

Coronavirus in the Hispanic Community

Dr. Miguel Díaz, MD, MBA

Community Care Physicians - COVID-19 Information

04/14/2020

Introduction

Greetings, I am Dr. Miguel Díaz - Family Medicine Specialist.

I have been practicing Family Medicine for 24 years in the NY Capital District community.

Today I want to talk to you about the Coronavirus and the damage it is causing in our Hispanic community. This is why today we want to inform our Community Care patients how to protect themselves from COVID-19 and provide them with some practical points to minimize their risk of suffering from Coronavirus.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new "strain" of an old virus that normally causes what is known as the "common cold." They named it COVID -19 because in English it is an abbreviation of COVID (Corona Virus Disease = Coronavirus Disease) and 19 because it was first presented in 2019.

This family of viruses includes other Coronavirus "strains" that caused other epidemics such as SARS in 2002 and MERS in 2012.

Commonly, this family of viruses is easily combated by the human immune system, but when a strain is transformed, by means of a genetic mutation.

This mutation creates a new, more virulent and deadly strain that damages organs before some humans can create a natural defense through antibodies.

How is COVID19 transmitted?

Through particles in the breath of infected people - especially when they sneeze or cough. Also, when they touch their nose or mouth and then they touch another person or another object.

We know that the virus can survive for several hours and in some cases even days on certain surfaces touched by infected people.

What are the common symptoms of COVID-19?

According to UpToDate - one of the most updated publications; the incidence of the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are;

- fever - 99%
- tiredness -70%
- chills - 60%
- cough - dry 59% or productive 27%
- muscle aches - 35%
- lack of smell -34%
- shortness of breath - 31%
- diarrhea -18%
- headache
- sore throat
- among others

How is COVID-19 treated?

There is still no specific treatment to cure COVID-19, we only have treatments for symptoms and some of the complications. A few drugs are being investigated that have so far been ineffective.

How long does it take from infection to symptoms?

Normally an average of 5 days but it can be between 2 to 14 days after contact with an infected person.

Is there a vaccine against COVID-19?

Not yet - but there are several that are under preliminary investigation.

What are the epidemiological data of COVID-19

Reports from the Center for Disease Control known by the acronym CDC, indicate that Hispanics represent 29% of the population of New York State. However, Hispanics have suffered 34% of deaths as a result of COVID-19. In short, the COVID-19 presents greater danger to Hispanics.

If we look at the data collected by the New York State Department of Health, it indicates that Hispanics have a 2 times greater risk of dying from COVID-19 than people of Asian descent and almost 4 times greater than Anglo-Saxon people.

New York State statistics also inform us that Hispanics, as minorities, suffer from several health disadvantages that increase our risk of being infected and dying from COVID19; some of the downsides are;

- Less access to health services in our community
- Lower percentage of Hispanics with health insurance
- Increased tendency to live in poverty
- Multiple number of people in each household
- Major tendency to live in places with dense population

- Increased incidence of diseases that predispose and increase mortality such as;
 - Arterial hypertension
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity

How can you and your family protect yourself from COVID-19?

- Physical distance - a minimum of 2 meters = 6 feet
- Greet each other without touching
- Avoid kisses and hugs
- Do not shake hands
- Wash your hands a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water or alcohol gel frequently
- Cover your face with masks
- Wear disposable gloves

How can I protect myself from COVID-19 if someone who lives at home already has symptoms or has been confirmed to have COVID-19?

- Isolate the patient for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms
- Only touch the patient's waste with gloves and mask
- Only touch the plates, spoons, cutlery of the patient with gloves and mask
- Only touch clothes and sheets with gloves and mask

What can I do if you develop symptoms of COVID-19?

- Call your Family Doctor
- Hydration until urine is clear - usually 2 liters of liquids / day
- Cough Syrup like Robitussin DM or Mucinex DM
- Tylenol - 1,000 mgs every 6 hours for fever
- Wear face masks and cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands frequently

When should I go to the hospital?

- If you have severe symptoms
- If you are short of breath

Remember that in New York State the death rate shows that for every 100 people with COVID-19, 95 will survive!