

Article by Zelda le Grange.

So I've read extensively about the corona virus over the last couple of months (since I have been to London) and I want to help de-bunk certain stigmas with this post for those interested and are overwhelmed with contradicting information. This is a lay-womens post but this is what Ive gathered.

There is currently no vaccine or medicine to cure the corona virus.

It is a common flu but one that progresses by default to a vital organ (the lungs) and since there is no medicine to cure it then becomes deadly if the lungs are susceptible to the infection.

It is deadly to anyone with a compromised immune system. Compromised immune system means anyone with another underlying illness and people who are generally weak especially those with lung problems. Eg: old, already sick, and/or children who have not developed strenght in lungs like adults, people who have HIV/TB, cronic asthma, weak lungs etc

It is currently prevalent in the northern hemisphere because it is winter there, so normal high season for flu. Winter is approaching in SA and why so few cases have been reported in the southern hemisphere in comparison to the rest of the world.

The World Health Organisation is on a hype about it as they have seen how fast it mutates (contagious) and how deadly it can be to the weak obviously also projecting its effects on the developing world (mostly Southern hemisphere), come winter. The WHO issues reports every year about the flu strain for the season and the reason they have not declared it a pandemic is that not all people who contract it will necessarily die but the mortality rate is higher than other strains of the past.

So yes, 10 000 people may die of the flu annually but with corona it could be 20 000 or 100 000 or more.

To panic is unnecessary. To prepare is vital.

In contracting the flu previously you may have been in contact with someone who had the beginning stages of flu and two days later you would start showing symptoms too. Once a person has full on flu, it is no longer contagious as your symptoms are not usually the virus itself. From what I understand Corona symptoms can start showing as long as two weeks after you contracted it and its initial signs are obscured which is why it is so contagious. Once you show symptoms it quickly moves to the lungs and in many cases too late to start medication strenghtening the lungs.

So yes flu is flu but the hype is about the mutation process and how and where the virus then manifests itself (lungs).

When I get a common cold, it always goes into my chest so I will be super vigilant. I have contracted flu from a beautician and a manicurist and it ended in full blown broncitis. My common sense tells me I am a perfect host. (yes yes i know)

Wearing a face mask will not prevent you from contracting it. The face masks' purpose is to prevent you from touching an area contaminated and then touching your mouth, nose or face.

You won't contract the virus by just speaking to someone who has the virus. Keep a distance from people generally.

Hand sanitizer will not help unless it is 60% alcohol based. Washing your hands with soap and water thoroughly, regularly is what will help.

After being in public (touching elevators/escalators/ATMs/rails/busses/trains/Ubbers/Taxis/restaurants/public toilets/handling money/shaking hands/touching people/shopping trolleys or dealing with people in close proximity) WASH YOUR HANDS.

Hugging and kissing people when you are not sure if they have the virus or when you may have another underlying illness is not a good idea now.

People who can afford a healthy diet are utterly selfish brushing off the consequences of corona. In an unequal society like South Africa with 15 million starving people most people on facebook will probably make it because you have food to eat to keep you healthy. Those 15 million people all have compromised immune systems then add the sick, elderly, children, HIV, TB cases.

Personally I don't think we need another crisis in SA. And no, it will affect everyone. Not any one colour, class, religion.

People in SA who do not have food to eat, definitely don't have money for soap. If you can do anything for others try and educate the people around you about the virus now and the importance of washing their hands. Those of us with means to raise donations should try and focus our efforts on gathering soap and handing that out to the less privileged.

Malls, airports, airlines, banks, petrol stations, municipalities, restaurants and any other public places can help by ensuring their bathrooms are kept clean and they have adequate liquid soap for people to wash hands.

I'm not panicking. I will do what I do every year and keep drinking my icheanaforte, vit B complex forte, washing my hands more and keeping my distance from fluish people.

If you work with people and you feel sick, be responsible if you have any kind of selflessness and stay away from others.

It is not the time to make jokes. Many of us have parents or someone who could be vulnerable. Be responsible for them if not for yourself.