



COMMUNITY HEALTH INFORMATION BULLETIN

Coronavirus myths busted

- Is Coronavirus a living organism?

The virus, officially named COVID-19, is technically “**not alive**”.

A virus is simply “a protein super molecule rather than a living organism”.

You “cannot kill” the virus, but that does not mean it cannot be destroyed or allowed to decay.

The time it takes to break down depends on the environmental temperature, humidity and type of material upon which it settles.

- Are people most contagious before they even know they have the virus?

“**This is untrue**”.

The virus invades, infects and destroys cells, allowing millions of new viruses to be created that can be passed on to others or shed on surfaces.

Spread is most effective, through coughed droplets.

Patients who are asymptomatic can, however, pass on the virus as soon as they are infected.”

- Is COVID-19 a hardy virus?

This virus is in fact “**surprisingly fragile**”, with its only protection being a “thin outer layer of lipid or fat”.

That is why any soap or detergent, both of which break down fat, will destroy it – even washing up liquid works well.

It is also why it is so important that we all keep washing our hands regularly with soap and water.

- Is it true that if the postman/delivery men wearing gloves, will not spread the virus?

This is wrong. Every item that a gloved hand touches can then be contaminated.

A recent study from the New England Journal of Medicine found the virus can survive for upto 24 hours on cardboard.

To stay safe, the best advice is not to touch the parcel until ideally the following day.

- Can the virus be passed on by food?

This appears to be an area up for some debate.

Public Health England and the Food Standards Agency say you are “**very unlikely**” to catch the virus through food or via food packaging.

It is acknowledged that transmission through food is less likely than other means, but arguably it is “**definitely still possible**”.

If someone who has the virus on their hands touches food, it is very likely to become contaminated for many hours.

To inactivate the virus, food should either be washed or **cooked at 65 degrees Celsius at least for four minutes** or more.

- Is sanitisers with 60% alcohol as effective as washing your hands in soap and water?

“This is wrong”

Squirting a little bit of alcohol gel on your palms and rubbing them together **is not effective**.

You need to cover the entire surface of both hands including fingers and thumbs, but this should be done only after the hands are free from any residues – such as after sneezing, etc.

The small bottles of sanitisers are part of the problem, as people assume a small amount is ample.

- Will drinking alcohol prevent people from getting the virus?

Sadly, for those who enjoy a little tippie, **“this is not true”**.

The minimum concentration of alcohol that will help to stop the spread of the virus is what is found in hand sanitisers.

Which is only for external use, and even then, it is only effective if it has a concentration of 60% or more, if you use enough and in the right way!

- Does moisturising hands after washing reduces cleanliness?

“Incorrect”.

Moisturising the skin is very important. You should use moisturisers with **anti-viral** properties.

The virus can lodge itself in damaged skin on your hands, cracked by repeated washing. So it’s important to try to avoid this possibility.

Keeping **finger nails short** will reduce the risk of sheltering and passing on the virus too.

- When self-isolating, is washing hands not as important, since you are all virus-free?

This perspective is simply **“wrong”**.

If you are bringing in shopping, deliveries and post into your home, then washing your hands remains important.

Every time you wash your hands you will break the chain of infection. **If in doubt, give them a wash**.

This means for **at least 20 seconds**, with warm, soapy water and then ideally using **disposable paper towels** rather than a communal one.

If using towels, try to stick to **one per person** and **wash them daily**.

- Is vinegar good for keeping bathrooms and kitchens free from the virus?

“Incorrect”. Vinegar will not work against COVID-19 and its use for that purpose is not advised.

The cleaning of bathrooms, kitchens and surfaces is still best carried out with hot water from the tap and a surface detergent as you have always done.

People seeking to disinfect shared areas in a home can use a dilution of household bleach (ratio 1 in 5), or hydrogen peroxide (ratio 1 in 2).

STAY AT HOME TO STOP CORONAVIRUS SPREADING

PEOPLE AT HIGHER RISK SHOULD STAY AT HOME / INDOORS FOR AT LEAST 12 WEEKS

THESE MEASURES ARE LIKELY TO BE IN PLACE FOR SOME WEEKS

Armenian Community Emergency Management Committee Contact Details

Please contact us at the following centres:

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