch," he said, and always, always make sure you wash your hands before preparing the meal.

In a blog post titled "Social distancing: This is not a snow day," Dr. Asaf Bitton,

an assistant professor at the T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard, takes a hard line, recommending no playdates or sleepovers for children. No sharing of toys with other families. Even playing outside with other kids is a no-go "if that means direct physical contact" such as in basketball or soccer.

Limit trips to stores. Cooking food at home, he wrote, is less risky than takeout. Don't have other families over for dinner.

School closings won't slow transmission if parents allow close play dates or even activity on playgrounds, said Elizabeth Stuart, a professor of mental health, biostatistics and health policy at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, in an interview with KHN.

Playgrounds are a problem because they put children, and their watching parents, in close proximity. There is also a chance the virus could remain on surfaces.

But some people need more flexible guidelines, especially those with young children or those who can't work from home, such as health care workers. For them, a "closed-network strategy" might work, Stuart, two epidemiologists, and a health policy expert wrote in a piece that ran in USA Today.

That means a small, trusted circle can continue to interact while creating social distance from outsiders. If any member of an individual family within that circle, however, exhibits symptoms, the entire family should isolate—and

let everyone else in their circle know. "The ideal situation is everyone stays home, but that's just not a reality for a lot of people," Stuart said in an interview with KHN.

She said friends have asked what to do in specific situations, such as deciding whether a teenager should babysit for another family.

The key, she said, "is to think of the number of unique people you come in contact with."

Each case involves a judgment call—and an element of risk. Maybe two families share child care, or a teenager babysits for one family. But the teen does not sit for 10 families, she said.

Bitton, in his column, took a tougher stance.

"Even if you choose only one friend to have over, you are creating new links and possibilities for the type of transmission that all of our school/work/public event closures are trying to prevent," he wrote.

Do get outside every day, he wrote, as "it will be important during these strange times," but "stay physically away from others."

Marcus Plescia, the chief medical officer for the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, agreed.

Correction

The article "Natural Protection Strategy Against Viruses, Including Coronavirus," published on March 5, incorrectly defined Lyme disease. Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and rarely, *Borrelia mayonii*. The Epoch Times regrets the error.



Black tea, garlic, ginger, cinnamon, and other common foods can have immune boosting benefits.

FOOD IS MEDICINE

Best Foods to Help Your Body Fight the Coronavirus

Choose spices, herbs, and beverages that can help your immune system take on coronavirus

JAYA JAYA MYRA

The World Health Organization has labeled COVID-19 a pandemic. That has a lot of people worried about getting sick, but do you really need to be concerned? The virus that causes COVID-19 is like the flu or common cold and, because of that, can't be treated with antibiotics. Antibiotics treat bacterial infections, but not viruses. The key is in prevention, because once you get a viral infection, it has to run its course. Luckily, there are many ways you can reduce your chances of falling ill—and strengthen your body for quicker recovery—including eating the right foods.

Your superpower against COVID-19 may well be in the foods you're eating because many foods have been scientifically

shown to both prevent and combat viral infections. Here are some of the most potent ones to add to your routine.

Garlic

Garlic is loaded with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and an active compound known as allicin. Garlic is known to strengthen the immune system, restore suppressed antibody response to disease, and help combat respiratory infections. Dr. David Friedman, naturopathic physician and author of "Food Sanity: How to Eat in a World of Fads and Fiction," said garlic is his first choice as a food remedy.

"In 460 BC, Hippocrates, the father of medicine, prescribed garlic to treat a variety of medical conditions. Fast forward to 2020 and modern science confirms garlic can treat everything from

Your superpower against COVID-19 may well be in the foods you're eating because many foods have been scientifically shown to both prevent and combat viral infections.



VZOSK/UNSPLASH



the common cold, flu, cardiovascular disease, and even helps in the prevention of cancer."

Ginger

Ginger is known to have antiviral properties, contains more than 50 antioxidant compounds and has powerful anti-inflammatory benefits that have been shown to aid breathing and respiration. It's also great at relieving nausea, treating aches and pains in the body, and reducing indigestion. Basically, ginger can both help combat viral infection and alleviate its symptoms.

Black and Green Tea

Both black and green teas have antiviral properties thanks to their enzyme-inhibiting and receptor-blocking properties. Tea is packed with catechins that have been shown to fight influenza and other respiratory viral infections. Tea is also loaded with antioxidants and flavonoids, and interestingly the flavonoids may help combat viruses thanks to the way they interact with the gut's microbiome.

Turmeric

I can't say enough good things about turmeric. It's packed with curcuminoids that have powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that help protect the body, reduce pain, and even alleviate depression. Curcumin has also been shown to have antiviral properties by inhibiting cell binding. Consume your turmeric with black pepper

to significantly increase absorption of curcumin in the body.

Probiotic Foods

Any food containing probiotics (think fermented foods with active cultures like yogurt, kefir, and sauerkraut), are your allies in the war against coronavirus, and getting sick in general. Probiotics play many roles in our well-being, with new roles being discovered regularly. Their role against viral infections is due to their immune-boosting properties, bolstering the body's white blood cell count. They also play a role in mood and mental health, so if you're stressed out, probiotics can help you feel more balanced.

Oregano

One of my daily go-to's for immune support is oregano oil, but you can just as easily reap its effects from the fresh or dried leaves. The active antiviral ingredient is known as carvacrol and has been shown to fight viral respiratory infections. You can add oregano to your favorite sauce, soup, or as a salad topper.

Cinnamon

Cinnamon has long been touted for its antimicrobial and antiviral properties, likely due to its high antioxidant potency which is even stronger than those of garlic or oregano. It's also anti-inflammatory, reduces blood sugar, and treats a host of ailments. There have even been scientific studies showing its effectiveness against HIV. Make sure to stick with Ceylon, or true cinnamon, as it is the most effective. But be wary if you are on medications, as it is a natural blood thinner.

Omega-3s

You'll find omega-3s in salmon, flax, seaweed, chia seed, hemp seed, walnuts, and soy products like tofu and tempeh. Omega-3s are anti-inflammatory and also directly boost immunity by enhancing the function of B cells, a type of white blood cell. Unlike the other foods we've discussed, omega-3 containing foods can be sustainable main dishes that can comprise the bulk of a meal. (I don't think you'd eat a whole plate of garlic by itself, but hey, maybe you would.)

You have some great choices here; even adding just a couple to your regular diet can help boost your immunity. Remember, stress also affects immunity, so take adequate time for self-care. A daily glass of tea is one of my self-care routines and may help you stay well.

Jaya Jaya Myra is a wellness lifestyle expert and go-to media expert on mind-body wellness, stress management, mindfulness, food for mood, and natural, healthy living. She's a best-selling author, TEDx and motivational speaker, and creator of The WELL Method for purpose-filled healthy living. Visit www.JayaJayaMyra.com

Scientifically Tested Apple Cider Vinegar Remedies

This age-old natural remedy has a growing list of scientifically-supported health benefits

SARA NOVAK

Running short of disinfectant amidst the crush of coronavirus panic buying? You might have an option you didn't even realize.

Vinegar is a product of fermentation. Making apple cider vinegar involves two processes. In the first stage of fermentation, sugars are turned into alcohol, then that alcohol ferments again and turns into vinegar. The main ingredient in apple cider vinegar is acetic acid, which has been singled out as an especially healthful tonic.

For more than 2,000 years, vinegar has been used to flavor and preserve foods, heal

wounds, fight infection, clean surfaces, and manage diabetes, to name a few. But does it really work? Let's find out.

Apple cider vinegar can lower glucose levels. A small 2007 study of 11 people with Type 2 diabetes found that taking 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar lowered glucose levels in the morning by 4-6 percent. A 2018 study found apple cider vinegar had significant antihyperglycemic and antioxidant effects and could prevent diabetic complications in liver and kidneys.

Apple cider vinegar has well-known antimicrobial proper-

ties. For this reason, it can also be used as a disinfectant that's a safer compound than bleach. A 2018 study tested apple cider vinegar on multiple dangerous bacteria strains and concluded "ACV [apple cider vinegar] has multiple antimicrobial potential with clinical therapeutic implications."

Apple cider vinegar is a source of polyphenols, which are compounds synthesized by plants to defend against oxidative stress. Polyphenols enhance oxidative protection, reducing cancer risk as well as conditions like heart disease.

Apple cider vinegar has been

linked to weight loss in many cultures for generations. A 2016 French study found apple cider vinegar had a satiating effect in rats that could counter the high-fat diet they were put on. However, it is worth noting, one trial found that healthy women consumed fewer calories on the days they ingested vinegar in the morning.

Sara Novak specializes in health and food-policy writing for Discovery Health. Her work has also been featured on TreeHugger, HowStuffWorks.com, TLC Cooking, and Animal Planet. This article was originally published on Naturally Savvy.



NATALIA KLENOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Apple cider vinegar is more than a delicious condiment, researchers have found it has several medicinal benefits.



THE ROOT CAUSE

Old Drug May Provide Promising New Treatment for COVID-19

Two common drugs may have an important role helping countries deal with the pandemic

ARMEN NIKOGOSIAN

Treatment options for COVID-19 are currently being investigated around the world. There is evidence that certain medications may have the potential to be effective against COVID-19 to prevent illness, treat symptoms, and potentially having direct antiviral effects.

Coronaviruses are RNA viruses that are named for the spikes that protrude from their surfaces, resembling a sun's corona or crown. They usually cause mild illnesses of the respiratory tract in both humans and animals and are one of the primary microbes responsible for the common cold. Most of us have been infected with coronavirus multiple times in the course of our lives.

The cause of this new global pandemic is the ongoing spread of the respiratory disease known as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). This novel coronavirus was first recognized in December 2019 in Wuhan City, China. Other novel coronavirus strains are SARS from 2002-2003 and MERS from 2013. They had death rates of 10 percent and 36 percent respectively.

Some of the most promising treatments have to do with zinc and its effect on the molecular machinery of the cell. To understand this better, we need a quick primer on the molecular biology of the cell—particularly when it is infected with COVID-19.

