

## COVID-19 Pandemic

**“This too shall pass...!”** - Unknown.

According to CDC (Centers for Disease Control), epidemic is a sudden increase in the number of people with a particular disease above what is normally expected in that area at that time. When an epidemic spreads to involve several countries or continents, it is called pandemic.

Life has changed dramatically in the last few months because of current COVID-19 pandemic. However, this is not the first pandemic in human history. Antonine Plague of 165 AD is the earliest reported pandemic. Justinian Plague of 541 AD, Black Death of 1347, Cholera Pandemic of 1817 and Flu pandemic of 1918 are some other known health disasters.

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-COV2. The disease originated in Wuhan, China, first reported in December, 2019 and rapidly spread across the world. As of May 5, 2020, it has spread to 187 countries infecting 3.6 million people and caused 250,000 deaths globally.

For now, there is no vaccine or effective treatment. Therefore, our best defense is prevention. Social distancing and handwashing are effective tools against the spread of this contagious disease. The outer layer of the virus is made of oil, and easily removed by soap. Hence, virus can be effectively killed by washing hands with soap. It is also important to avoid touching face, especially mouth, nose and eyes.

COVID-19 spreads from person to person through air droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, or talking. The best way of prevention is to reduce close contact among people, known as social distancing. Based on this idea, the government has issued "Stay at home" orders, including closing shops, schools, restaurants, and restricting gatherings. People are advised to wear facemasks in public.

Epidemiologists recommend “flattening the curve” by social distancing, which means spreading out cases. If everyone fell sick at the same time, there would not be enough hospital beds and healthcare workers to take care of the ill. By practicing social distancing and adopting preventive measures, number of cases at a specific time can be brought down to match healthcare resources, so everyone can get the care they need.

Even though I feel sad that I cannot leave my house, there is a silver lining in the whole situation. I get to spend a lot of time with my family. I have discovered new hobbies and tried new activities like roller skating, gardening and baking. Even though it is difficult to find a bright side in this situation, having a different perspective can make it manageable. Finally, I remember this apt quote: **“This too shall pass...!”**

References:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/>
2. The 12 Worst Health Disasters of All Time by Susan E Harman.