

COMPREHENDING COVID

A TRI-BETA PANDEMIC NEWSLETTER



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Do antibiotics or other medications cure or prevent COVID?

Just as the coronavirus has spread at a rapid rate over the past year, so have the number of COVID-19 misconceptions. There have been various myths concerning the coronavirus, making it difficult for people to discern what may be accurate or inaccurate. A common misconception surrounding COVID-19 has to do with the use of antibiotics to counteract the virus. The purpose of antibiotics may not always be made clear to people and even patients. COVID-19 is caused by a virus in the family of viruses called Coronaviridae. Viruses do not have cell walls, like bacteria, but are coated by protein instead.



Antibiotics attack the cell walls of bacteria, disrupt reproduction, or inhibit bacterial proteins, which means that they have no effect on viruses. Thus, it would not have an effect on the coronavirus. The virus would continue to run its course in the body even if antibiotics are taken. As a result, taking antibiotics to prevent or counteract the coronavirus will not be as effective as you may think. On the other hand, the coronavirus may lead to various bacterial infections, which would require the use of antibiotics. In this case, healthcare providers or physicians may prescribe antibiotics to fight secondary bacterial infections after a viral infection.

Additionally, a commonly known medication, hydroxychloroquine, has reportedly been stated in the news as a cure for the coronavirus. But it was only a theory at the time, and evidence showed that this information is false.





Hydroxychloroquine, or chloroquine, is a treatment for various diseases, such as malaria, lupus erythematosus, and rheumatoid arthritis. Some have made claims about and studied the effects of chloroquine on COVID-19, believing it may be a possible treatment for the coronavirus.

However, research and data shows in this short time period that this medication does not effectively treat people diagnosed with COVID-19. In some countries, like Uganda, where a majority of the population is already taking hydroxychloroquine to treat and prevent certain diseases, like malaria, people believed that this drug also prevented and treated the coronavirus. On the contrary, evidence has shown that the safety restrictions and regulations in Uganda contributed to the low COVID-19 cases, not chloroquine. This drug may be safe for patients diagnosed with malaria or autoimmune disorders, but can cause mild to severe side effects for others who may take it without medical supervision.



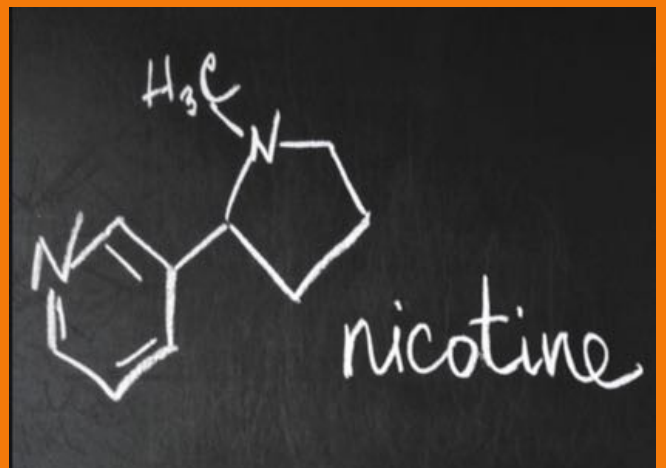
Hydroxychloroquine may also cause side effects, such as chest discomfort, blurred vision, and difficulty breathing. Therefore, hydroxychloroquine is not recommended as a method for COVID-19 treatment or prevention. For more information on hydroxychloroquine, visit [COVID 19 TREATMENT GUIDELINES](#).



With all these myths circulating around, it is important to check the facts and validity of different claims related to COVID-19 before putting yourself or others at risk of harm. To stress the importance of staying safe is to also know what is real and what is fake in the news about the coronavirus. As of right now, there is no cure for the coronavirus and it is critical for people to not carelessly test medications on themselves as a means to prevent or cure the virus. Instead, we must leave the research to the medical professionals and research teams. To learn more about various COVID-19 myths and facts, visit [WHO Mythbusters](#).