All of the instructions for life are contained within the DNA that resides in an organelle in the center of the cell known as the nucleus. In order for those instructions to leave the nucleus, they must be transcribed into RNA. Once outside the cell, the RNA is processed further by placing a 5-prime cap and a 3-prime-poly-A tail on its ends. This cap and tail are needed in order for another organelle called the ribosome to be able to recognize the RNA and facilitate

their translation into amino acids. Amino acids are the building blocks that will ultimately make proteins. Proteins are how cells get things done. A few notable examples of this are life-sustaining functions such as the protein hemoglobin which transports oxygen throughout our body.

Enter COVID-19 into the cell. It is an RNA virus, meaning that all the instructions needed to replicate the virus are contained within this code, but the virus needs to hijack our cellular machinery in order to actually make more virus. Conveniently, coronavirus RNA already has a 5-prime cap and 3-prime-poly-A tail on its ends, so our own ribosomes recognize it as our own RNA and translate into proteins.

Rather than making useful proteins our bodies can use, the ribosomes have now been taken over by the virus and instead make a special viral enzyme known as replicase. Replicase reads the COVID-19 RNA and replicates it, which then produces more coronavirus.

To summarize, the virus takes over our own cells to become virtual "virus factories" at the expense of the proteins we need daily to perform various functions—many of which are life-sustaining. The viral enzyme replicase is critical in this process and a good target for potential treatment.

Zinc has been shown to inhibit the activity of replicase.

In order to get zinc (and just about every other mineral) inside the cell, you need a transport protein called an ionophore. This is basically what you are trying to do when you are sucking on those zinc lozenges all day. While I still support their use for prevention, it simply isn't enough once active COVID-19 infection has taken hold.

In a relatively old study from 2010 and published in PLOS Pathogens, researchers established that by increasing zinc concentration in cell culture

Most of us have been infected with coronavirus multiple times in the course of our lives.

and blocking the activity of the replicase enzyme, significantly reduced the viral load of SARS (novel coronavirus strain from 2002) in the cell.

Now we just need to find a compound that behaves as a zinc ionophore or zinc transporter.

Enter chloroquine. Chloroquine is a medication discovered in 1934 and used extensively all over the world to treat malaria. It has also been found to benefit patients with parasite infections and autoimmunity.

In 2014, medical researchers from China and Oklahoma published a paper in PLOS One investigating chloroquine's actions as a zinc ionophore or zinc transporter. While the original paper looked at the effects of increasing intracellular zinc as an anti-cancer strategy, we can repurpose this knowledge in our battle against COVID-19. Adding chloroquine to cell culture revealed an almost five-fold increase in zinc concentration compared to cell lines without chloroquine.

So it works in a controlled laboratory setting, but what about in real life?

In February, South Korean physicians published treatment guidelines for COVID-19 in the Korean Biomedical Review.

Antiviral treatment was reserved for patients who were old, had underlying conditions, or had severe symptoms. This treatment consisted of chloroquine or an HIV medication called Kaletra for 7-10 days. Use of both medications concurrently wasn't shown to be any more effective than using a single agent alone nor was it recommended due to the increased incidence of fatal cardiac arrhythmias. Chloroquine wasn't available in South Korea so they used a close cousin called hydroxychloroquine or Plaquenil.

The use of these agents in severely ill patients could be a possible reason for the massive

difference in mortality rates between South Korea and Italy.

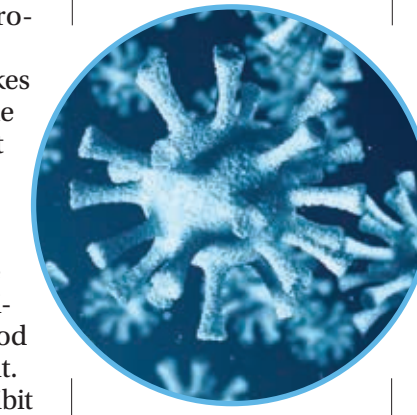
Both countries provide 21st-century medical infrastructures with universal access to health care. While the number of COVID-19 cases is similar between the two countries, the mortality rate is lower in South Korea by a whole order of magnitude. This could be explained by many factors, one of which being the treatments discussed above.

Before you get the bright idea to start hoarding these medications, it's important to understand that they aren't FDA-approved for COVID-19 and proper randomized, double-blind, controlled studies still need to be performed.

Chloroquine is a medication discovered in 1934 and used extensively all over the world to treat malaria.

These are prescription medications with significant adverse effects including possible blindness and fatal heart conditions and should never be used without an experienced physician supervising the treatment. While there is still much work to be done, the preliminary results look promising at this point.

Armen Nikogosian, M.D., practices functional and integrative medicine at Southwest Functional Medicine in Henderson, Nev. He is board-certified in internal medicine and a member of the Institute for Functional Medicine and the Medical Academy of Pediatric Special Needs. His practice focuses on the treatment of complex medical conditions with a special emphasis on autism spectrum disorder in children, as well as chronic gut issues and autoimmune conditions in adults.



Coronavirus looks to be vulnerable to a zinc-based treatment already commonly used for other diseases.

JEZPER/SHUTTERSTOCK

How School Closures Strengthen Your Family

Here are 3 ways to cope if your kid's school closes

CHRISTINE CARTER

It's chilly outside, but a summer-of-sorts—has started in my household this week. My two college students and two high schoolers are home from school for the foreseeable future. There is both excitement about lengthened spring breaks (one high schooler) and real sadness (the others). And there is, of course, a lot of chaos and uncertainty.

My family isn't alone. Here in the United States, millions of families are dealing with school closures. The number of students around the world whose education has been interrupted by the coronavirus is approaching 400 million, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

As closed schools ramp up for online learning, we can retool in our families, too. Here are three practical ways families can

cope—and even thrive—despite school closures, event cancellations, and a whole lot more time at home with the kids.

1. Create some structure around work and school at home now. I'm supposedly working as I write these words, but my high schooler just popped in to see if I knew where his phone charger is (nope). Before that, one of my daughters came in to get the dog and some stamps. I love seeing my kids and having them home, but each interruption breaks my focus. It takes ages for me to get started again; it's so much easier to check my email (or the status of the coronavirus) than to do my actual work.

Clearly we need to get set up a little better now, rather than waiting until we know how long this is going to last (it could be a while) or until we are all at our wits' end (possibly tomorrow). Constant interruptions are a recipe for misery. Not only do they hinder our productivity, but they increase our stress and tension levels in measurable ways.

We can minimize interruptions by carving out specific times and places for each of us to do our work. Our kids need

individual work-at-home plans to finish out their semesters. If your kids need supervision and you also need to work from home, find partners (perhaps neighbors if you don't have a parent) to help you, and set up shifts so that you are either in charge of the kids or working somewhere that minimizes interruptions—but not trying to do both things at the same time.

We can better ward off illness when we are mentally and physically healthy, and this puts us in a much better position to help others.

2. Connect with your clan. Social distancing is painful. We, humans, need social connection to feel safe. Those of us who live in families have

a built-in way to counter the feelings of isolation that social distancing can cause. We can hug our kids and tickle their backs. We can share our meals together—all of them. We can relax and read and watch our shows on the same couch in the same room.

This sort of old-fashioned family time isn't the norm. These days it seems more natural to eat lunch alone in front of the computer. Kids today are more likely to watch videos on their devices alone than they are to join the family for an episode of TV. But we'll do well to counter the distancing we're experiencing from our broader school and work communities by deepening our connections to one another at home. Let's not be alone together; let's be together when we're together.

3. Embrace not being so busy. Have you recently complained that you can't find time to exercise? That you're sleep-deprived? That you don't have time to cook healthy food? With no athletic events, no commute, and no pickups and dropoffs, we parents have a lot more time on our hands.

This is likely to be unsettling at first. We Americans feel

important rushing from one commitment to the next. Busy-ness makes us feel significant. Having more time to take care of ourselves can feel indulgent in a time when sacrifice is called for. But one of the best things that we can do for others is to take care of ourselves. We can better ward off illness when we are mentally and physically healthy, and this puts us in a much better position to help others.

These are strange, uncertain times. But we'll do well to remember that "life is never made unbearable by circumstances," as Viktor Frankl wisely wrote, "but only by lack of meaning and purpose." This may be the longest summer ever—kids may be home for five months—but let's not forget to find the meaning behind it.

All of this is about helping oth-

ers: We are slowing the spread of a lethal and virulent disease, trying to keep our hospitals from becoming overwhelmed, to keep our doctors from having to make decisions about who lives and who dies. We can welcome school closures, and curb complaining about inconveniences. Stay home, friends. Stay safe. Help others.

Christine Carter, Ph.D. is a

senior fellow at the Greater Good Science Center. She is the author of three books including this year's "The New Adolescence: Raising Happy and Successful Teens in an Age of Anxiety and Distraction." A former director of the GGSC, she served for many years as the author of its parenting blog, "Raising Happiness." This article was first published on the Greater Good online magazine.

We need to get set up a little better now, rather than waiting until we know how long this is going to last.

A Geriatrician Offers 4 Tips for Seniors to Stay Connected During Coronavirus Outbreak

Laurie Archbald-Pannone

community, particularly the elderly.

As the numbers climb for those infected with the novel coronavirus, the dangers rise for vulnerable populations. People who are older or with underlying medical conditions risk the most severe consequences, including organ failure and death.

Should the spread of COVID-19 continue—and every indication suggests it will—people must make sure they are protected.

I am a geriatrician and an associate professor at the University of Virginia in geriatric medicine. So far, the disease isn't present at my hospital or clinic. But our staff is already making preparations to minimize COVID-19's impact, particularly on those most at risk.

Along with other hospitals across the country, we stay informed on local and national recommendations for screening, testing, and protective equipment. We make sure staff and patients know about proper hand hygiene. We take extra steps to keep the facility clean, like removing magazines from the waiting rooms and implementing a "you-touch-it-you-take-it" policy for flyers and brochures. And we encourage all of our patients to call a doctor if they develop a fever or new respiratory symptoms.

Most of all, we are doing our best to get the right information out to the

Ways to Reduce Exposure

For those most at risk for severe infection: Do everything you can to reduce exposure to the virus. Keep space between you and anyone who is sick. Avoid crowds. Limit your time in public by consolidating trips to get supplies. When out, try to keep a distance from others. Wash your hands often. And if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community, stay home as much as possible.

