

Dear valued patients and colleagues

### **A thank you**

First, I would like to say thank you so much for all the positive feedback I have received. Your feedback has been so gratifying that I have continued to write far more and far longer than I initially intended. The newsletter mailing list continues to grow and this is our 24<sup>th</sup> COVID-19 newsletter (and my wife is still hanging in there with me). Thank you for reading and writing because without your kind words, there would be no purpose to my endeavors.



Many of you have asked me how I find time to write this newsletter. It is easy, this is truly a labor of love. Knowing that I am in contact with so many individuals is truly a reward in and of itself. In addition, I have been told by almost everyone that they forward the newsletter to their friends and family, so I am gratified beyond belief. If this newsletter helps you understand the pandemic we are now experiencing, it will more than have achieved its goal.

### **A response**

One reader wrote to disagree with my opinion about how and when to reopen the country. I am glad that I received an email that disagreed with my point of view as it allowed me to clarify my thinking on this topic. The issue of when to open the country is one that is bandied about quite frequently in the press and is one on which there is no consensus. As I said in a previous newsletter, it is just my opinion, but I believe we should really be opening things back up sooner rather than later and we should definitely not wait for months. I realize that reopening the country is not an all or none proposition, but I would prefer to get American society rolling again. Here are some of the factors that informed my opinion.

- *The 1957 flu, which was during my lifetime, killed about 1-4 million people world-wide. It also started in China. The death toll at that time was 116,000 in the United states. The US*

*population then was 172 million or about half of what it is today. There was no lockdown, there was no closing of society. We developed herd immunity and moved on.*



*Scene of classroom in 1957 with empty chairs due to Asian Flu*

- *Approximately 2.8 million people died in the US last year, many of them before their “time”*
- *Last year, 47,000 people died of suicide. The number this year will surely rise if given the number of people who are out of work.*
- *20 people each minute are abused by their partner for a total of 10 million people, mostly women. It is a well-known statistic that quarantine, and unemployment increase domestic violence.*

### **Simply fascinating statistics**

Here is a set of statistics that may put the deaths from coronavirus in a little bit of perspective.

The CDC calculated the average number of deaths for the period from 2015 through the 2019 as 921,603. The total deaths for 2019 to 2020 were estimated using the average from January through April and amount to 944,251. The estimated number of deaths for the period 2019 to 2010 is slightly more than average but slightly less than the number of deaths in 2017.

Year	Total Deaths
2015-16	878,457
2016-17	919,548
2017-18	946,067
2018-19	919,693
2019-20	944,251
Average 2015-2019	921,603
Slightly GT Average	102%

These statistics are not meant to minimize this disease or its severity or the suffering of those who have lost friends and/or family. These statistics provide a perspective on where we are relative to other years when absolutely no quarantine or economic destruction was rendered. We do not know, with any certainty, whether or not social distancing contributed to keeping the number of deaths relatively low. These data indicate that there is not a very large difference in mortality for the first 4 months of the year, despite having experienced the very heaviest death toll in March and April. Just food for thought to add to all the stats you will be hearing.

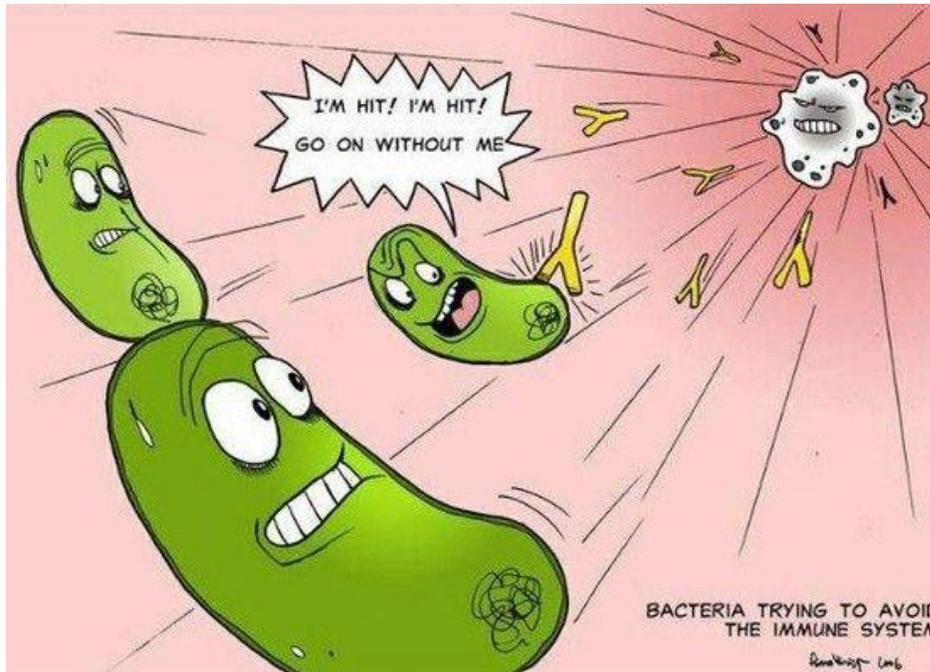
#### **Hat tip**



A hat tip goes to Bob who sent me an article from Reuters on Abbott Labs antibody test. According to the brief report, the Abbott antibody test is highly likely to correctly determine whether people have been infected. The Washington School of Medicine evaluated the test in the Journal of Clinical Microbiology and found the specificity to be 99.9% and the sensitivity to be 100%, suggesting very few false positives and no false negatives. Abbott has shipped 10 million antibody tests to hospitals and labs.

