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**MEDIA CONTACT**

Wendy Forbes

[WendyForbes@Centura.org](mailto:WendyForbes@Centura.org)

720.321.4304

## Six Big Myths About Coronavirus

Centura Health wants you to stay aware of misinformation

(ENGLEWOOD, COLO.) With growing concerns surrounding novel coronavirus (COVID-19) Centura Health, the region's health care leader, believes accurate and current information is a key part of keeping our communities whole and healthy. Here are six common myths presently circulating in conversations and online.

**Myth 1: Saline, garlic and sesame oil can prevent coronavirus infection**

There is "no evidence" that these products can ward off coronavirus (COVID-19) and there is no known preventive treatment for COVID-19. World Health Organization (WHO) notes that while researchers, including those in the United States, are pursuing possible vaccines against coronavirus, no vaccine is currently available.

Right now, **the best methods of prevention**, according to CDC, are to avoid close contact with sick individuals, wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, clean and disinfect hard surfaces, and limit touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

**Myth 2: Spraying your body down with alcohol or chlorine, or swallowing bleach, can kill the new coronavirus.**

Another myth that's been gaining traction is that dousing oneself in alcohol or chlorine can kill the new coronavirus (COVID-19). The World Health Organization (WHO) notes that while there is evidence that chemical disinfectants, such as those containing bleach or chlorine, can kill coronavirus on surfaces, the products will not ward off the virus when used on human skin. What's more, WHO warns that using those chemicals on your skin can be "harmful."

**Myth 3: The new coronavirus is man-made.**

CDC states that coronavirus (COVID-19), like MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, can be traced back to bats, and many of the first patients in Wuhan had a link to a large seafood and live animal market. However, researchers have yet to identify the exact animal that led to the first human case. Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people.

**Myth 4: Pets can become infected with and spread the new coronavirus.**

While researchers believe that coronavirus (COVID-19) originated in animals, animals are not intimately associated with the spread of this disease. Pet cats and dogs cannot pass the new coronavirus on to humans, but they can test positive for low levels of the pathogen if they catch it from their owners. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the World Organisation for Animal Health have issued advisories saying there is no evidence that companion animals can spread the virus.

However, both CDC and WHO caution that you should continue to wash your hands after contact with pets or animals to prevent the general spread of bacteria. CDC also notes that, if you are infected with coronavirus, you should avoid contact with pets as you would other humans, as an extra precaution.

**Myth 5: The new coronavirus is 'the most dangerous virus' and 'a death sentence'.**

The fifth myth we'll address here is that the new coronavirus (COVID-19) is "the most dangerous virus," and that contracting the virus amounts to "a death sentence."

Experts don't yet have a clear picture of how deadly COVID-19 is when compared with other viruses. That said, research suggests the global mortality rate for COVID-19 currently is around 3.4% - which makes the virus a more severe illness than the flu, but doesn't spread as efficiently.

**Myth 6: Coronavirus can spread from products, letters or packages from China.**

People receiving packages from China or purchasing products from China are not at risk of contracting the new coronavirus. From previous analysis, we know coronaviruses do not survive long on objects, such as letters or packages.

Centura wants our communities to stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the CDC website and through your local public health authority. Centura has created a web site with links to these resources and more at [Centura.org/COVID-19](https://www.centura.org/COVID-19).

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