

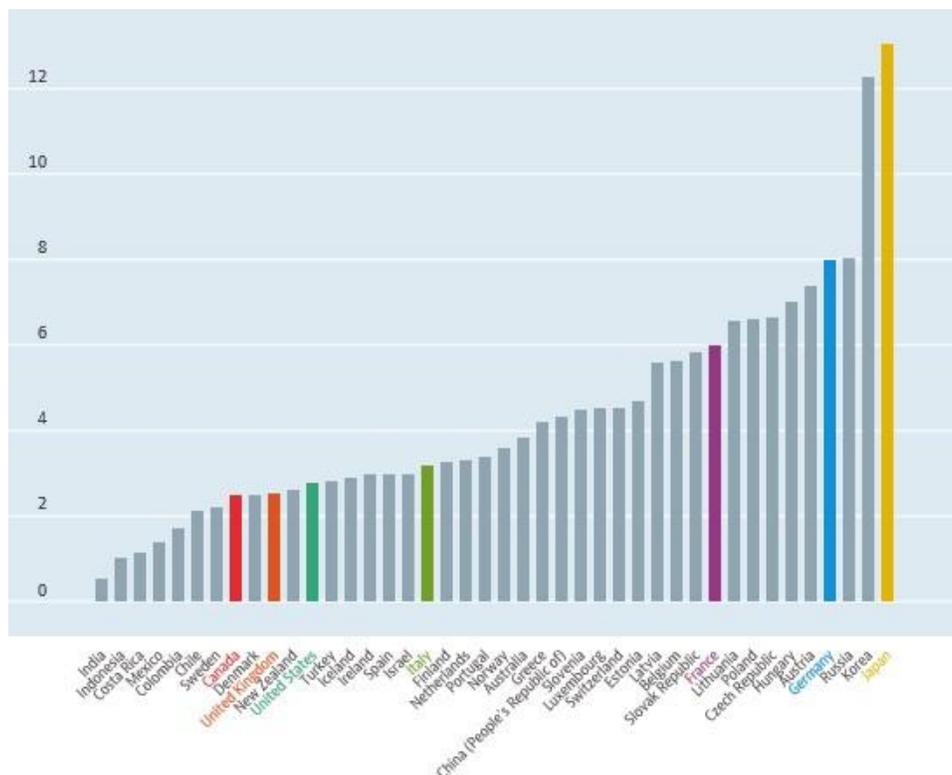
# Dr. Brownstein's Blog on Coronavirus Part XIII

## Coronavirus XIII: The Good News is Still There

To me, the days seem too long. Instead of 24 hours in a day, it feels like the day is 30 hours long. I know our political leaders are trying to do their best, but *they are making decisions on incomplete data*. I have stated this before, I am not afraid of coronavirus—over 99% of those with the illness will recover (more about that later)—**I am much more concerned for our country. I hope this illness does not change us for the worst where we look on each other with suspicion and fear.**

At my office, my partners and staff have continued to see patients through this crisis. That has been an honor. I feel we are providing a much-needed service and I have seen sick patients improve with our care. So far, out of the five providers (Drs. B, Ng, Nusbaum, NP Taylor, and PA Jenny), none of us has a patient hospitalized with pneumonia. We have not heard about any of our patients dying. And, we have had many sick patients with flu-like symptoms, and some who have tested positive for the virus, who have done well taking their vitamins and receiving IV nutrient therapies.

Let's look at the positive and the bad news. I would like to get the bad news out of the way. The US has moved into the number one spot with the most cases in the world of COVID-19. Not a great statistic. Hospitals in NYC are overflowing and there is a worry about a lack of respirators for sick patients. The same worry is occurring in my home state of Michigan. That is due to a *lack of planning by our state and federal agencies*. Japan has significantly more hospital beds and ICU beds than we do per capita. Look at the chart below. This is a graph of hospital beds per 1,000 inhabitants (2018 data). (1)



The US is the green bar near the left side of the graph—just over 2 beds per 1,000 compared to Japan which has over 12 beds. If that graph does not infuriate you, nothing will. **We are the richest country on the face of the earth who spends the most on health care** and we lack hospital beds? We not only lack beds, we lack respirators, masks and gowns, and here we are in a pandemic.

As I said in previous posts, heads should roll when this is over!

