NEWSOM PREPARES FOR WORST-CASE SCENARIOS AS VIRUS SPREADS »
THESE LOCAL DOCTORS HAVE ANSWERS TO YOUR URGENT CORONAVIRUS QUESTIONS »
‘QUARANTINE SHAMING’: US NAVIGATES SOCIAL NORMS »
GV Wire invited two Fresno-area doctors with expertise in the control of infectious disease to answer urgent questions about the spread of the novel coronavirus and COVID-19. Dr. Almira Opardija is a physician with UCSF Medical Center in Fresno. She is also an assistant clinical professor specializing in infectious disease. Dr. Sohrab Sohrabi is an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist currently in practice at Fresno’s Veterans Affairs Central California Health Care System facility.

Click the videos below for their insights on the way the virus spreads, who should be tested, treatment options and the steps needed to defeat the pandemic.

**Coronavirus Overview**

March 18, 2020 | GV Wire

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**How Contagious Is Coronavirus?**

**Could You Be Immune?**

**Are Homeopathic Remedies Effective?**

**THESE LOCAL DOCTORS HAVE ANSWERS TO YOUR CORONAVIRUS QUESTIONS**
Fresno Mayor Lee Brand says knew there would be pushback on his decision to impose a shelter-in-place emergency order — even one calling for voluntary compliance. He was being inundated with phone calls from worried business owners.

And he knew Fresno County and Clovis leaders likely would further evaluate the situation before deciding whether to follow suit. But the nationwide shortage of COVID-19 test kits and the rapid spread of the killer virus convinced Brand to act sooner rather than later. “This really weighed heavily on me,” Brand said in an interview Wednesday afternoon after the shelter-in-place announcement. “But there is such a lack of testing that we have a silent killer out there with people not knowing they have the disease. The potential for deaths is mind-boggling."

The best thing we, as Americans, can do right now is limit our physical contacts, practice social distancing, and help contain COVID-19. By doing that, we give the medical community time to catch up in this deadly fight. Though he had expressed hope earlier in the day that Clovis and Fresno County would also issue voluntary shelter-in-place orders, it didn’t happen. Paul Nerland, director of human resources for Fresno County, sent an email to employees after the city’s announcement stating: “This order was not issued in coordination with the...
NEWSOM PREPARES FOR WORST-CASE SCENARIOS AS VIRUS SPREADS

March 18, 2020 | AP News

While urging Californians to stay united and promising “we will get back to the life that we have lived,” Gov. Gavin Newsom acknowledged on Tuesday that much is unknown and so the state is preparing for frightening worst-case scenarios. He put the California National Guard on alert for duties that include humanitarian missions like ensuring proper food distribution and public safety as some grocery stores resorted to rationing to control panic buying.

He said the state is acquiring two vacant hospitals to beef up capacity as it faces the possibility of a surge of hospital patients. California also is negotiating with about 900 hotels to acquire tens of thousands of rooms that could be used for hospital patients and for the homeless, a group particularly susceptible to coronavirus, which is spread by coughs and sneezes. The virus is affecting every aspect of life in California and is devastating many of the state’s key industries.

NEWSOM PREPARES FOR WORST-CASE SCENARIOS AS VIRUS SPREADS

In readying the National Guard for action, Newsom’s office emphasized that it’s for duties routinely performed during natural disasters and other emergencies.

March 18, 2020 | AP News

“...we had a very candid and a sobering conversation about where we may be and where we need to go together. The good news is none of it surprised any of us. We as a state, working with our system, anticipated much of these needs and have been running plans to address them.” — Gov. Gavin Newsom

Imposing Martial Law Would Take the Extraordinary Step of Replacing the Usual Laws

The state Legislature approved $1.1 billion in emergency spending Monday and then voted to suspend its session in what is believed to be the first unexpected work stoppage in 158 years. Lawmakers went one step further Tuesday by closing both the Capitol and the Legislative Office Building to the public “until further notice.” It’s all part of a rapidly escalating reaction that saw three more Northern California counties on Tuesday follow the example of those in the San Francisco Bay Area that told residents to stay at home and go outside only for food, medicine and other essential needs. At a news conference, Newsom did not announce a similar requirement statewide, but previously told bars, restaurants, movie theaters, fitness centers and other gathering places to shut their doors as the death toll crept to 12 and the number of confirmed cases neared 500. All people 65 and older and those with underlying health conditions have been encouraged to stay indoors.