Vaping: Friend or Foe Against COVID 19

Over the past five years, vaping e-cigarettes, commonly known as Juuls, puff bars, etc., has become an increasingly popular pastime for many teenagers and young adults across the country. What started as a device designed to help appease the nicotine cravings of addicted smokers trying to quit cigarettes, soon became a new, multimillion-dollar 'trend' among the youth of America. Hoping to discourage and restrict adolescents from unnecessarily damaging their respiratory systems, the Food and Drug Administration banned the 'fruity', more appealing flavors, while President Trump signed to raise the minimum age for the sale of tobacco products from 18 to 21 years old. Unfortunately, due to fake I.D.s and new companies creating disposable, fun-flavored vapes, the issue is far from being resolved. This concerning situation only continued to escalate with the world-wide outbreak of COVID-19, a virus causing lung infections that have claimed thousands of lives in the United States alone.



With all the speculation surrounding COVID-19, it comes as no surprise that unreliable sources on websites and popular apps, like Tik-Tok and Facebook, began to spread inaccurate assumptions about the pandemic and vaping. Without any scientific support, questionable articles and posts started to come out and support the idea that vaping helps to protect the lungs and respiratory system from contracting the hazardous disease.



In an article by the Vaping Post, it discusses a study held in France that revealed a lower rate of contracting COVID-19 in smoking/vaping patients compared to the general population. However, without any reputable, scientific proof or data, this article, like many others, only added fuel to the flames of an unfortunate side-effect from the pandemic: the spread of illogical information to the public through social media.

Thankfully, trustworthy organizations, like The American Lung Association, opposed the uninformed idea that vaping and smoking helps to protect and fight against COVID-19. Dr. Albert Rizzo, Chief Medical Officer of The American Lung Association, explains that inhaling substances with vape emissions and tobacco smoke disrupts the capacity of the lungs to secrete an important mucus layer found within human airways. This mucus layer is imperative in protecting the respiratory system, by removing harmful substances and debris out of the lungs. Not only that, but vaping and smoking irritates and induces inflammation in the airways.

THESE SYMPTOMS CREATE A WEAKENED RESPIRATORY SYSTEM THAT CAN EASILY SUCCUMB TO AN INFECTION, SUCH AS COVID-19. "COVID-19 IS A LUNG INFECTION THAT AGGRESSIVELY ATTACKS THE LUNGS AND EVEN LEAVES LUNG CELLS AND TISSUE DEAD. IT WOULD BE REASONABLE TO THINK THAT ANY CONDITION THAT POTENTIALLY AFFECTS THE LUNGS, BE IT CHRONIC ACUTE EFFECTS FROM SUCH BEHAVIOR AS SMOKING OR VAPING, REGARDLESS OF THE INGREDIENTS INHALED, COULD PLAY A ROLE IN MAKING SOMEONE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO COMPLICATIONS FROM THE DISEASE."

- DR. RIZZO





A recent study in The New England Journal of Medicine revealed that individuals who smoked were 2.4 times more likely to experience more severe COVID-19 symptoms than non-smoking individuals. With the current situation of the world, it is now more critical than ever for people who vape or smoke to quit the habit that could potentially cause painful suffering, or even death, when combined with COVID-19. For more information, visit: [American Lung Association.](https://www.lung.org)

Is COVID on my hair? On my clothes?

