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Dr Gero Baiarda of GPDQ.co.uk

SARS-COV-2 HEALTH ADVICE FROM GPDQ'S DR GERO BAIARDA

NHS GP Dr Gero Baiarda is one of the hundreds of GPs currently on-call at GPDQ - the UK's leading GP-on-demand service. Dr Baiarda has myth-busted 10 common beliefs associated with the SARS-COV-2:

1. **The virus is a living organism that we can kill.** It is not alive. It is a protein chain of RNA within a protective layer of fat. Since the virus is a protein super molecule rather than a living organism, you cannot kill it. It will, however, decay spontaneously given enough time. The time it takes to break down depends on the environmental temperature, humidity and type of material upon which it settles.
2. **People are most contagious before they even know they have the virus.** This is untrue. Infected cells are invaded and destroyed by the virus, allowing millions of new viruses to burst forth and be shed on surfaces or passed to other people. Spread is most effective, therefore,

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

3. **SARS-COV-2 is a hardy virus.** It isn't. SARS-COV-2 is surprisingly fragile. The only protection it has is 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. By dissolving the external lipid layer of the virus, the virus is rendered completely inert and unable to penetrate human cells. Hence why washing hands often with soap and water is so important.
4. **If delivery drivers wear gloves, they won't spread it.** This is wrong. Every item that a gloved hand touches can then be contaminated. According to a recent study from the New England Journal of Medicine, the virus can live up to eight hours on cardboard. To stay safe, the best advice is not to touch the parcel until ideally the following day.
5. **The virus can't be passed on by food.** It can be transferred easily. If someone who has the virus on their hands touches food, it is very likely to become contaminated for many hours. To denature and inactivate the virus, food should either be washed or cooked at 65 degrees celsius at least for 4 minutes or more.
6. **Alcohol-based sanitizer with a 60 percent alcohol concentration is as effective as washing your hands in soap and water.** 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 of any residues - such as after sneezing. The small nozzle on bottles of sanitizer are part of the problem, as people assume a small amount is ample.
7. **Drinking alcohol will prevent people getting the virus.** This is not true. The only alcohol that will help to prevent the spread of the SARS-COV-2 is that in hand sanitizer. This is only for external use, and even then, it is only effective if it has a concentration of 60 percent or above, if you use enough, and in the right way.
8. **Moisturising hands after washing reduces cleanliness.** Incorrect. Moisturizing the skin is very important. The virus can lodge itself in damaged skin on your hands cracked by repeated washing, so it's important to try to avoid this. Keeping fingernails short will reduce the risk of sheltering and passing on the virus too.
9. **Washing hands isn't as important when self-isolating, as you're all virus-free.** Wrong. If there are any external items (shopping / deliveries / post etc) entering your home, hand washing remains important. Every time you wash your hands you will break the chain of infection. If in doubt, give them a wash! Do this for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water and if you have paper towels that you can throw away, this is better than using a communal towel. If using towels, dedicate one to each person in the house, keep them separate, and wash them daily.
10. **Vinegar is good for keeping bathrooms and kitchens free of the virus.** Incorrect. Vinegar will not work against SARS-COV-2 and 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. If you have a case of SARS-COV-2 in your house and want to disinfect

common areas, you can use a dilution of household bleach or hydrogen peroxide - this is a mild antiseptic.

-ENDS-

For more information contact Lisa Malyon at lisa@sensecommunications.co.uk or call 07525204402.

Notes to editor

About GPDQ

- **What it is** - GPDQ is the UK's first and leading GP-on-demand service that connects its users (patients) directly with a local NHS GP who will visit them within hours at a location of the patient's choice, be it their home, workplace or a hotel if they are travelling from abroad.
- **Why it exists:** Frustrated by the state of hospital admissions and GP retention in his area and knowing that there were local community members willing to pay to see a GP, Dr Bhagat founded GPDQ in 2015.
- **Why it's so important:** Thanks to leading technology, GPDQ is the UK's first genuinely scalable national primary care service, with a community today of over 80 like-minded NHS GPs that have seen over 7K patients through the UK's first doctor on demand home visiting service.
- **How to access:** Patients can request a GP and track their progress from their smartphone, via the GPDQ app (downloadable for [iOS](#) or [Android](#)) or alternatively, they can call GPDQ, or visit the website to book an appointment. Video consultations are now also available.
- **The leader:** GPDQ was the first 'in person' GP-on-demand app to launch in the UK and was also the first to achieve CQC approval. GPDQ is the most popular GP-on-demand service in the UK, having responded to the most call outs since launch in October 2015, compared to other services.
- **Highest quality care:** Patients receive a full 25-minute consultation with a GMC-registered NHS GP who has undergone GPDQ's rigorous screening process and intensive patient care training programme.
- **Private clinics:** GPDQ has opened a GP clinic within London's Hadley Wood Hospital, which is open 6 days a week.
- **Holistic support for employers:** GPDQ runs corporate clinics for some of the UK's largest employers, providing curated programmes with access to a range of holistic physical and mental wellbeing experts including audiology, dentistry, physios, counsellors, psychologists, occupational health, nutritionists, and many more.
- **The founder:** GPDQ was founded by third generation GP and NHS-evangelist Dr Anshumen Bhagat who has appeared in the GP industry magazine 'Pulse's Power 50' in 2018 and again in 2019 for his efforts in reducing NHS waiting lists through utilising digital technology, and raising awareness around work/life balance for GPs.
- **Join the journey:** Follow GPDQ on social media: <https://twitter.com/GPDQUK/>
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