

How to Prevent the **Fear** of Coronavirus From Spreading

The latest strain of the coronavirus, COVID-19, has overtaken many of our news and social feeds for the last few weeks! But how many of these stories are actually true? Could it be possible these sources are spreading undue fear of the coronavirus without sharing all the facts?

To help in putting your mind at ease, we've gathered some grounding facts from authoritative sources, including Harvard University and the World Health Organization, about the coronavirus. Hopefully, this guide will help you to think more clearly about COVID-19 and to make more sound decisions regarding travel.

Did you know COVID-19 has not issued any travel bans?

Probably the biggest fact you can know is that, **according to the World Health Organization (WHO), there [shouldn't be any travel or trade restrictions](#) due to the coronavirus.**

Do you know most cases of COVID-19 remain within China?

Of all the confirmed cases of the outbreak, around [95% have stayed within Mainland China](#). Considering the virus originated in the Hubei regions of China, this means the virus has hardly spread worldwide. Fear of COVID-19 has spread more rapidly than the disease itself.

Did you know COVID-19 is weaker than the flu?

According to the experts, the coronavirus is much less harmful than the flu, yet it's causing outsized anxiety around the globe. The flu kills around [20 times more people](#) on an annual basis than COVID-19 has in its totality.

The most reputable institutions, including Harvard and WHO, all agree that the media hype has done nothing but help the coronavirus spread in undue, global anxiety. These trusted sources agree that the coronavirus is not as deadly, not as scary, and not as intense as the media is making it out to be. Collectively, these authoritative resources agree:

- Influenza kills 20 times more people annually than COVID-19 has in its lifetime.
- Most deaths from COVID-19 have occurred in older people with pre-existing medical conditions.
- Around 95% of all COVID-19 cases are occurring in China, with the majority of those in Hubei Province, where it originated.

This ultimate guide will:

1. Answer your most asked questions regarding the coronavirus and travel
2. Debunk the common myths you might be thinking about the coronavirus
3. Provide authoritative resources you can reference for coronavirus updates

1. Most Asked Questions Regarding the Coronavirus & Travel

How does the coronavirus spread?

The coronavirus spreads by coughs or sneezes from a contaminated person. To get the coronavirus, someone needs to inhale these small water droplets, which means you have to be in pretty close proximity to a sick person. COVID-19 is not an air-borne disease, as once thought.

How likely am I to get the coronavirus if I'm traveling?

This largely depends on where you're traveling. The Department of State provides a thorough list of [travel advisories for each country](#), which should report if a country is restricted for travel or not. Check your destination for its travel warning, and you can make an educated decision to travel or not based on any travel warnings you may find.

Is there risk of getting the coronavirus on an airplane?

WHO informs travelers that [plane cabins are not dangerous](#) for contracting the coronavirus. Since the virus is not spread through the air, sitting on a plane with circulating air will not increase your risk of getting the coronavirus.

Should I wear a mask to protect myself against the coronavirus?

WHO recommends that those displaying respiratory symptoms of the coronavirus--coughing and sneezing--should wear a protective mask. However, they do not claim that wearing a mask will aid the unaffected to stay healthy. Even if you do wear a mask, you need to make sure it's the respirator kind and that it fits properly.

Can the coronavirus live on surfaces?

The CDC informs travelers that coronaviruses are [unable to survive on surfaces](#) for very long. It is [unclear how long](#) the COVID-19 virus can live on surfaces just yet.

Is there a drug or vaccine for the coronavirus?

There is no drug or vaccine for the coronavirus currently. However, there's a vaccination for influenza, yet countless of those inoculated still get the flu. Simply having a vaccination is not the end all cure--literally. Also, there's no drug or vaccination to cure the common cold, and yet countless people survive without one. Having a young and healthy immune system paired with plenty of water and rest can do wonders at healing the human body.

Should I cancel my trip due to the coronavirus?

The undue panic from the coronavirus has caused travelers to question whether it's safe to still take their trip, and it certainly is still safe to travel. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there shouldn't be any travel or trade restrictions due to the Coronavirus. The [risk of being infected is low](#) in most countries around the world. However, you have to make an educated decision that works best for you and what you're comfortable with.

Can I cancel my trip due to the coronavirus if I bought travel insurance?

It depends. Travel insurance providers generally exclude trip cancellation coverage for epidemics, an outbreak of a virus, or a travel advisory. The only circumstance where travel insurance could reimburse you for a portion of your lost trip cost would be if you purchased a specific type of coverage called "Cancel for Any Reason." To qualify for this benefit, you must have purchased your policy within 14-21 days from your initial deposit date and meet certain requirements.