"Social distancing" is the new phrase that describes most of this, and it goes against what we typically advocate for our older patients. As geriatricians, we promote the benefits of social engagement to our patients; we remind them of the poor health outcomes associated with social isolation. Now, with COVID-19, the times have changed. But along with the risk of coronavirus infection comes the risk of social isolation. How should older people balance these competing recommendations? During a time of social distancing, here are four ways for



All sorts of online options exist to talk with family and friends.

elders to stay socially connected.

1. Learn the New Technology FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and lots more. All sorts of online options exist to talk with family and friends. And you don't have to be tech-savvy. Doing the basics is easy, and for most people, fun. If setting up an account is daunting, ask a neighbor, niece, or nephew for help and a quick tutorial.

2. Stay Active in the Community From Home It may sound counterintuitive. How can you remain a part of the community if the goal is to separate from the community? But maybe there's a remote option. Many organizations—political parties, faith-based groups, nonprofits—rely on volunteers to make phone calls. You can do that clearly community-based activity right at home.

3. Go on a News Diet Stay informed, know what's going on, but don't get locked into endlessly watching "breaking news" on the 24-hour news channels. Typically, not much changes from hour to hour. But enduring the repetitious pummeling from TV all day long can bring needless anxiety. My patients have found the following advice helpful: Watch a news update in the morning, then check in again at night. Don't stay with it all evening—30 minutes or an hour is plenty.

4. Reach out to Family and Friends

Stay in touch with the people close to you, especially those who are social distancing, too. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending that communities create "buddy systems" to make sure vulnerable and hard-to-reach people stay connected, particularly to news about COVID-19. This can be done through your church, social group, or daily neighborhood email blasts. And for those of you who aren't elderly—why not make it a point to check in on your older friends and relatives? Such thoughtfulness is always greatly appreciated.

Communities create 'buddy systems' to make sure vulnerable and hard-to-reach people stay connected, particularly to news about COVID-19.

Social distancing doesn't mean social isolation, and even a potentially deadly virus shouldn't force us to be alone. Now, more than ever, people need to find smart ways to stay connected.

Laurie Archbald-Pannone is an associate professor of medicine and geriatrics at the University of Virginia. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

Rise Above the Stress

Stay clear-minded in the days to come with habits to help you relax

LYNN JAFFEE

Let's face it; stress is everywhere, and not in a good way. We live in stressful times of the coronavirus pandemic, financial worries, and how to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe.

At the same time, the very nature of our modern lives makes it hard to slow down or opt-out. The result is that millions of Americans are suffering from symptoms and ill-health related to stress, including insomnia, digestive problems, anxiety, depression, headaches, heart disease, and high blood pressure to name a few.

Being under unrelenting stress feels bad, suppresses your immune system at a time that you need it to be strong, and affects the quality of your life.

Solutions to overwhelming stress are unique to each individual. In addition, finding time for stress-relief activities can be one more stressful thing to fit into an already busy day. That said, the payoffs of doing something, anything, are big in terms of better physical and mental health. Here are some suggestions on ways that you can manage your stress:

Begin your day by meditating. This can be as simple as consciously breathing for five minutes before you get out of bed. Just breathe normally and pay attention to each inhalation and exhalation. Equally as relaxing is resting in your favorite place, simply by filling in all the

details of that particular spot. Be sure to engage your senses in your visualization; your brain doesn't know the difference between your visualization and you actually being there.

Millions of Americans are suffering from symptoms and ill-health related to stress, including insomnia, digestive problems, anxiety, depression, headaches, heart disease, and high blood pressure to name a few.

Move your body. A little exercise releases feel-good and releases calming endorphins in your brain. Also, movement helps to relieve muscle tension and clear your mind.

Get a massage. Booking a massage is making an appointment for stress relief. The massage itself is relaxing and helps to relieve tight and achy muscles. It is a time that is completely focused on your well-being. And if you don't want the close contact right now, get down on the floor and stretch your tight

muscles. It will help loosen them up, relieve tension, and it flat out feels good.

Put your stress down on paper. Keeping a journal allows you to download all the thoughts and feelings that are stressing you. By writing these things down, you're committing them to paper and allowing yourself to release them. Journaling is not judgmental. It is unfiltered and allows you some clarity on the issues that are bothering you. This often leads to solutions.

Step away from the stress. To avoid becoming completely burned out on stress, do what it takes to remove yourself from your stressful situation whenever possible. If you're able, take a personal day or two to do something that you enjoy. Turn off all electronic gadgets for one day a week. All the emails, texts, and tweets will be there tomorrow. Set aside an hour or two as often as possible to sit quietly and read a book or listen to music.

Go outdoors. A number of research studies have documented that spending time in a natural setting can lower your stress, decrease your blood pressure, lower cortisol levels, and improve your immunity. Look for a wooded area or park nearby and spend some time soaking up the sights, sounds, and smells of the outdoors.

Get some acupuncture. Many

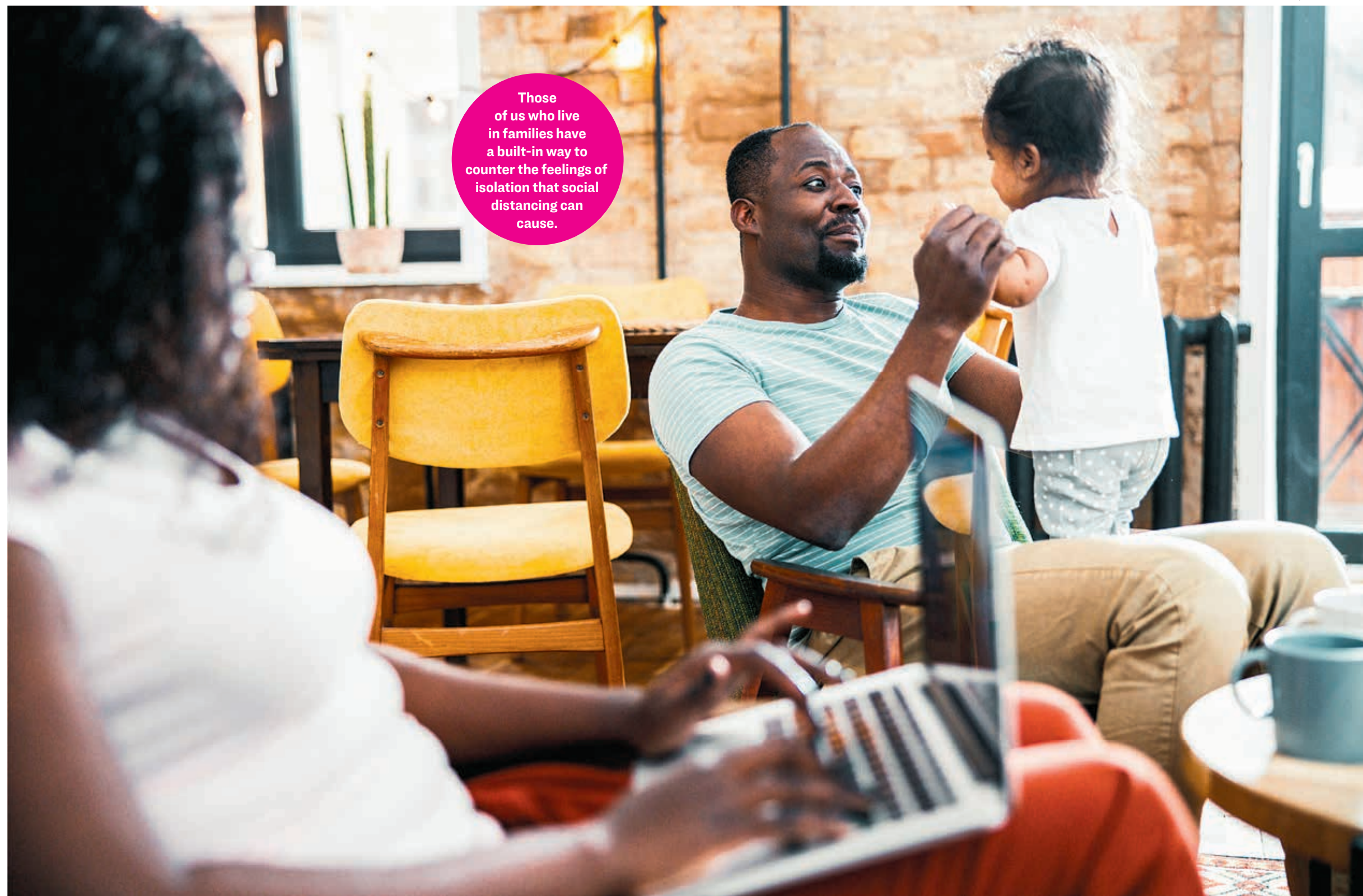


Keeping a journal allows you to download all the thoughts and feelings that are stressing you.

people think acupuncture is only about treating pain. However, research has shown that acupuncture activates feel-good endorphins in your brain to bring a sense of calm and well-being for hours to days after treatment. Research has also found that acupuncture can boost your immune system and reduce inflammation. In addition, your acupuncturist can prescribe a herbal formula and/or dietary regimen that can help smooth your emotions and address any stress-related symptoms that you may be experiencing.

Stress-related health conditions have become an epidemic, but they don't have to be. Acknowledging that your stress is impacting your health is a first step in reversing this pattern. The second step is making a plan and a commitment to dealing with that stress. You'll feel better, your life will feel a little bit easier, and your body will thank you.

Lynn Jaffee is a licensed acupuncturist and the author of "Simple Steps: The Chinese Way to Better Health." This article was originally published on *AcupunctureTwinCities.com*



Those of us who live in families have a built-in way to counter the feelings of isolation that social distancing can cause.

BECOMING MINIMALIST

Hysteria Drives Clicks

Selling fear can be key to many companies' business models

JOSHUA BECKER

I've blogged for 12 years, which is crazy to think about.

Along the way, I've learned a few things about writing for the internet, including the importance of titles and headlines. If you are going to get noticed on the internet, you need to do it well.

