

BUSTING

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) MYTHS

What Orange County Residents Need to Know

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to cause considerable international concern, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization and public health entities across the globe are addressing misinformation about the disease.

Here are some myths and correlating facts about the virus:

MYTH Getting the coronavirus is a death sentence.



FACT: This is blatantly untrue. Based on current data, the new coronavirus seems to be a mild type of viral infection. In fact, about 80 percent of the cases are categorized as mild. If you are elderly or have an underlying medical condition, you should take extra precautions, but this is the same advice doctors give every year for the flu.

MYTH Eating garlic can help prevent infection with the virus.



FACT: Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new coronavirus.

MYTH Specific medicines can prevent or treat the virus.



FACT: To date, there is no specific medicine recommended to prevent or treat the new COVID-19. However, those infected with the virus should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms, and those with severe illness should receive optimized supportive care. Some specific treatments are under investigation and will be tested through clinical trials.

MYTH Wearing a facemask will protect you from the virus.



FACT: The CDC does not recommend that people who are not sick wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Experts caution that putting on a facemask without proper fitting and training could actually increase your risk because you will likely be touching your face more frequently to put on and adjust the mask.

MYTH The virus only affects older people.



FACT: People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus. Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus. Everyone must take proper precautions to both protect themselves and others.

MYTH You can get sick from a package sent from China.



FACT: People receiving packages from China are not at risk of contracting the new coronavirus. Coronaviruses do not survive long on objects, such as letters or packages.

MYTH Regularly rinsing your nose with saline can help prevent infection.



FACT: There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the new coronavirus. There is some limited evidence that regularly rinsing nose with saline can help people recover more quickly from the common cold, but it has not been shown to prevent respiratory infections.

MYTH Pets can transmit the virus.



FACT: Although the coronavirus was likely transmitted from an animal to a human, the illness is now spreading from person to person. People traveling to China should avoid animals, both living and dead, but there is no reason to believe any animals or pets in the United States are a source of infection.

MYTH Antibiotics are effective in preventing and treating the virus.



FACT: Antibiotics do not work against viruses, only bacteria. The new coronavirus is a virus, and antibiotics should not be used as a means of prevention or treatment.

MYTH Vaccines against pneumonia protect you against the virus.



FACT: Vaccines against pneumonia do not provide protection against the new coronavirus. The virus is so new and different that it needs its own vaccine. Work to develop a vaccine is underway, but will likely take a year or more to develop as it will be tested through clinical trials.