California’s 415 Hospitals Have Been Planning for a Surge of Patients

U.S. and California health officials have repeatedly warned that the virus could have a devastating impact and that the timetable for controlling it isn’t known. President Donald Trump on Monday said the crisis could last until August. California’s 415 hospitals have been planning for a surge of patients. They have...
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CALIFORNIA’S LOCKDOWN OF SENIORS

March 18, 2020 | CalMatters

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sunday called for seniors and people with chronic conditions to isolate themselves during the coronavirus pandemic, raising questions about the state’s capacity to ensure delivery of food, medicine and services to some of its most vulnerable residents.

Newsom pledged that his office would address specific issues related to this directive in a plan to be released on Tuesday, after state officials and private industry collaborate and work out the details. He did not say how long he expected that people would have to isolate themselves since no one knows how long the pandemic will last or how bad it will get.

The governor’s advisory does not carry the force of law, but Newsom said he would not hesitate to sign an executive order making it mandatory if the directive is not followed. “If you want to establish a framework of martial law which is ultimate authority and enforcement, we have the capacity to do that, but we are not at this moment thinking that is a necessity,” Newsom said.

It’s unclear how the government will help coordinate the delivery of meals to an estimated 5.7 million California seniors and millions of other Californians who suffer from heart, respiratory, kidney and immune system disorders. “We are...
March 19, 2020 | AP News

The chairman of Arizona’s Asian Chamber of Commerce didn’t see much downside to attending a small dinner at a local restaurant to bolster the business and bring together other leaders to discuss how to help Asian-American eateries devastated by the coronavirus. That was, at least, until he posted about it on Instagram.

The feedback was swift from people who were appalled that Ryan Winkle would promote a gathering — even a small one — as COVID-19 raged and entire cities were urged to self-isolate. “I started getting some messages saying, ‘Hey, why are you trying to spread the virus?’ I was like, ‘It’s a small event, and everyone had washed their hands, and they had sanitizer on the tables.’ Winkle said of the dinner held Saturday in Mesa, Arizona. “My thinking is always about the economics. Imagine when all these businesses shut down. That’s a whole different problem.”

“Quarantine shaming” — calling out those not abiding by social distancing rules — is part of a new and startling reality for Americans who must navigate a world of rapidly evolving social norms in the age of COVID-19.

As schools close and shelter-in-place orders sweep across the U.S., the divide between those who are stringently practicing self-isolation and those who are still trying to go about some semblance of normal life has never been more clear. Complicating matters: What was socially acceptable even 48 hours ago may now be taboo, as government officials race to contain the virus with ever-expanding circles of social isolation. “The time matrix seems to be shifting. I’ve never known several days to go by so slowly and watching the collective conscience move more and more in one direction day by day,” said Paula Flakser, who lost her bartending job when California’s Mammoth Mountain ski resort closed this week.

Some Trying to Juggle Working From Home While Caring for Kids

For those who must go to work, the divide is widening too. Steve Diehl, who is considered an essential employee at his job at a warehouse near Chicago, wears a mask to work because a family member has a compromised immune system. He’s terrified of catching the new coronavirus or transmitting it to his loved one at home. Diehl posted a sign at the warehouse entrance asking people to put on masks that were provided “to protect immuno-compromised family,” but several co-workers didn’t wear them, he said.

“That angered me greatly,” said Diehl, who posted a photo of himself in a mask on Twitter. “And when I made a comment about it, they shrugged it off.” Others who are trying to juggle working from home while caring for kids who are also home are making smaller and more mundane choices that nevertheless bring shocked responses — or even rebukes — from co-workers, friends and even family. Is it OK to run out for a coffee? Can you allow your children to go the playground? What about sending kids to day care centers, which remain the only lifeline in many states that have...
NEW YORK — Liam Elkind’s big heart and his break from college was a highlight of 83-year-old Carol Sterling’s week. The retired arts administrator has been sheltering at home during the coronavirus outbreak, unable to shop for herself. Yearning for some fresh food, she found the 20-year-old through their synagogue, and soon he showed up at her door with a bag full of salad fixings and oranges.