There are a number of different things a publisher can do to grab our attention—and not all of them are healthy for us.

A blogging friend of mine once confided in me that he'll spend hours crafting the perfect title for a blog he has written—sometimes spending as much time

crafting a title as writing the article itself. That is how important the skill has become.

But it makes sense.

In a world where billions of new pieces of media are being published every day, a headline may be the only opportunity you have to grab a potential reader's attention. And your words are only helpful if they are read by someone else.

Choosing headlines and titles that can grab a person's attention enough to cause them to stop their lives to read what you wrote is one of the most important skills for writing on the internet.

I think it is important, from time to time, for all of us to take a step back and remember how hard websites are working to grab our attention to increase clicks and views. There are a number of different things a publisher can do to grab our attention—and not all of them are healthy for us as individuals or for us as a society.

For example, hysteria drives clicks (and viewers).

Manufacturing hysteria is not usually helpful or beneficial for society. But websites and media outlets use it all the time to grab our attention.

It is, after all, more likely that we would click on a news article proclaiming the end of the world than an article reporting everything is going just fine.

I've been taking note of some of the headlines I've seen over the past



MILJAN ZIVKOVIC/SHUTTERSTOCK

few weeks. Here are just a couple:

Most Dauting Virus in Half Century.

Virus Outbreak Sparks Toilet Roll Panic!

Bye-bye Handshakes.

Refugee Crisis Could Break the EU.

Investor Massacre May Be Near.

Mechanized Bots Amplifying Denialist Messages.

Bumblebees are Going Extinct.

Within each article, there is important news, and some of the information is certainly serious. Don't misread what I am saying here.

But in almost every case above, the overstated hysteria of the headline is designed for one purpose: to grab attention and garner clicks.

Of course, this might all be fine and good if this constant overstated hysteria was not causing any harm. But there are numerous studies connecting the consumption of newscasts with

anxiety—reflected in uncontrolled fear, physiological hyperarousal, sleeping difficulties, and fearful thoughts. Constant overstatement of the danger surrounding us is causing personal harm and division among us.

It is important to stay informed and I am not encouraging you to bury your head in the sand, ignoring world events. It is wise for each of us to read and stay educated on current happenings.

Additionally, I do suppose there is a chance, that at some point in the future, the world will end by some great catastrophe. At that point, hysteria will be warranted.

But at this point in time, from everything I can tell, the hysteria does less to help us and more to grab attention and clicks.

Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker and the founder and editor of *Becoming Minimalist* where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit BecomingMinimalist.com

▲ Manufacturing hysteria is not usually helpful or beneficial for society.

In a world where billions of new pieces of media are being published every day, a headline may be the only opportunity you have to grab a potential reader's attention.



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When there is no hope—when people cannot picture a desired end to their struggles—they lose the motivation to endure.

HOW Hope

**CAN KEEP YOU HEALTHIER
AND HAPPIER**

Regaining hope affirms that we are more than our mistakes and beyond the limits of our systems

EVERETT WORTHINGTON

Hope can erode when we perceive threats to our way of life, and these days, plenty are out there. As we age, we may struggle with a tragic loss or chronic disease. As we watch the news, we see our political sys-

tem polarized, hopelessly locked in chaos. The coronavirus spreads wider daily; U.S. markets signaled a lack of hope with a Dow Jones free fall. Losing hope sometimes leads to suicide.

When there is no hope—when people cannot picture a desired end to their struggles—they lose the motivation to endure. As a professor emeritus at Virginia Commonwealth University, I've studied positive psychology, forgiveness, wellness and the science of hope for more than 40 years. My website offers free resources and tools to help its readers live a more hopeful life.

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TRUTH *and* TRADITION

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There is a clear trend to growth in countries the west considers unethical. The countries that are growing the fastest don't adhere to our standards, morals or ethics. Their success is because we have no effective defence and no systematic attack strategies. 7Tao is at home in an honourable ethical business environment, but when attacked by forces not sharing your values - 7Tao gives you the power to fight back.

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HOW Hope

CAN KEEP YOU HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER

Continued from Page 9

What Is Hope?

First, hope is not Pollyannaish optimism—the assumption that a positive outcome is inevitable. Instead, hope is a motivation to persevere toward a goal or end state, even if we're skeptical that a positive outcome is likely. Psychologists tell us hope involves activity, a can-do attitude and a belief that we have a pathway to our desired outcome. Hope is the willpower to change and the way-power to bring about that change.

With teens and with young or middle-aged adults, hope is a bit easier. But for older adults, it's a bit harder. Aging often means running up against obstacles that appear unyielding—like recurring health or financial or family issues that just don't seem to go away. Hope for older adults has to be “sticky,” persevering, a “mature hope.”

How to Build Hope

Now the good news: this study, from Harvard's “Human Flourishing Program,” recently published. Researchers examined the impact of hope on nearly 13,000 people with an average age of 66. They found those with more hope throughout their lives had better physical health, better health behaviors, better social support, and a longer life. Hope also led to fewer chronic health problems, less depression, less anxiety and a lower risk of cancer.

So if maintaining hope, in the long run, is so good for us, how do we increase it? Or build hope if it's MIA? Here are my four suggestions:

Attend a motivational speech—or watch, read or listen to one online, through YouTube, a blog or podcast. That increases hope, although usually the fix is short-lived. How can you build longer-term hope?

Engage with a religious or spiritual community. This has worked for millennia. Amidst a community of like believers, people have drawn strength, found peace and experienced the elevation of the human spirit, just by knowing there is something or someone much larger than them.

Forgive. Participating in a forgiveness group, or completing a forgiveness do-it-yourself workbook, builds hope, say, scientists. It also reduces depression and anxiety, and increases (perhaps this is obvious) your capacity to forgive. That's true even with long-held grudges. I've personally found that successfully forgiving someone provides a sense of both the willpower and way-power to change.

Choose a “hero of hope.” Some have changed history: Nelson Mandela endured 27 years of imprisonment yet per-

severed to build a new nation. Franklin Delano Roosevelt brought hope to millions for a decade during the Great Depression. Ronald Reagan brought hope to a world that seemed forever mired in the Cold War. From his fourth State of the Union address: “Tonight, I've spoken of great plans and great dreams. They're dreams we can make come true. Two hundred years of American history should have taught us that nothing is impossible.”

Hope Gets You Unstuck

Hope changes systems that seem stuck. Katherine Johnson, the black mathematician whose critical role in the early days of NASA and the space race was featured in the movie “Hidden Figures,” recently died at age 101. The movie (and the book on which it was based) brought to light her persistence against a system that seemed forever stuck. Bryan Stevenson, who directs the Equal Justice Initiative, and the subject of the movie “Just Mercy,” has successfully fought to help those wrongly convicted or incompetently defended to get off death row.

Hope leads to fewer chronic health problems, less depression, less anxiety and a lower risk of cancer.

Stevenson laments that he could not help everyone who needed it; he concluded that he lived in a broken system, and that, in fact, he too was a broken man. Yet he constantly reminded himself of what he had told everyone he tried to help: “Each of us,” he said, “is more than the worst thing we've ever done.” Hope changes all of us. By regaining his hope, Bryan Stevenson's example inspires us.

Regardless of how hard we try, we cannot eliminate threats to hope. Bad stuff happens. But there are the endpoints of persistent hope: We become healthier and our relationships are happier. We can bring about that hope by buoying our willpower, bolstering our persistence, finding pathways to our goals and dreams, and looking for heroes of hope. And just perhaps, one day, we too can be such a hero.

Everett Worthington is an emeritus commonwealth professor of psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. This article was first published on The Conversation.

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Hope changes systems that seem stuck.



Teenagers and college students have amplified innate, developmental motivations that make them hard to isolate at home.

Try using feeling words instead of criticizing them.

How to Help Teens Shelter in Place

Teens are not made for isolation, which makes COVID-19 measures especially hard on them

CHRISTINE CARTER

Last week my kids began arriving home from their various schools. We invited our oldest daughter's longtime best friend, Lena, over for a homecoming dinner. She's like a member of our family, and we were excited to see her, too, despite closing schools and social-distancing recommendations. The kids are all healthy, we reasoned. We had Lena wash her hands when she came in; we resisted hugging her.

Then we got a government order to shelter in place and having had Lena over the night before suddenly seemed like a reckless mistake. But not all families in our neighborhood agree.

Parents all around me are reasoning that their high schoolers have been hanging out together anyway, so they've already “shared germs.” Lots of seemingly rational (but dangerously short-sighted and scientifically unvalidated) arguments for letting kids out of the house are circulating, including the belief that teens and college students won't get seriously sick, and that they aren't contributing to the spread of COVID-19 beyond their “friend groups.”

Teenagers, college students—and other families—can be difficult to control. When asked how she is holding up, a friend texted “two of my kids are at home being good citizens and students doing homework. The other is at the beach with her friends being a part of the problem.”

Another worried mother of younger kids proclaimed: “Why, for the love of God, is it so hard to follow the guidelines and ISOLATE?”

It isn't that we aren't trying. Isolating teenagers and young adults is hard. Another friend is understandably coming unglued. “My kids keep skating around rules and being with friends every time I close my office door to work.” She has two teenagers and a big corporate job she's got to keep doing. She's trying to care for elderly in-laws, and her younger daughter needs medication that she's having trouble securing. “I feel like I should be able to

control them. I'm trying. But my anxiety is so heavy. I'm emotionally exhausted.”

Time is of the essence. Accounts from Italy make it clear that we need to get our young people—those who are carrying the coronavirus but not showing any symptoms—to stop spreading it. Today matters. “It only takes a one-day difference in action to see a 40 percent reduction in cases—that's enormous. It really conveys the urgency of the situation,” infectious disease epidemiologist Dr. Britta Jewell explained to the New York Times.

Teenagers and college students have amplified innate, developmental motivations that make them hard to isolate at home. The hormonal changes that come with puberty conspire with adolescent social dynamics to make them highly attuned to social status and peer group. Friends feel like everything. Social isolation is hard for humans of all ages, but it is more profoundly distressing for adolescents—especially if they think that their friends are all hanging out without them.

