

## **REVIEW ARTICLE: MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT COVID-19**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Myth is widely held but false idea or a belief. It is usually backed by religious, traditional , customs and rituals which tries to manipulate public mindset. Since the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic, myths are being believed by people .In this review article I am providing information about Myths and its actual facts about COVID-19 which are essential to be known so as to stop the spread of Myths by some set of people for own gains or either due to lack of Scientific Information It takes too long to debunk a myth by presenting facts.

**CONCLUSION:** Myths have been believed by common people at large whenever a new disease or virus is identified. These Myths have potential to spread more vigorously than the virus itself Myths can have detrimental effects on various aspects of physical, mental and social health. These myths should be curbed by providing evidence based information which can stop its spread. Therefore strict possible measures as discussed above should be taken by respective authorities.

**KEYWORD:** COVID-19, SARS COV-2,

### **INTRODUCTION:**

An outbreak of Pneumonia of an unknown origin was reported in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubie province, China<sup>1</sup> Several Deaths were also reported. Thus this novel coronavirus was named as SARS COV-2. It started spreading in other parts of the world and many countries have recorded number of cases<sup>2</sup> Thus it was declared as Pandemic by WHO on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.<sup>3</sup> The disease caused by SARS COV-2 is known as COVID-19 . This disease has caused severe destruction in terms of economy ,Deaths of people , Mental health of school going children and has seen shift of work place as work from home for adults.<sup>4</sup> It has also exposed Preparedness of health care systems across the world.

Despite creating awareness through various media platform, distribution of pamphlets and hoarding display, these myths are still being believed and is spreading from one person to other

.While there is still no potent medicine available for COVID-19 there are myths related to its perfect cure by traditional means.<sup>5</sup> It is important to verify a myth by applying some scientific knowledge which can stop its spread further through various social media platforms.

Myths are generally being believed in Rural areas where there has been less or no awareness, lack of scientific approach and traditional taboos are followed. But the urban areas are also not spared by Myths as it spreads more rapidly due to ease of connectivity through internet, certain apps and social media platforms.<sup>6</sup>

Some prevailing myths and their facts are mentioned below.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1.** Myths and fact of COVID 19.<sup>8,10</sup>

Sr.No	Myth	Fact
1	Coronavirus is killed by spraying alcohol or chlorine on the skin.	Alcohol or chlorine applied to the skin can be harmful, particularly if it gets into the eyes. These chemicals can disinfect surfaces, but they can't kill viruses that are inside the body.
2	Infection is only a threat to the elderly and those with comorbidities.	SARS COV-2, like all coronaviruses, can infect people of any age. Older people and those with comorbidities such as diabetes, asthma, and other illnesses are more likely to be seriously ill.
3	Coronavirus may be transmitted by cats and dogs	There is no evidence that animals play a major role in the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
4.	Coronavirus can be killed by using a hand dryer.	The Coronavirus is not killed by using a hand dryer.
5.	Having an alcoholic beverage protects you from a variety of diseases. COVID-19 is a virus that infects people.	Alcohol consumption does not guard against COVID-19 and can be harmful. Alcohol abuse, on the other hand, may raise the risk of developing health problems.
6.	Cow dung and cow urine may be used to treat	There is no evidence to support this.

	various ailments. COVID-19	
7.	COVID-19 is passed from person to person through houseflies.	There's no proof that the COVID-19 virus spread to houseflies. COVID-19 is transmitted by droplets produced when an infected individual coughs, sneezes, or talks. By touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes and mouth before washing your hands, you may become infected.
8.	COVID-19 can be detected using thermal scanners	COVID-19 is undetectable by thermal scanners. They are good at detecting fever in people. Fever can be caused by a variety of factors.
9.	COVID-19 may be prevented or cured by adding pepper to your soup or other meals.	Even though hot peppers in soup are delicious, they cannot prevent or cure COVID-19.
10.	Exposure to the sun or temperatures above protects you from COVID-19.	COVID-19 can be caught regardless of how sunny or humid the weather is. COVID-19 cases have also been recorded in countries with hot weather.
11.	COVID-19 is spread by a 5G mobile network	Viruses are incapable of travelling over radio waves or cell networks.
<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
12.	Getting COVID-19 means using it for the rest of your life..	The majority of people who contract COVID-19 are able to recover and rid their bodies of the virus. COVID-19 infection does not mean you will be infected for the rest of your life.
13.	You are cured of COVID-19 if you can keep your breath for 10 seconds or longer without coughing or pain.	Dry cough, tiredness, and fever are the most common COVID-19 symptoms. This disease can progress to more serious forms in some people. A laboratory test is the most reliable way to determine whether you have the virus that causes

