

COVID-19 Facts vs Fiction

Viruses are 100 times smaller than bacteria and can only be seen through the highest form of microscopy. They become **easily airborne** and this is why viruses often enter the human body through our respiratory systems. A virus is not a typical living organism; they require a living host to replicate. They can remain virulent (able to propagate in an animal host) for hours to days while resting on inanimate surfaces waiting to be transferred to a host. Much like seeds from a weed scattered to the winds waiting to come to rest in moist, fertile soil that germinate into more abundant seed spreading weeds. Most people are not avid biological science geeks and find the subject of microbes a bit boring until something like a pandemic grabs our attention. Unfortunately that leaves most people deficient in the understanding of what is necessary to protect themselves and their loved ones appropriately and makes many of us vulnerable to anxiety and fear through lack of understanding. Unfortunately, many lack knowledge concerning viral infection spread which makes us not much better off than people that lived in the 1700's trying to understand how to prevent the spread of disease. Here are some facts to help provide better understanding.

Facts vs Fiction:

Corona virus is likely to gradually die out. This **may be True** if society is willing to accept an unknown death toll.?! The fact is, there is a lot that is unknown about this virus. Scientific historical facts show that as most viruses spread through a population they often mutate into a less virulent / less life threatening form. We do not know if this will be true for COVID-19. Even if true, it takes about two years for this process to occur with a death toll that may be unacceptable to reach a less virulent point in the biological process.

Kids are nearly immune to COVID-19. This is **False**. What is true is that they are considerably less likely to die from a COVID-19 infection. Scientists are not certain at this time if children can be a significant cause for the spread of the virus. Some studies show they are not and some recent events at Georgia schools and summer camps say they may be. This will require time to sort out the facts and reach more certain conclusions.

You can protect yourself from COVID-19 by injecting or bathing your skin with bleach. This is **False**. While bleach may be able to kill any virus on your skin it does not prevent you from inhaling the virus into your respiratory system where the virus can take hold and cause an infection. Putting high concentrations of bleach on your skin can be harmful to the skin and result in break down of your protective skin layers. Injecting bleach is never good and can be fatal.

Only the elderly are at risk. This is **False**. People of all ages who have any of the following: asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, high blood pressure, immuno-compromised and/or obesity are at greater risk if contracting COVID-19. Anyone with co-morbidities have a greater risk of fatality should they contract COVID-19

Because I have constantly sheltered in place I do not need to be tested for COVID-19. This statement is **False**. Testing is part of our community effort to understand the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. The county wants everyone to be tested. Testing helps collect the necessary scientific data to determine the severity of this pandemic in our county. It helps the county health department determine hotspots and how best to react to this pandemic. Many businesses are suffering under shelter in place but we can not make sound judgments on how and when to lift restrictions if we do not have accurate scientific data about this pandemic.