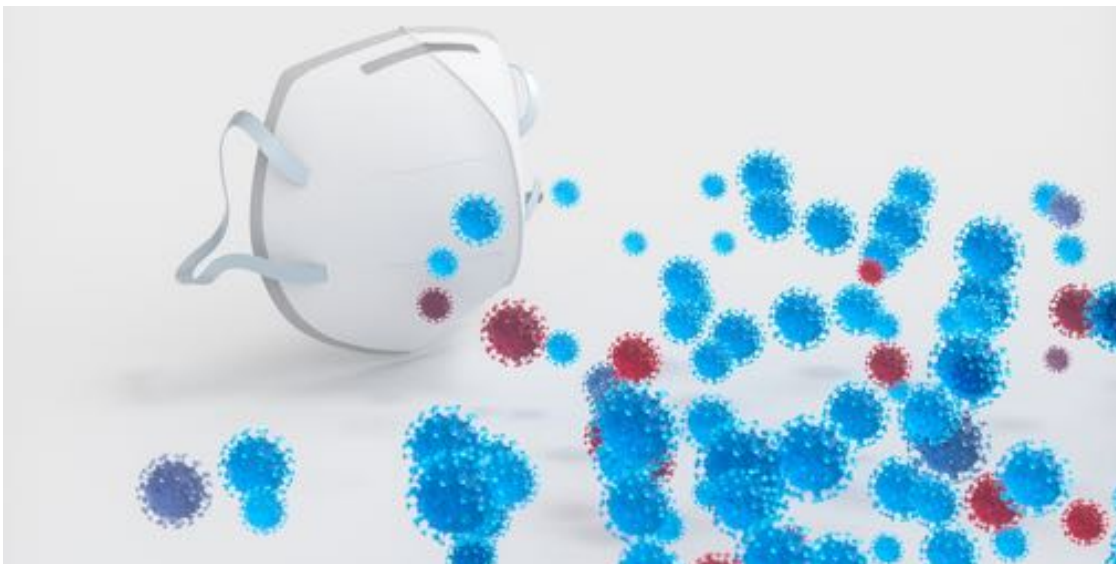
Speculations on COVID have been circulating the media for months now and it is time to debunk some of these myths. Becoming more aware of the way COVID behaves can help alleviate stress in these already stressful times. Many people have had the misconception that COVID can stick to hair and clothing. Although it is said that COVID can stay on surfaces for long periods of time, hair and clothing do not fall into that category. It is true that any virus can cling to human hair, as stated on WebMD, however that does not mean the virus can make you sick. The strength of COVID weakens anywhere outside of the body, which causes it to become too weak to make someone sick.



Our hair also has a layer of protection against viruses. Human hair not only secretes slippery oil onto the scalp to protect from germs, but the antimicrobial effect it has can cause germs to die more quickly. So the next time you're worried about catching the coronavirus from your hair, rest easy because your hair has that under control.

it is unlikely for coronavirus to land and survive on clothing. Even if someone was to cough behind you, the droplets would not fall far enough to land on your clothing. As mentioned before, the droplets dissipate and the virus weakens outside of the body. Especially if masks and social distancing is maintained, the chances of your clothes being a source of virus is very unlikely.

This is in part due to aerodynamics. Studies have shown that viruses can stay in the air in small droplets for half an hour. However, since humans move relatively slowly compared to insects, collisions with air particles is not likely.





In the NY Times, Dr. Marr, an aerosol scientist at Virginia Tech, further explained that “as we move, we push air out of the way, too.” The small droplets follow a streamline of air which gets pushed away as we move. Droplets would need to be larger in order to get onto someone’s clothes. Changing your clothes after coming home from the grocery store can be comforting, but rest assured that you will be fine even if you don’t.

Surfaces that COVID can live on are plastics, stainless steel, cardboard, paper, glass, ceramics, and aluminum. The best protection we have against COVID is disinfecting common surfaces and objects in the home and at work. Having a box of clorox wipes with you has never been more acceptable. Disinfecting things you buy or receive in the mail would be a good idea as well. Continually social distancing, mask wearing, and hand washing/sanitizing should be the main focus on fighting this virus. These virus protection methods are highly effective and helpful. The next time you come back home from being in the store DO wash your hands, but DON'T worry about taking a shower.

for more information, visit:

[Is the virus on my clothes?](#)
[How long does COVID-19 lives on surfaces?](#)