In addition, their hard-wired attunement to social status makes them super touchy about whether or not they are being treated like children. Their most central developmental job during adolescence is to individuate, to leave the nest and become independent from us, their parents. So, of course, they feel infantilized when ordered to shelter in place.

What can we do to encourage teens to comply with social-distancing measures? We need to work with their existing motivations. Teens are unlikely to be persuaded by arguments—however brilliant and logical—that conflict with their innate, developmental motives.

Let's start with their high motivation to individuate, to be out from under our control. We can work with this existing motivation by treating them like competent young adults rather than little kids.

Expect Teens to Contribute Teens can help with meal prep and household cleaning. We expect our kids to keep family

spaces clear of their belongings, and also to help with actual cleaning by vacuuming and wiping down the counters. Being nice to their siblings—keeping conflict low amid tight quarters—is a meaningful contribution. Planning fun activities for the family to do together might be the most important contribution of all.

Often teens simply need to make a plan, and sometimes if they aren't asked to articulate it, they won't do it.

Allow teens to manage themselves.

Teenagers can handle their own schoolwork, and other responsibilities without nagging or cajoling. This does not mean that we won't set expectations or establish the structure and support they need to function in this new reality. Nor does it mean that we don't engage with them. It means that we give them space to operate freely within the limits we agree to as a family.

Ask them to help us with our work.

“My kids keep interrupting me on Zoom calls for stupid stuff,” a friend texted me, frustrated to the brink. Most teens need us to be clear about how their constant interruptions affect us. Try using feeling words instead of criticizing them. For example, explain rather than accuse: “I feel embarrassed and stressed when I'm on a video call and you keep asking me questions” vs. “It is inconsiderate and selfish of you to keep interrupting my meetings.”

Use non-controlling, non-directive language.

One good way to do this is to ask them questions instead of telling them what to do. For example: “Is there anything that I can do to help you get some exercise today?” My all-time favorite question is this one: “What's

your plan?” As in: “What's your plan for getting your homework done?” This makes it clear that they are still in control of their own behavior, and it helps put them in touch with their own motivations and intentions. Often teens simply need to make a plan, and sometimes if they aren't asked to articulate it, they won't do it—especially those who are used to being nagged because they know their parents will eventually get frustrated and do their planning for them.

Acknowledge that all of this is difficult.

Many students coming home from school are experiencing a sense of great loss right now. Their feelings of grief, anxiety, stress, and isolation are hard to cope with. But one of the great lessons of adulthood is that they can do hard things.

We can also tap into their high attunement to the social world by emphasizing their social value—how their lives have a purpose, meaning, and impact on other people. While Generation Z's impact on this global pandemic might be obvious to us adults, it's not to many of our kids. Here is what we said to our teen who was resisting isolation:

- We know that you want to see your friends. We know that you are bored and lonely.
- We hope you see clearly that you are not a passive actor here, along for the ride. Your actions are directly affecting the course of this crisis.
- We are wondering: What do you truly care most about in this crisis?
- Who can you help, and who are you concerned that you might harm? How can you use your skills to help the world right now?
- Your grandchildren might ask you about the role you played during this pandemic. What will you tell them?

If they just aren't getting it, try humor, which can be hugely effective with teenagers. Not comfortable with that? Try asking them to demonstrate their understanding of the graphs showing the exponential potential

of coronavirus infection rates. Show them the videos coming out of Italy and hospitals here in the United States pleading with folks to stay home.

Help them see that this is not about what they want or expect from life. It's about what life is expecting from them right now. We expect them to rise to the occasion and be a part of the solution—not the problem.

The best outcome right now is that we get the virus under control before our hospitals are overwhelmed. If this happens quickly, my family will accuse me of being too aggressive. They may be angry with me for having unnecessarily ruined a few weeks of their lives. That is the outcome I am hoping for.

No matter what happens, there are incredible, urgent life lessons here. We are teaching our kids both directly and through our own example how to take responsibility—not just for ourselves and our immediate family, but for our local and global community, as well.

We are all being called to demonstrate our character and commitment to others and to the greater good. Our young people are being called, too. Let's give them the opportunity to step up.

We are all being called to demonstrate our character and commitment to others and to the greater good.

Christine Carter, Ph.D., is a senior fellow at the Greater Good Science Center. She is the author of “The New Adolescence: Raising Happy and Successful Teens in an Age of Anxiety and Distraction” (BenBella, 2020), former director of the GGSC, and served for many years as the author of its parenting blog, “Raising Happiness.” This article was first published by the Greater Good online magazine.

Are You Afraid to Be Alone With Yourself?

Our devices are making us fear our own company and that robs us of ourselves

NANCY COLIER

People often ask me how I think human beings are changing as a result of our addiction to technology. The fact is, we are changing in innumerable ways, but perhaps none more profoundly than in our relationship with ourselves—that is, how we experience our own company.

It is paradoxical. On the one hand, those of us who live our lives on social media believe that every cinnamon latte we consume is extraordinary and meaningful to others. We share every thought and feeling, imagining the world as our dotting mother, celebrating every itch we scratch. And yet, despite our temporary sense of self-importance, we have lost touch with an internally generated sense of self-worth and meaning.

We determine much of our value by the number of thumbs up we receive on social media. We may not feel important or likable until our friends validate us with public “likes.” And if our Snapchats are left unopened, our self-worth can plummet. We are on an endless roller coaster, riding between feeling that we matter and are valuable, to believing that we are worthless and unlovable—all driven by an external, and often unknown, audience.

In the age of technology, many of us dread being alone. We consider time spent in our own company to be time to kill or to be avoided at all costs. The few moments at the end of the day when all of the devices are finally off and the distractions are gone are often viewed as boring at best and frightening at worst. To be left alone with just ourselves is to be left in a vacuum, with nothing to do and nowhere to be.

We consider time spent in our own company time to kill, or to be avoided at all costs.

These days, when a meaningful moment occurs—perhaps we go out of our way to help a stranger on the street—rather than privately processing the event and reflecting on the experience, too many of us immediately announce our story on social media: “#gratitude” or “kickin’ it with kindness.”

And then we wait for the virtual world to respond, to determine what the expe-

At this moment in history, too many of us are trying to outrun ourselves, with the great help of technology and the unending distractions it offers.

In the age of technology, many of us dread being alone.



rience will mean, and most importantly, to tell us what the event says about who we are—our identity.

Getting Reacquainted

At this moment in history, too many of us are trying to outrun ourselves, with the great help of technology and the unending distractions it offers. The goal seems to be to make it to the end of our lives without spending any time with ourselves along the way. What a tragic goal.

We treat technology as if it were our savior. We imagine that somewhere inside its magical, mysterious maze lies the key to our happiness and fruition, a place where we will finally be able to settle down and be present. Somewhere, somehow, our smartphone will deliver peace.

In truth, we cannot experience authentic well-being if we cannot tolerate our own company. We can only distract ourselves for so long before we run out of places to hide and distractions to hide in. When we chase anything external for our sense of completeness and worth, we set ourselves up for certain failure and suffering.

Nothing outside of us can ever complete us, not even technology. Every spiritual, philosophical, and psychologi-

cal tradition eventually leads us back to ourselves, to the one thing too many of us abandon in the course of our searching. Our true refuge is not in the next best app or an updated rose-gold smartphone. Ultimately, we are the destination we are seeking.

The next time you feel the impulse to check your smartphone or computer to fill an idle moment, ask yourself:

- What would I have to feel right now if I couldn't use it?
- What am I experiencing right now that I am wanting to get away from?
- What am I really longing for in this moment?

If you still use technology after contemplating these questions, that's OK, too. What's important is to start shifting your mindset so that you can experience yourself as a place to be and as someone you want to spend time with. At the end of the day, this relationship with ourselves is the true measure of well-being.

Nancy Colier is a psychotherapist, interfaith minister, author, public speaker, and workshop leader. For more information, visit NancyColier.com

TOMMASO79/SHUTTERSTOCK

How to Maintain Community While Social Distancing

Keeping your distance doesn't mean staying disconnected from the world around you

ERIC STANN

It's possible to maintain community while social distancing to contain the spread of COVID-19, according to a professor of health psychology.

In an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 throughout the United States, thousands of in-person gatherings are now canceled, including sporting events, parades, concerts, and church services. For many, the CDC recommendations on social distancing can start to feel isolating. People who have anxiety and depression can have their symptoms exacerbated, and people who are not normally depressed or anxious can start to feel disconnected and lonely.

However, there are ways to maintain community while still being responsible, according to professor Laura Schopp, chair of the department of health psychology in the School of Health Professions at the University of Missouri.

“We can mitigate the effects of social distancing by reaching out to others in different ways,” Schopp said. “It is very empowering when everyone feels like they have a place to make a contribution.”

“We can mitigate the effects of social distancing by reaching out to others in different ways.”

professor Laura Schopp, chair of the department of health psychology in the School of Health Professions at the University of Missouri



There are ways to maintain community while still being responsible.

Schopp offers the following insight for maintaining community:

Call or Video Chat With Family and Friends

Connecting with others virtually can build a sense of community during a difficult time.

This includes virtually checking in with people through text messaging and hanging out in video group chats. People can consider using phone trees to check in on family members and to keep everyone posted on how they are doing. You can play board games using video chat or FaceTime. You might want to consider a brief daily call with a small group of friends to plan what you will do today in the event that you cannot get out. Just make sure that your conversations include non-virus-related topics since it can be easy to focus on the virus and forget all the things that are going well.

Cook for Others in the Community

Cook a meal for a friend, family member, or neighbor who doesn't cook or deliver groceries to someone who is housebound.

This is a small way to make a big impact and will also brighten your day. Consider leaving kind notes for others outside their houses or an occasional small gesture of care, such as a small jar of cut flowers or a book you've recently enjoyed. Make sure others who cannot leave their houses have your cellphone number. Also, don't forget to ask about

their pets—do they have enough cat litter or dog food? Additionally, consider sharing suggestions for funny videos or classic movies you have enjoyed.

If you are uncertain of their condition, leave the item on the doorstep. Otherwise, maintain the six-foot rule. Items left should be clean.

Be Friendly With Social Distancing

There's no need to avoid eye-contact and smiling at your neighbor. We're all in this together. A polite wave can be a great morale booster during these tough times.