At present, more are being diagnosed with COVID-19. However, there is a silver lining in this data. Let's look at the glass half-full perspective. The reason we are number one in COVID-19 infections is because we have tested more people than anyone else. As more are diagnosed, the death rate will go down. However, we are still not doing enough testing. We simply do not have the data to say how lethal this virus is because we are not testing both sick and well subjects. Testing the sick, as we have been doing, skews the mortality data to make COVID-19 appear more deadly than it is. Even with that info, the latest numbers show a 1.5% death rate IN THOSE TESTED. Another way to look at those numbers is that there is a 98.5% chance that if you test positive for COVID-19, you will not die. Folks, this glass is not half empty, in fact it is more full than you can imagine. The problem we are all facing is the constant barrage of bad news from the media. Every death is reported in real time. Keep in mind out of over 320 million Americans, we have had only 1271 deaths. Before any one decides to send me nasty emails, you should know that *I am not minimizing anyone's illness nor a death*. Every death is one too many. But, tens of thousands—around 50,000—die yearly from flu-like illnesses and pneumonia during the flu season. I have been following those statistics yearly from the CDC. Those are the numbers. We don't shutter the country and create an overwhelming sense of anxiety and fear because 5-10,000 deaths occur per month during a regular flu season. Until now.

I know this illness is slightly more contagious than the regular influenza virus. It is also more deadly. When we calculate the final numbers, I think it will show a slightly higher death rate than common influenza-like illnesses. However, the death rate may be similar to the common flu death rate. *The main problem we are facing now is that COVID-19 illness is occurring too fast and we are lacking a proper number of hospital beds to care for these sick patients.*

Enough bad news. Let's look at the good news.

As of today (3.27.20), there are 83,381 positive COVID-19 cases and 1,271 deaths. So, the death rate is 1.5% (1,271/83,381). As I stated above, a better way to look at these numbers is that you have a 98.5% chance of NOT dying if you test positive for COVID-19. If you don't smoke, aren't obese, don't have hypertension, diabetes, lung and heart disease, your risk is lowered. If you aren't elderly, your risk is lowered. Whatever way you look at the data, THE VAST MAJORITY WHO GET COVID-19 will recover and you should have immunity for life.

**Keep in mind those numbers are only based on those tested. The vast majority of those tested are ill. Very few healthy people or even people with mild symptoms have been tested across the US because of a lack of test kits.** For that, heads should roll when this is over. If we test everyone, which we should be doing, then we could see how many have actually had this illness and recovered and who is asymptomatic with it. When you add in those subjects, the death rate will fall below 1% and inch closer to the CDC-reported annual flu death rate.

### **Final Thoughts:**

Turn off the news. I have. We simply cannot process every case and each death being reported in real time. When that happens we lose the perspective that over 99% who contract this virus will recover and should have life-long immunity.

COVID-19 will pass. We will get back to work and that should happen soon. *There is no reason to quarantine everyone at this point. The healthy need to go back to work.* The isolation and stress are going to kill many. **Those ill should still maintain quarantining. We can do a lot by isolating the sick and infected. Other countries have fared better by following a similar path.**

Washington State, where the first cases were reported has seen a marked decline in new cases at the hospital near the infected nursing home in Kirkland, WA . (2) The article in the Washington Post states, *“On some days, doctors here see just one new case and haven’t seen more than four in a single day since mid-March. Few need admissions to the intensive care unit, which is now half full, two weeks after overflow necessitated transfers to nearby hospitals.”* Why doesn’t this story lead the news cycle?

I still think COVID-19 will begin to fade soon. I have seen flu-like illnesses recede every spring over the last 30 years. At my office, we have seen a solid nutritional support approach help our patients stay healthy and recover from flu-like illnesses for over 25 years. The good that can come from this crisis is that people will have to take control of their health care. They can educate themselves about how to eat a healthy diet.

Remember, a healthy diet means avoiding refined sugar and other refined food products. You can be healthier by following a few simple steps: maintain optimal hydration, exercise daily, and take your supplements including vitamins A, C, D, and iodine. Our patients are doing well with these steps and so can you.

To All Our Health!

~DrB

David Brownstein, MD is a conventionally trained Board-Certified Family Physician with the additional overlay of holistic principles.

While Dr. Brownstein does not claim to have a cure for any illness, he does believe that we can enhance the individual's immune system by supporting the 'host' & the terrain of the host. The human body is well designed and the immune system, when given the proper support, can optimally function.

Disclaimer: The information in this blog should not be used as medical advice. Any therapies that are discussed should be supervised under the guidance of your physician or licensed healthcare professional.

(1) <https://data.oecd.org/healtheqt/hospital-beds.htm>

(2) <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/where-coronavirus-outbreak-started-in-washington-state-officials-see-hope-as-cases-appear-to-be-leveling-off/ar-BB11Ls27?ocid=spartanntp>