2. Common Myths Surrounding the Coronavirus

With the exponential buzz about the coronavirus, it's no wonder people are circulating myths as fact. To ease your mind, here are some common myths getting shared about the coronavirus that are simply not true.

Myth #1: Everyone who gets the coronavirus will die.

Since there have been over 82,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and only 2,800 recorded deaths. Those most at a mortality risk are over 80 years old with prior medical complications including [cardiovascular issues, respiratory diseases, diabetes, and cancer](#).

Myth #2: The coronavirus is the most dangerous virus in human history.

Actually, it's not. If you think back to the SARS epidemic in 2003, that virus had a [mortality rate of nearly 10%](#). Similarly, MERS in 2015 had a fatality rate of 34%. According to current studies of the coronavirus outbreak, it only has an estimated fatality rate of 3%. WebMD reveals that influenza, the most common virus we face, causes more deaths annually ([up to 56,000 people](#))

than COVID-19 has caused in its totality ([2,800 people](#)). So coronavirus is certainly not the deadliest of the recent virus outbreaks.

Myth #3: Wearing a mask keeps me safe from the coronavirus.

Surgical masks worn by your typical dentist will not protect you from the coronavirus. Even if someone has the right type of mask, many civilians do not know how to wear them properly. Healthcare workers often wear a N95 mask which acts as a respirator. It's proven to [filter foreign particles with 95% efficacy](#); however, if the mask is to work properly, you need to properly fit the mask to your face. When medical professionals use these masks around sick patients, they undergo tests to ensure it fits properly and the seal isn't compromised. Otherwise, the mask will not help protect against illness.

Myth #4: I could get the coronavirus from a package sent from China.

When you consider how long it takes a package to ship from China and how short the coronavirus can survive outside the human body, this theory is highly unlikely. If you also consider the extreme temperature changes the package likely underwent, you can mostly guarantee the coronavirus did not survive shipment.

Myth #5: Taking herbal remedies can keep you safe from the coronavirus.

Although you can always take proactive steps to naturally boost your immune system, there is [little evidence](#) that herbal remedies can protect you from contracting a coronavirus. Protecting yourself is easy. The best way to [protect yourself while traveling](#) is through proper hygiene—frequently washing hands, avoiding touching unwashed hands to the face and liberal use of hand sanitizer.

3. Best Authoritative Sources for Coronavirus Updates

If you want to find the most accurate updates on the coronavirus, social media might not be the place to check. If you want to find trustworthy news on the coronavirus, consider turning to a trustworthy source. Here are a few that will give you the facts.

Harvard Health Publishing

Harvard Health Publishing derives from the minds of over 10,000 highly educated physicians at Harvard Medical School. This trusted health news source released an incredibly insightful [article about the coronavirus](#). The author warns against rampant myths regarding the coronavirus, and encourages concerned readers to be cautious about misleading sources on social media, where anything can get blown out of proportion.

John Hopkins Medicine

John Hopkins Medicine sets a standard of excellence by pushing the boundaries of scientific discovery and medical education. The director of infection prevention at Johns Hopkins brings some well-needed light by [comparing the coronavirus to influenza](#). Although onset symptoms can appear similar, the fatality rates are increasingly different. Although the coronavirus has caused over 2,800 deaths to date, the seasonal flu has taken the lives of 20 times more people throughout the world on an annual basis.

World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO directs and coordinates international health within the United Nations system to project people into a better and healthier future across the globe. WHO released an insightful video about [common questions regarding the coronavirus and travel](#). When asked if people should cancel their travel plans, the Head, International Health Regulations Secretariat chuckles with a resounding, “No.”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC gives a bold promise to America to protect our health, safety, and security around the clock. They provide an insightful, [three-tiered level system](#) to evaluate the risk of nonessential travel to certain destinations. Check out their resources if you're curious about the risk of the coronavirus associated with your travel destination. (It's likely lower than you think.)

Final Thoughts on the Coronavirus Chaos

It's quite possible that fear and panic over the coronavirus are substantially worse than the actual sickness. Educated statistics show that the coronavirus is merely a bad cold, and influenza, which we face annually, is actually much worse in comparison. WHO is not issuing a travel ban due to the coronavirus; therefore, you do not need to be afraid to travel.

Be cautious like you would any other time you were to travel, research the location you're heading to, and always be safe.

Sources:

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