		COVID-19 disease. You can't prove it with this breathing exercise, which is also potentially risky.
14.	Mosquito bites will spread the COVID-19 virus	There has been no proof that the current coronavirus can be spread by mosquitoes to date.
15.	COVID-19 is prevented from taking a hot bath.	Taking a hot bath will not protect you from COVID-19 infection. Regardless of whether you take a bath or a shower, your natural body temperature stays about 36.5oC to 37oC. Taking a hot bath with extremely hot water can actually be dangerous, as it can cause you to burn..
16.	COVID-19 can be prevented by rinsing the nose with saline.	There is no proof that rinsing the nose with saline on a daily basis protects people from the latest coronavirus..
17.	COVID-19 can be prevented from eating garlic.	Garlic is a nutritious food with antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence that consuming garlic protects people from contracting the disease in the current outbreak.
18.	COVID-19 can be treated with antibiotics	Antibiotics are only effective against bacteria, not viruses. Since COVID-19 is caused by a virus, antibiotics are ineffective in treating it.
19.	COVID-19 infection can be acquired by blood donation.	There is no proof that COVID-19 can be transmitted by blood donation.
20.	COVID-19 may be contracted by ordering or purchasing goods imported from outside the United States.	The risk of contracting COVID-19 from a commercial shipment, according to the World Health Organization, is low because it has likely travelled for many days and has been exposed to different temperatures

21.	Coronavirus can be transmitted by newspapers.	There is no proof that newspapers are possible carriers of COVID-19
<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
22.	COVID-19-positive pregnant women must have their babies via a caesarean section only.	According to the WHO, caesarean sections should only be performed when medically necessary or justified
23.	COVID-19 infection can be spread by any healthcare worker.	In the battle against COVID-19 infection, healthcare workers are seen as frontline soldiers. They have a lot of personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent them from being infected with the virus.
24.	Even after recovering from COVID-19, an individual can still spread the virus.	A individual who has healed and tested negative for the infection using WHO's RT-PCR dual testing is fully safe and cannot spread the infection.
25.	If anyone contaminated with COVID-19 lives in your housing society or neighbourhood, you should be concerned.	If a person maintains social distance, wears two masks, and avoids touching objects, he or she cannot become infected.

The above Myth list has been discussed in order to replace the myths with the actual facts. The myths when circulated through various social media platforms can cause anxiety among common people which makes them to go for repeated testing even if they don't show any symptoms. This can complicate and lead to actual infected patients being devoid of getting tested or the Test reports getting delayed which means delay in getting proper treatment and this adds to their sufferings and lead to severity.

Furthermore Psychological conditions of the people have changed during the Lockdown.<sup>11</sup> they have become more anxious, more stressed and more worried at the same time. Considering the Myth during this difficult time may lead to harming oneself or taking some actions which are not suitable for the society. Thus, Myths has to be burst which will stop people from taking such steps. Myths, also have made people boycott Health care workers and debarring them to enter into housing societies <sup>12</sup> telling them to stay away from public places. <sup>13</sup> Hence, a properly planned awareness program should be organized in both rural and urban areas which can change the

societies outlook towards the myths. Further, Strict actions should be taken by respective officials for the persons spreading false claims or myths which make people stigmatized. If they are not restricted at proper time than there could be more detrimental effects on the health of the population at large.<sup>14-17</sup>

People should also be encouraged not to blindly follow a myth and share with others instead think on it twice by applying scientific approach. The health officials should release a more descriptive written information in the form of pamphlets and newspaper free of cost so as to make people aware about the actual precautions to be taken to combat the virus. This should be done on regular basis with time to time updated knowledge of the same. This will enable to eliminate the spread of myths.<sup>4</sup>

**CONCLUSION:** Myths have been believed by common people at large whenever a new disease or virus is identified. These Myths have potential to spread more vigorously than the virus itself. Myths can have detrimental effects on various aspects of physical, mental and social health. These myths should be curbed by providing evidence based information which can stop its spread. Therefore strict possible measures as discussed above should be taken by respective authorities.

#### Ethical Approval:

As per international standard or university standard ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the authors.

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