

Dear ones,

As you know, the Coronavirus is spreading throughout the Bay Area, and our country. The situation is developing rapidly, and we would like to do all that we can to keep the community informed, safe, and well-cared for.

We will be sending out weekly updates to keep you informed about what you can do to help slow the spread of this virus, and how you can support your body in being as strong as possible in case you do catch it.

The Coastal Health Alliance is currently working on a strategy to address as many of our most vulnerable patient's needs over the phone, in support of recommendations for those over age 60 to stay at home as much as possible. Stay tuned for more information on this.

Here is what we know:

- This virus is very contagious. It is anticipated that between 40 and 70% of people in our country will become infected in the coming months.
- Most people will only have a mild illness.
- Some people, particularly those over age 60 and with chronic health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or lung disease, can become very sick, and a many could die. There is an inflammatory reaction that happens in many of the critically ill patients that makes the risk of death higher.
- It is essential that we all work together to slow the spread of this virus so that our hospitals are not overwhelmed with more sick people than they can take care. This is happening in Italy now and could happen here.
- The best way we can slow the spread is to stay at home, away from gatherings large and small.
- Handwashing frequently, avoiding touching your face, and disinfecting surfaces with cleansers containing alcohol, bleach or peroxide helps prevent transmission.

Focusing on these important strategies in your home and workplace is essential. Letting go of plans, keeping our children separated from vulnerable elders, and checking in on neighbors to make sure they have what they need is very important. Doing everything we can to support our immune system and decrease inflammation is important both for our individual health and the health of our community. Now is the time to be making wise choices. Here are my recommendations:

- Good sleep is central to immune function. [Here](#) is a link to a very comprehensive handout on things you can do to support your sleep. Contact us if you'd like a phone appointment to discuss this important issue.
- Strictly avoid immune suppressing and inflammatory foods like sweets, sugar, and processed foods with lots of chemicals in them
- Choose brightly colored fruits and vegetables
- If you smoke, please stop. Contact us if you'd like a phone appointment to get support on this.

- Getting exercise boosts the immune system and is anti-inflammatory.
- Being in nature boosts the immune system and decreases inflammation. Walks in nature are very good for you.
- Many herbs that are easily grown here are anti-viral and immune supporting. Rosemary, oregano and thyme are great to include in a big pot of vegetable broth, as is garlic.
- Stress and anger inflame and suppress the immune system. Let go of what you can, and let us know if you need help with stress or anger management.
- A strong “vagal tone”, meaning, a strong “rest and digest” (as opposed to fight or flight) nervous system supports the immune system and decreases inflammation. A meditation or prayer practice supports this, as does giving and receiving love, singing, dancing, swimming in cold water, laughing, petting a pet, appreciating beauty, listening to music.
- Immune supporting and anti-inflammatory herbs and supplements may be helpful. However, they will be so much more effective if you partner with them by doing the above things. My favorites:
 - Vitamin D-high dose (10,000 IU) for the first four days after any sign of illness.
 - Elderberry and astragalus are two immune supporting herbs with anti-viral effects.
 - Omega three fatty acids (both DHA and EPA) are anti-inflammatory
 - There are others, and I’m currently researching those with the strongest evidence in this type of virus. I’ll continue to send these out along with other updates.

This is a challenging time we are facing together. It is a good time to bring our focus on what is most important, and to reach out to and support vulnerable friends and neighbors.

We will continue to be in contact here each week, and will reach out to let you know other measures Coastal Health Alliance will be taking as the situation unfolds. Please share these recommendations widely.

With love and care,
Anna O’Malley, MD