Share Your Extras

If you have extra toilet paper or cleaning supplies available, consider sharing your surplus to help others. Food banks, homeless shelters, and other local agencies need your donations. Many people struggle in the best of times to ensure that their families have the resources they need, and the virus puts even more pressure on individuals and organizations just when securing those resources may be most challenging.

The views and opinions expressed here are based on the research and/or opinions of the faculty member and do not reflect the university's official stance.

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WAVEBREAKMEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK



Women generally become more susceptible to cystitis if they are older, pregnant, diabetic, or confined to bed rest for long periods of time.

Green Tea

Helps Cystitis Sufferers and Prevents Antibiotic Resistance

This energizing beverage has long been acknowledged for healing effects now being recognized by researchers

Green Tea May Aid Cystitis Sufferers

These synergistic effects were explored by researchers at Kerman University of Medical Sciences in Kerman, Iran, in a pioneering clinical trial investigating green tea as an adjunct therapy for the treatment of cystitis in women.

In this triple-blind, randomized trial, researchers selected 35 patients from a sample group of healthy, premenopausal, non-pregnant adult women between 18 and 50 years of age with acute uncomplicated cystitis.

Women with complicating factors such as diabetes, discharge, or vaginitis, as well as regular green tea drinkers were excluded from consideration. Researchers hypothesized that the response rate to co-trimoxazole would be around 50 percent, and that this rate would rise to around 80 percent by adding green tea to patients' daily intake.

To test their hypothesis, 107 patients were allocated into one of two groups, experimental or placebo (control). Participants were assigned to receive four 500-milligram (mg) capsules of green tea in the experimental group, while the control group received the same number of starch-only capsules with identical shape, color, and packaging.

Both groups were dosed daily for a period of three days, while also receiving the standard course of antibiotic treatment: two 480-mg tablets of co-trimoxazole twice daily for three days.

Green Tea's Powerful Antimicrobial Effects

Green tea is known for powerful healing properties, including the ability to fight viral infections and prevent periodontal disease. In prior studies on the antimicrobial effect of green tea

for urinary tract infections, it has been noted that effectiveness is enhanced when green tea is administered before bed due to the retention of therapeutic catechins in the bladder overnight.

Study authors noted that more than 90 percent of the antimicrobial agents in green tea are excreted in the first eight hours after ingestion, therefore the patients received their capsules in the evening during the study period.

The presence of acute uncomplicated cystitis symptoms was recorded via urinalysis at baseline and also on the fourth day at the end of the study period. Patients were screened for symptoms during the three-day trial via phone consultation.

Patients whose symptoms were not resolved on the fourth day were referred to physicians for further treatment, and patients were asked to return to the clinic at two, four, and six weeks post-commencement for physician assessment of the symptoms of recurrent uncomplicated cystitis.

Green Tea and Uncomplicated Cystitis

Of the 107 eligible participants, 70 women completed the trial. Women in the green tea group showed a statistically significant decrease in the prevalence of cystitis symptoms at each time point after initiating treatment in comparison with the placebo group.

Meanwhile, the addition of the green tea resulted in a statistically significant improvement in urinalysis results (abnormal urine color, the presence of pus, and bacteria in the urine), with the exception of blood in the urine (hematuria), after three days of treatment.

Regarding the side effects of

treatment, seven patients in the placebo group and six in the green tea group reported mild nausea that was resolved within two days. There was no statistically significant difference in the incidence of nausea between the two groups. No other significant side effects were reported.

In the placebo group, 63 percent of the patients remained symptomatic, 37.1 percent had bacteriuria, and 57.1 percent had pyuria on urinalysis after three days of co-trimoxazole therapy, suggesting that there is a high prevalence of co-trimoxazole resistance among E. coli strains in the urinary tract for individuals in the geographic region of Kerman, Iran.

Previous in vitro studies in Iran have reported that more than 47 percent of the E. coli isolates from patients with urinary tract infections were resistant to cotrimoxazole. However, in the green tea group, almost all the patients responded to the treatment.

If the response rates were related to the synergistic effects of green tea catechins, it suggests that adding green tea to co-trimoxazole therapy could be a way to decrease and control the rates of co-trimoxazole resistance among uropathogenic E. coli strains.

In their final analysis, researchers concluded that green tea was an effective adjunct to trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole therapy for treating acute uncomplicated cystitis in women. They concluded that this result could be related to the antibacterial effects of green tea catechins and its synergistic effects when taken in conjunction with standard antibiotic treatment.

Common or 'uncomplicated' cystitis is a bacterial infection of the bladder that is the most prevalent type of urinary tract infection in women.

Cystitis: A Common Infection for Women

Common or “uncomplicated” cystitis is a bacterial infection of the bladder that is the most prevalent type of urinary tract infection (UTI) in women, spurring more than 6 million trips to the doctor every year in the United States.

Cystitis is typically caused when E. coli bacteria enter the bladder through the urethra, although other types of bacteria can also cause cystitis. Cystitis can occur as a reaction to certain drugs or radiation treatment, or in response to irritants such as feminine hygiene sprays and spermicides.

Health factors, like having a blocked bladder or loss of bowel control, create conditions where bacteria are more prevalent around the urethra. These bacteria move up the urethra and into the bladder causing cystitis, which is why illnesses requiring the use of a urinary catheter increase the likelihood of developing a UTI.

Women generally become more susceptible to cystitis if they are older, pregnant, diabetic, or confined to bed rest for long periods of time.

Signs You May Have Cystitis

Discomfort while urinating is typically the first sign of a cystitis infection. The sensation of painful, urgent, or more frequent urination may accompany a sensation of bladder fullness or lower abdominal discomfort. The region around the pubic bones may become more sensitive. You may also have a low-grade fever and may even detect blood in your urine.

During the more than 6 million visits to physicians that women make each year seeking treatment for UTI, diagnostic measures generally include asking the patient to urinate into a cup for a leukocyte esterase dipstick urinalysis, aimed at detecting white blood cells in the urine, showing that infection is present. Doctors may also take a bacterial culture.

GreenMedInfo.com has identified more than 400 reasons to drink green tea. To learn more about the power of plant-based medicine, including the impressive health benefits of green tea, explore the scientifically-backed research on GreenMedInfo.com.

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Both too much and too little exercise are bad while somewhere in the middle is just right.

Should I Exercise During the Coronavirus Pandemic?

Experts explain the appropriate amount of exercise to stay healthy without exhausting your immunity

TAMARA HEW-BUTLER & MARIANE FAHLMAN

So here we are, perfecting our social distancing skills while schools, sports, and other forms of social engagement are on indefinite hold because of a dangerous virus named after a (regal) crown.

The coronavirus is named as such because the center envelope is surrounded by small protein spikes called peplomers. These little protein spikes wreak havoc when they attach to lung tissue and hijack otherwise healthy tissue into building a potentially lethal coronavirus army of invaders.

Because the virus settles primarily with the respiratory tract—the nose, mouth, and lungs—it is highly contagious when people sneeze, cough, or exchange respiratory droplets with others. Despite its importance, social distancing has been a social disappointment for many weekend warriors, team sport athletes, fitness fanatics, and sports fans who find camaraderie and biochemical joy from the dopamine rushes and stress reduction that come from regular exercise.

We are both sports scientists who study athlete health and safety. We're also proud exercise addicts who find the prospect of not exercising almost as disturbing as the prospect of the disease itself.

Here's how exercise affects the immune system in response to the flu and

some practical tips on how much people should (and should not) exercise.

Look for the 'Just Right' Amount

Both too much and too little exercise are bad while somewhere in the middle is just right. Scientists commonly refer to this statistical phenomenon as a "J-shaped" curve. Research has shown exercise can influence the body's immune system. Exercise immunity refers to both the systemic (whole-body cellular response) and mucosal (mucous lining of the respiratory tract) response to an infectious agent, which follows this J-shaped curve.

A large study showed that mild to moderate exercise, performed about three times a week, reduced the risk of dying during the Hong Kong flu outbreak in 1998. The Hong Kong study was performed on 24,656 Chinese adults who died during this outbreak. This study showed that people who did no exercise at all or too much exercise—over five days of exercise per week—were at the greatest risk of dying compared with people who exercised moderately.

Additionally, studies performed on mice demonstrated that regular exercise performed two to three months prior to an infection reduced illness severity and viral load in obese and non-obese mice.

Thus, limited animal and human data cautiously suggest that exercise up to three days per week, two to three months prior, better prepares the immune system to fight a viral infection.

What if we have not exercised regularly? Will restarting an exercise routine be good or bad? Limited data, also obtained from mice, suggests that moderate exercise for 20–30 minutes a day after being infected with the influenza virus improves the chances of surviving. In fact, 82 percent of the mice who exercised 20–30 minutes a day during the incubation period, or the time between getting infected with flu and showing symptoms, survived. In contrast, only 43 percent of the sedentary mice and 30 percent of the mice who performed strenuous exercise—or 2.5 hours of exer-



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cise a day—survived.

Therefore, at least in laboratory mice, mild to moderate exercise may also be protective after we get infected with the flu virus. But while a little exercise is good, no exercise—or even too much exercise—is bad.

For those who are "committed exercisers," how much exercise is probably too much during a flu pandemic? It is clear that both too much exercise and exercising while sick increases the risk of medical complications and dying.

We conducted studies on both collegiate football players and cross-country runners, which showed a decrease in secretory immunoglobulin A, or "sIgA" when athletes competed and trained hard. sIgA is an antibody protein used by

the immune system to neutralize pathogens, including viruses.

sIgA is also closely associated with upper respiratory tract infections (URTI). When sIgA levels go down, URTI's usually go up. We saw this relationship in football players who showed the most URTI symptoms when their sIgA levels were lowest. This indirectly suggests that over-exercise without adequate recovery may make our body more vulnerable to attack, especially by respiratory viruses. So, when it comes to immunity, our studies show that more exercise is not necessarily better.

Here are some guidelines based on just the right amount—for most people.

Excessive exercise can put additional strain on your immune system, while moderate exercise can keep it in fighting form should infection strike.

Do not exercise past exhaustion, which increases the risk of infection.