Elkind, a junior at Yale, and a friend, Simone Policano, amassed 1,300 volunteers in 72 hours to deliver groceries and medicine to older New Yorkers and other vulnerable people. They call themselves Invisible Hands, and they do something else in the process — provide human contact and comfort, at a safe distance, of course.

On delivery day Tuesday, Elkind and Sterling met for the first time over her paper bag of groceries outside her 15th-floor apartment on the Upper West Side. It was a moment of “tikkun olam” between the two congregants of the progressive and service-minded Steven Wise Free Synagogue. The Hebrew for “world repair” is a phrase synonymous with the notion of social action. “It’s neighbor to neighbor,” Sterling...
TEHRAN — Iran on Wednesday reported its single biggest jump in fatalities from the coronavirus as another 147 people died, raising the country’s overall death toll to 1,135. The nearly 15% spike in deaths — amid a total of 17,361 confirmed cases in Iran — marks the biggest 24-hour rise in fatalities since Iranian officials first acknowledged infections of the virus in mid-February.

Busy Stores and Highways as Persian New Year Approaches

Even as the number of cases grows, food markets were still packed with shoppers and highways were crowded as families traveled ahead of the Persian New Year, Nowruz, on Friday. Deputy Health Minister Ali-Reza Raisi urged the public to avoid travel and crowds, telling Iranians the days ahead represented two “golden weeks” to try curb the virus.

He criticized people for not adhering to the warnings to stay home. “This is not a good situation at all,” he said. President Hassan Rouhani defended his government’s response to the outbreak in the face of widespread criticism that Iran acted too slowly and might even have covered up initial cases. He told his Cabinet the government was being “straightforward,” saying it announced the outbreak as soon as it learned about it Feb. 19. “We spoke to people in an honest way. We had no delay,” he added. For weeks, officials implored clerics to shut down crowded Shiite shrines to halt the spread of the virus. The government finally closed them this week.

“It was difficult, of course, to shut down mosques and holy sites, but we did it. It was a religious duty to do it.” — President Hassan Rouhani

“I am financially ruined. How can I earn my living now?” — Mohammed Gamal, a worker in a coffee shop that was shut down by authorities

The Israeli Health Ministry said 90 more people had tested positive, bringing the country’s total of infections to 427. Authorities have put the country in near-shutdown mode, ordering tens of thousands of people into home quarantine, turning unused hotels into hospitals and setting up drive-through testing centers. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned of catastrophic consequences if instructions aren’t followed. “This is a huge crisis. We are only at the start of the campaign,” he said in an address Tuesday evening.

Most controversially, the Israeli government has instructed the shadowy Shin Bet internal security service to deploy phone surveillance technology to curb the spread of the virus in Israel by tracking movements of those infected. In Iraq, a week-long curfew began in Baghdad, allowing pedestrians on the streets only to buy necessary food and medicine. Armed police...
TORONTO — The U.S. and Canada have agreed to temporarily close their shared border to nonessential travel, President Donald Trump announced Wednesday, and the Trump administration is considering a plan to turn back all people who cross the border illegally from Mexico, two administration officials said.

Canada and the U.S. are eager to choke off the spread of the virus but also maintain their vital economic relationship. Canada relies on the U.S. for 75% of its exports. Trump made the announcement on Twitter, saying the decision would not affect the flow of trade between the countries.

"We will be, by mutual consent, temporarily closing our Northern Border with Canada to non-essential traffic," Trump tweeted.

As for Mexico, Trump would be using powers they say the president has during pandemics like the coronavirus outbreak to mount what would be one of the most aggressive attempts to curtail illegal immigration. The plan is under consideration and no final decisions have been made, according to the officials, who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the plan wasn’t announced.

"We are seeing a significant increase in demand, which means our labor needs are unprecedented for this time of year," said Dave Clark, who oversees Amazon’s warehouse and delivery network. Amazon said this weekend that a surge of orders is putting its operations under pressure. It warned shoppers that it could take longer than the usual two days to get packages. It also said it was sold out of many household...