



## Doc's Friday Facts on COVID-19

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1. This is a disease of crowded indoor spaces, public transit, big cities, elderly people with multiple co-morbidities, and most of all, congregate living. This is nursing homes, assisted living, and prisons. Of the 101,000 US deaths, 34,000 or 1/3<sup>rd</sup> are from New York City and the suburbs in New Jersey. Currently in New York City, 70% of the new cases come from family homes where one person brings it in and passes it to the rest of the family.
2. 43% of the US deaths are from a group that makes up just 0.6% of the population – nursing homes and assisted living. That number is 70% in Ohio.
3. We know that children under 10 years old rarely get this disease, and when they do, they hardly spread it. Their chance of dying from influenza is at least 50 times more likely than dying from COVID-19. The death rate does increase very slowly for each decade of age, but does not begin to reach significance until age 50 with co-morbidities and age 60 for others.
4. In looking at case investigations in countries that have effective contact tracing, there has been no proven case of a student causing a teacher's death, and only one case of transfer outside. There are probably more, especially in a 100,000-person soccer or football stadium.
5. Therefore, outdoors is quite safe, especially with even a modicum of social distancing. The air volume and movement rapidly dilute the virus, and ultraviolet light kills it in minutes. Heat also deactivates the virus
6. Masks, ah the conflicting opinions. The Toronto SARS outbreak in 2003 taught us that virus was rapidly spread from very sick patients unshielded respiratory output, even in negative pressure rooms. This resulted in the deaths of multiple Healthcare Workers. Of course, aerosolization procedures, high oxygen flows and the like, are the worst situations. However, studies have shown that even if 80% of the population wear a mask that is only 60% efficient, COVID-19 spread will stop. Unfortunately, the one piece of data we desperately need is how much can asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals spread the virus.
7. So, let's get outside, wear masks in crowded indoor spaces out of respect for others, and finally, stay home if we are sick.

Boyd Hoddinott, MD, MPH – Health Commissioner