

COVID-19 Facts VS Fiction

Claim: "Avoid Ibuprofen if you are infected with Coronavirus."

Verdict: FICTION

This myth originated from a reputable source – the French health minister. The WHO and NHS have since clarified that there is no evidence to suggest that Ibuprofen causes adverse outcomes in Coronavirus cases and there is no reason to avoid it.

Claim: "Children and young adults cannot be infected with Coronavirus."

Verdict: FICTION

All age groups can be infected. Younger age groups just seem to be experiencing milder symptoms. Whether symptomatic or not, all infected individuals act as carriers for the disease and spread it to more vulnerable groups.

Claim: "If you don't drink enough water regularly, the virus can enter your windpipe and into lungs. People should drink water at least every 15 minutes to wash the virus down through the throat and into the stomach, where the acid will kill the virus."

Verdict: FICTION

Although drinking plenty of water is a good thing, there is no evidence to support it will protect you from a Coronavirus infection.

Claim: "Gargling or drinking warm water or salt water will kill the virus."

Verdict: FICTION

Based on data from other respiratory viruses, there is no evidence to support this claim. The implication that warm water will inactivate the virus is entirely inaccurate.

Claim: "If you are able to take a deep breath and hold it for 10 seconds without coughing or chest discomfort, it proves that you do not have lung fibrosis and therefore do not have the virus."

Verdict: FICTION

When someone has an acute viral upper respiratory infection, it may **sometimes** be difficult to take a deep breath and not cough because the airways are irritated. This in no way is an indication of fibrosis or Coronavirus infection.

Claim: "Coronavirus only produces dry cough. If you have a productive or 'wet' cough or have a runny nose, you do not have Coronavirus."

Verdict: FICTION

Many cases of Coronavirus have a dry cough, but it can also produce a wet cough. Neither wet cough nor a runny nose rules out COVID-19 infection.

Claim: "Surgical face masks protect against coronavirus."

Verdict: FICTION

Healthcare workers use professional face masks, which fit tightly around the face, to protect them against infection. However, disposable face masks are unlikely to provide such protection. As these masks do not fit neatly against the face, droplets can still enter the mouth and nose. Also, tiny viral particles can penetrate directly through the material. However, if someone has a respiratory illness, wearing a mask can help protect others from becoming infected.

Claim: "Hand dryers and other sources of heat kill the coronavirus"

Verdict: FICTION

Hand dryers do not kill the virus. The best solution is to use soap and water or hand sanitizer.

Claim: "You can protect yourself by gargling bleach"

Verdict: FICTION

There are no circumstances in which gargling bleach might benefit your health. Bleach is corrosive and can cause serious damage.

Claim: "Home remedies like Vitamin C or Garlic can cure and protect against Coronavirus"

Verdict: FICTION

No home remedies can protect against COVID-19, including vitamin C, essential oils, silver colloid, sesame oil or garlic.

Claim: "Coronavirus was man-made in a Laboratory"

Verdict: FICTION

There is no evidence to support this conspiracy theory.

Claim: "You can get Coronavirus by eating Chinese food."

Verdict: FICTION

There is no evidence to suggest Coronavirus infection can spread through food.

Claim: "You can get Coronavirus from packages from China."

Verdict: FICTION

Although the novel Coronavirus has shown to be able to survive on some surfaces like glass and metal for a few days, it's survivability on packaging material is poor and therefore unlikely to spread infection. If worried, packages can be wiped down with anti-septic wipes.

Claim: "Homeopathic medicine like 'Arsenicum' can be used to prevent and treat Coronavirus."

Verdict: FICTION

There is no scientific evidence to suggest the efficacy of Arsenicum in the prevention or treatment of COVID-19. It can still be taken, since there are likely no side effects.

Claim: "The virus will die off when temperatures rise in spring."

Verdict: Too soon to tell

Some viruses, such as cold and flu viruses, do spread more easily in the colder months, but that does not mean that they stop entirely when conditions become milder. As it stands, scientists do not know how temperature changes will influence the behavior of SARS-CoV-2.

Claim: "The virus can be treated with Hydroxychloroquine"

Verdict: Too soon to tell

Some anecdotal evidence has suggested that Hydroxychloroquine reduced viral load on nasal swabs. Does it reduce symptoms of COVID-19 or reduce duration of illness? We currently do not know. It is in clinical trials now with Azithromycin to assess effectiveness. Earlier trials showed that anti-retroviral drugs (against HIV) like Lopinavir and Indinavir are ineffective in treatment of COVID-19. We will have to wait and see what, if any, drug will be available for the treatment of COVID-19.

Claim: "People with Blood Type 'A' are more susceptible for Coronavirus"

Verdict: Too soon to tell

There has been 1 study out of China which showed that individuals with blood type A are at higher risk for getting Coronavirus. This study has not been peer reviewed or corroborated in any way. It is possibly true, but again, only time will tell.

What are the facts?

The best defense against Coronavirus is good handwashing and social distancing.