- Do perform mild to moderate exercise (20–45 minutes), up to three times per week.
- Strive to maintain (not gain) strength or fitness during the quarantine period.
- Do avoid physical contact during exercise that is likely to expose you to mucosal fluids or hand-to-face contact.
- Wash and disinfect equipment after use.
- If you use a gym, find one that is adequately ventilated and exercise away from others to avoid droplets.
- Remain engaged with teammates through social media, rather than social gatherings.
- Eat and sleep well to boost your immune system.
- Remain optimistic that this too shall pass.

How Much Exercise May Be Too Risky? Here are some things not to do:

- Do not exercise past exhaustion, which increases the risk of infection. An example would include marathon running, which increases the risk of illness from 2.2 percent to 13 percent after the race.
- Do not exercise if you have any flu-like symptoms.
- Do not exercise more than five days a week.
- Do not exercise in crowded, enclosed spaces.

Do not overdrink fluids, especially when sick, to try and "flush out" the toxins or prevent dehydration. It is not true that you can "flush out" toxins.

The J-shaped ("just right") curve suggests that exercise, like most things, is best in moderation. Stay safe out there and be creative. The game is not over, just temporarily suspended.

Tamara Hew-Butler is an associate professor of exercise and sports science at Wayne State University, and Mariane Fahlman is a professor of kinesiology, health and sport studies at Wayne State University. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.



SAVVAPANF PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Are You Sure You're Buying Whole Grains?

'Multigrain' and 'made with whole grains' may falsely indicate meaningful whole grain content

MOHAN GARIKIPARITHI

"Eat more whole grains" is one of the most common pieces of nutritional advice modern science continues to affirm. Whole grains are high in fiber and other nutrients that are associated with a lower risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, obesity, and more.

But do you know how to buy a whole grain item? Does "multigrain" mean whole grain? And are all whole grain products created equally?

The answers might surprise you. First, a few quick facts about whole grains. Whole grains are made of three main components: the bran, germ, and endosperm. The bran and germ are the most nutritious parts that are likely responsible for whole grain's effects on blood pressure, cholesterol, digestion, and more.

As far as whole grains go, oats and brown rice are completely intact. Quinoa and amaranth are safe bets, too. Whole grain flour is milled in a way that retains the three parts even though they are not intact.

One full serving of whole grains is 16 grams. Recommendations are that you should eat 48 grams—three servings—of whole grains per day for health benefits. So, how do you know how much you're getting if this information is not on nutrition labels?

The easiest way is to look for the golden stamp of the Oldways Whole Grains Council, a consumer advocacy group. They have three tiers of whole grains to help customers understand what they are getting:

100 percent Whole Grain: The product features 16 g of whole grains per serving and is entirely made from whole grain.

50 percent Whole Grain: At least half of each serving is whole grain. This means there are 8 grams of whole grain per serving.

Whole Grain: This means that less than half of a serving is made from whole grain, yet there is still at least 8 grams per serving. Proportionally, though, there are more refined grains than whole.

Of course, not all products get the stamp. To assess whole grain content, pay attention to where they are listed on the ingredients list. If whole grains are near the top, then there is likely a decent supply.

Lastly, don't be fooled by certain keywords that sound good but don't indicate whether or not a product is whole grain. These words or phrases include "multigrain," "made with whole grain," "stone-ground," and "organic."

These terms don't tell you anything about the whole grain content, specifically, so they should not be relied on. The last thing you want to do is buy something detrimental when you think it's healthy.

Mohan Garikiparithi holds a degree in medicine from Osmania University (University of Health Sciences). He practiced clinical medicine for over a decade. During a three-year communications program in Germany, he developed an interest in German medicine (homeopathy) and other alternative systems of medicine. This article was originally published on *Bel Marra Health*.

During Coronavirus Hospital Surge, a Midwife Recommends Home Birth

Keeping healthy mothers and newborns away from hospitals and freeing up resources for those infected are big wins

MANAVI HANDA

For many health care providers who worked through the 2003 SARS epidemic, especially in epicenters, like Toronto, the COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder of the many lessons health care providers learned at that time. Social distancing measures are the most effective way to "flatten the curve" and minimize the spread of the epidemic.

For people with high blood pressure, diabetes, preterm labor, and other health issues, home birth wouldn't be the safest option.

However, as a midwife working in Toronto for more than 20 years, I can also speak about another important lesson learned during SARS that is often forgotten or overlooked: the importance of home birth and the role of midwives during an epidemic.

There is ample evidence from high-income countries like Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom to demon-

strate the safety of home births for healthy people who have a trained midwife. In fact, research shows that home birth may even be beneficial in terms of rates of unnecessary interventions, complications, and associated costs to the system.

The evidence is so compelling that in 2014, the United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)—the main body responsible for setting guidelines for health care in the UK—recommended home births for all low-risk healthy pregnant people. Since the selection criteria for home birth is vitally important to safety, being a low-risk pregnant person is an important factor. For people with high blood pressure, diabetes, preterm labor, and other health issues, home birth wouldn't be the safest option.

However, despite these recommendations, the mainstream perception hasn't greatly changed regarding the hospital as the preferred place of birth for the large majority. The reasons for this are numerous and complicated, and highly related to social norms, preferences, and perceptions of risk. I have seen many news articles, targeted campaigns, TV shows, and even movies supporting home births. But in all my 20 years as a regulated midwife, nothing in my recollection came close to changing people's minds about the place of birth more than SARS.

For midwives, this wasn't necessarily surprising, as we know the safety of home birth. But it was one of the first times mainstream public perception was greatly altered.

Home Births During a Pandemic

During a pandemic, people quickly remember that hospitals are, and should be, for sick people; that is, those needing medical care. Ironically, however, in Canada and the United States, childbirth is the top reason people are admitted to hospitals.



Research shows that home birth may even be beneficial in terms of rates of unnecessary interventions, complications, and associated costs to the system.

During a pandemic, it soon becomes apparent what a bad idea it is to have healthy women and newborns in the same place as those who are unwell due to a contagious infection.

I fully appreciate all the bells and whistles of modern medical care—when they are needed. But, like many of my colleagues, I prefer a home birth for low-risk births with a healthy uncom-

plicated pregnancy and normal labor. Not just because it can be very beautiful—quiet, intimate, family-oriented—but also because it is actually safer for healthy people—especially during a pandemic.

Although I could talk about the great benefits of home births in general, I'm specifically advocating for home births, or out-of-hospital births, during the pandemic. So, as our health resources and hospital beds become more scarce, I hope we remember the importance of home birth.

Lessons From SARS

SARS was one of the rare times in my career that I had both obstetrical and pediatric colleagues openly supporting the idea of home births and encouraging people to stay out of the hospital. At that time, we understood hospital care should be saved for those who were at high risk. This was even more clear as the situation worsened during the SARS epidemic.

There were many other important lessons learned during SARS, particularly for Canadian midwifery—although there is almost no academic literature on this subject. However, I do have some anecdotal experience to share as a front-line care provider during that time.

Midwives are an important part of the health force that is often overlooked. Our specialty is low-risk normal birth: This is where we have the most expertise and where we can be most effective.

This is a time when other birth attendants—mainly obstetricians—will be called on for their clinical and surgical specialty skills to manage those pregnant people who have complications, have COVID-19, or are unwell for other reasons.

Midwives can be divided into those who work within the hos-

pital setting and those that work outside within the community. This would help prevent movement in and out of people's homes and health care settings.

During a pandemic, people quickly remember that hospitals are, and should be, for sick people; that is, those needing medical care.

Midwives have a lot of crossover skills between nurses and physicians. We can stitch and prescribe, like a physician, but also start an IV and take blood, like a nurse. There are many things we can use our skills for beyond birthing.

Some midwives have more advanced skills such as being able to assist during surgery, perform bedside ultrasounds, and conduct vacuum deliveries. These skills could be important as the health force declines.

Birth centers, or other out-of-hospital birth locations, should be considered and opened as places for low-risk people to give birth and for healthy newborns to stay.

Manavi Handa is an associate professor of the midwifery education program at Ryerson University in Canada. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

New Study Suggests Exercise Can Supplement ADT

Exercise may alleviate the side effects of hormone reduction therapy for prostate disease

DEVON ANDRE

If you're undergoing hormone reduction therapy to treat your prostate, a new study finds exercise can aid recovery and limit side effects.

Androgen suppression therapy, or androgen deprivation therapy (ADT), is a common treatment used to limit androgen production and stymie the spread of compromised prostate cells.

Consistency and adherence are essential if you're interested in experiencing any of the benefits of exercise.

But the treatment comes with a number of side effects like increased body fat and reduced efficiency of the cardiovascular and pulmonary systems. These side effects can boost the risk of heart attack or stroke while also reducing the quality of life.

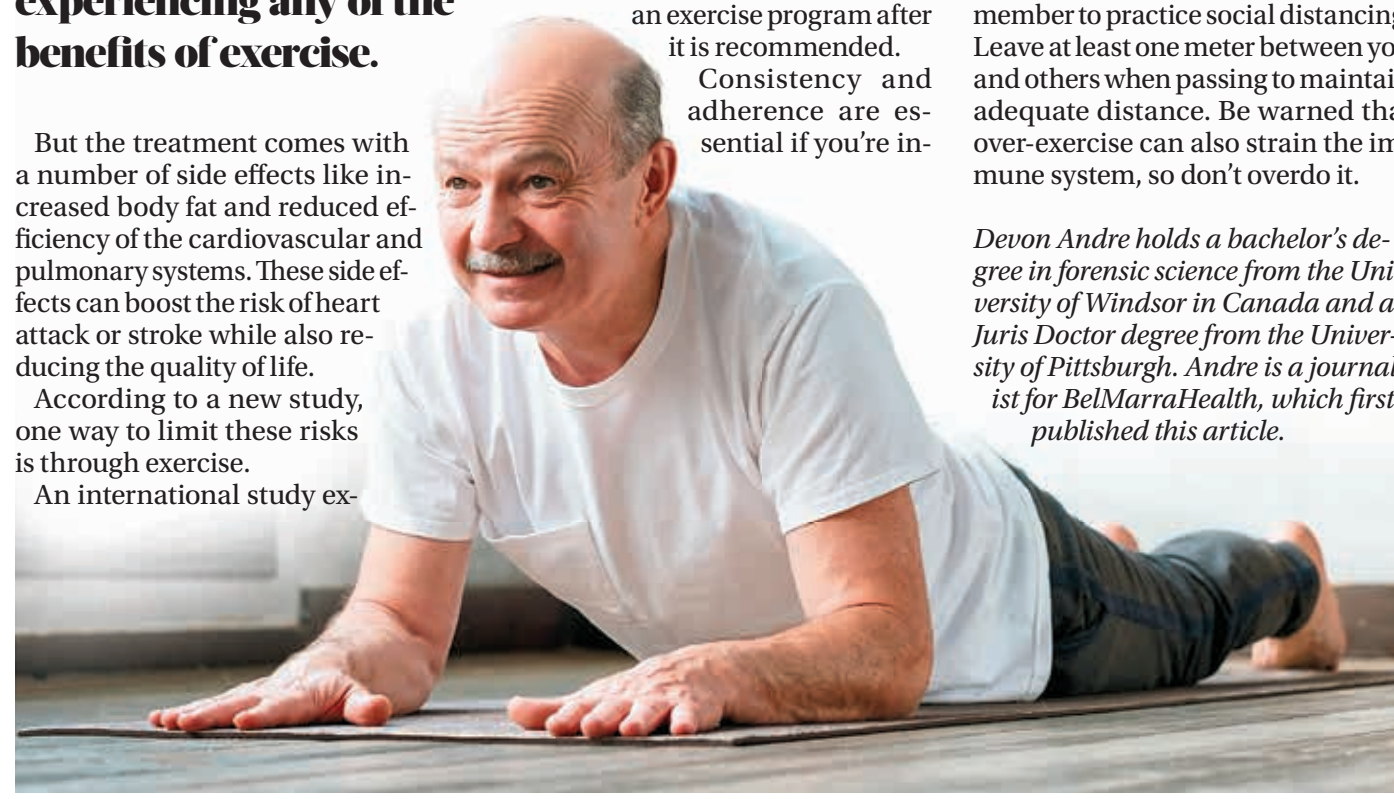
According to a new study, one way to limit these risks is through exercise. An international study ex-

amined if a supervised exercise program could help reduce ADT side effects in 50 men. The exercise group completed three months of supervised aerobic and resistance training for 60 minutes twice per week.

Afterward, they continued with self-directed exercise for three weeks. The study started before participants began ADT, and it was noted that the side effects associated with the treatment went way down. Participants showed several benefits, including improvements in fatigue and lower risk for heart and lung disease.

Researchers noted that the first three months following ADT is when side effects develop, and exercise may help combat them. Starting just before is recommended, and continuing an exercise program after it is recommended.

Consistency and adherence are essential if you're in-



COLLINS/SHUTTERSTOCK

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Steps to Avoid That Burned-Out Feeling

FIZKES/SHUTTERSTOCK

If you are working too hard, it is critical to rest, relax, and breathe to avoid a decline in your well-being

LYNN JAFFEE

At my acupuncture clinic, I see a number of patients who work too hard. I see a busy lawyer who sometimes works 70 and 80 hours a week. I work with a woman who is in school and holding down a job at the same time.

I also see a number of women who are trying to balance a busy work schedule with caring for their young children. These people have a couple of things in common: They are working too hard, and they're exhausted.

In Chinese medicine, working too hard, or overwork is considered to be a common cause of illness. It's believed that in order to be completely healthy, you must have a good balance between rest and work. When you burn the candle at both ends, the result is a depletion of your energy.

Chinese medicine is all about energy, and having enough to function on a daily basis is crucial. If you become depleted, you might experience symptoms such as getting sick frequently, fatigue, a poor appetite, feeling cold, easy bruising, a pale complexion, poor digestion, and

shortness of breath.

What can you do if overwork has taken its toll on your energy? The obvious answer is to not work so hard. However, if you're the parent of small children or the sole wage-earner in a family, if you need to work long hours at your job or have decided to go to school and work at the same time, working less may not be possible.

There are things that you can do, however, to protect your health until a time when you can slow down.

1. Get Enough Sleep. If you do nothing else, getting enough sack time is imperative—seven to eight hours is ideal. If you struggle with insomnia, consulting with your acupuncturist can be extremely helpful.

2. Rest and Rejuvenate. While this may feel like one more thing to do in a busy week, it's important to take some time for yourself to rebuild your depleted energy. This means taking some time each day to feed yourself mentally and spiritually. If you have time on a weekend, put your feet up for half an hour and take a nap.

3. Eat Well. According to Chinese medicine, your energy is made from the food you eat and the air you breathe. Eating foods that are wholesome, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and light proteins cooked in soups, stews, and stir-fried dishes are nutritious and easy to digest. (Yes, some fruits can be cooked into soups, curries, compotes, and other entrees.)



While this may feel like one more thing to do in a busy week, it's important to take some time for yourself to rebuild your depleted energy.

Chinese medicine is all about energy, and having enough to function on a daily basis is crucial.

4. Just Breathe. Most of us don't think much about breathing because it's something we do all the time. However, knowing that your energy is made partly from the air you take into your body through the lungs might make you a little more conscious of how you breathe.

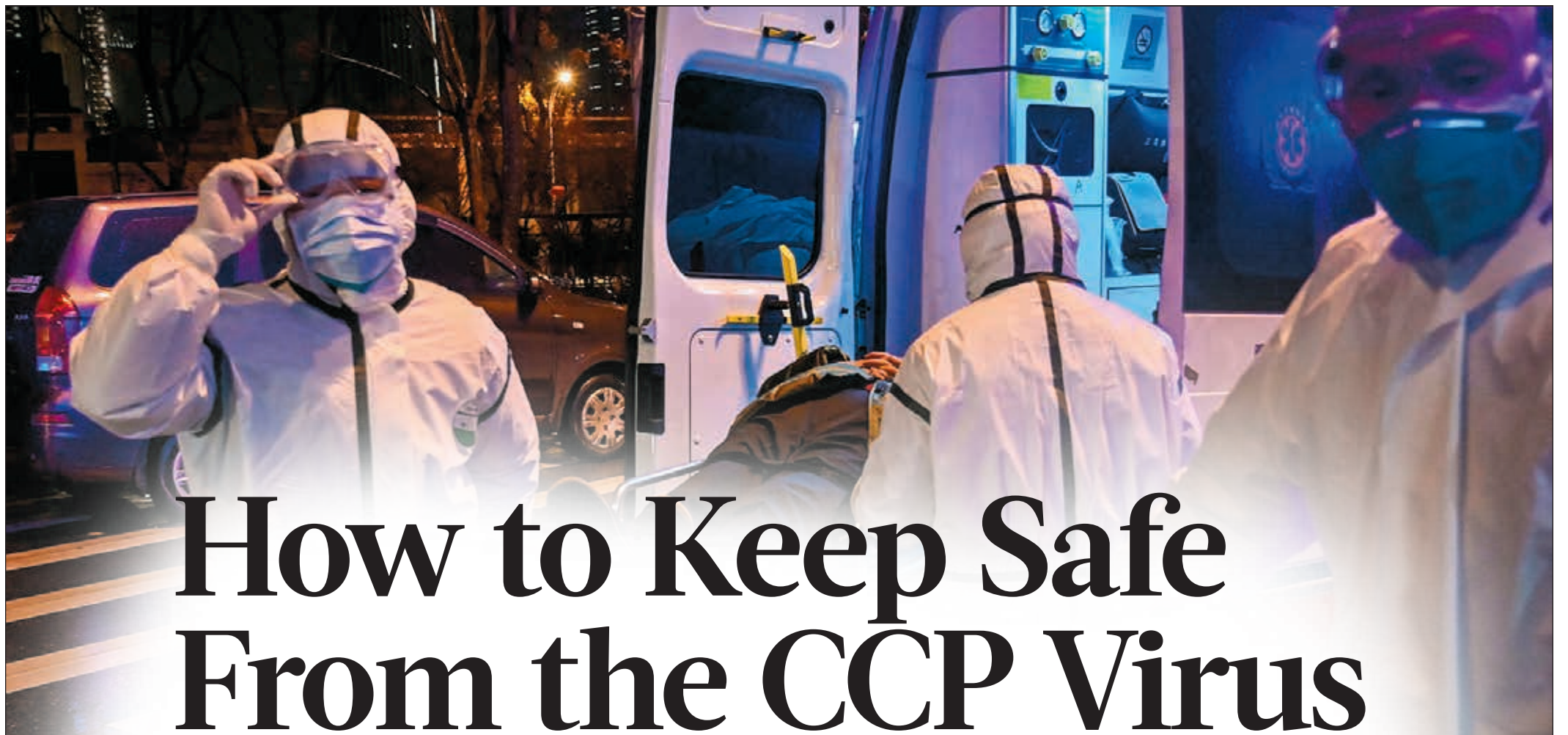
Take a few minutes each day (really, only three or four minutes) to take a deep breath, open your chest as you breathe in, hold for five seconds, and release slowly until your lungs are empty. Repeat this sequence for 10 breaths.

5. Sit Up. You can't breathe properly (or digest well) if you're slumped over a keyboard

or folded into a couch. Imagine you have a string coming out of the top of your head that is pulling you upward. Feel yourself getting taller, your shoulders dropping, and your chest opening.

6. Take Care. If you are working too hard or too many hours, the ideal solution is to lighten up. However, if that's not possible, it's especially important for you to take really good care of yourself to avoid becoming sick or exhausted.

Lynn Jaffee is a licensed acupuncturist and the author of "Simple Steps: The Chinese Way to Better Health." This article was originally published on Acupuncture-TwinCities.com



How to Keep Safe From the CCP Virus

In times like these, you need trusted information.

The Epoch Times was months ahead of other media in covering the CCP virus, commonly referred to as the novel coronavirus.

Similarly, The Epoch Times was among the first to report on the SARS epidemic in 2003.

That is because we are truly independent and not afraid of reporting honestly on the Chinese

Communist Party (CCP) and the threat it poses to the world.

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