#### **A lot of people**

I see and talk to many people, some of whom believe they have had the coronavirus because they felt sick sometime in the earlier part of the year. I have been doing the coronavirus antibody test for about one week in my office and have had many patients and non-patients tested. To date, from my limited experience, most people are coming back negative, even those who think they may have had Covid-19.



I thought I may have had Covid-19 because of the number of patients I saw prior to knowing about the coronavirus and the need to wear personal protective equipment. Fortunately, I tested negative.

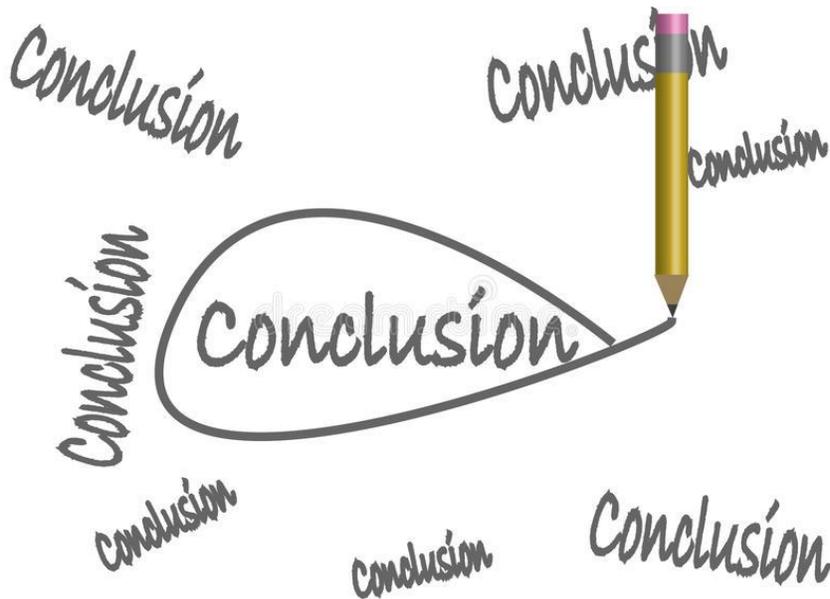
I continue to see reports of Chinese antibody test kit failures (see next topic). So please be careful if you do not receive the antibody test offered by my office.

### **Houston, we have a problem**

Here are some countries reported to have had problems with some of the Chinese coronavirus products/testing:

- Spain canceled orders for antigen coronavirus tests after finding they were not sensitive enough
- The Netherlands has had problems with masks and filters
- The Czech Republic said up to 80% of rapid coronavirus test kits were faulty
- Australian Border forces seized 800,000 defective face masks
- Slovakia has complained about faulty antigen or antibody testing kits
- Turkey has complained about faulty antigen or antibody testing kits
- Britain has complained about faulty antigen or antibody testing kits
- India has suspended the use of Chinese rapid testing kits for COVID-19 because they were faulty
- Finland has found defective and unsafe Chinese test kits and protective gear
- Nepal has advised its hospital and medical centers not to use testing kits and medical equipment purchased from China
- Colombia has reported that thousands of rapid tests for COVID-19 from China do not work

- Germany, according to Der Spiegel, procured Chinese masks and they “turned out to be rubbish”
- Canada bought millions of KN95 masks that turned out defective. These masks were intended for healthcare workers.



### Medicine and history

One of my favorite figures in historical literature is Shakespeare’s Henry V. Henry V is best known for his amazing victory at the Battle of Agincourt. Henry fell ill during the siege of Meaux and died shortly after the siege ended. He was only 36 years old. As English and French military buffs know, the battle of Agincourt is incredibly famous. Let me set the scene before you watch his incredibly famous speech Henry gives to his men before the battle. (Band of Brothers speech)



The hundred years war lasted from 1337 to 1453. The English army, for this campaign, was invading France because of the English claims to French territory. The French rejected the English claims and Henry arrived in Normandy with 12,000 men in 1415 and laid siege to Harfleur. The city eventually capitulated but it was disastrous for Henry and he lost many men to war, disease, and desertion. As French forces gathered, Henry took about 1000 knights and 5000 archers northward to Calais to disembark for England. The French constable Charles d'Albert was in hot pursuit and intercepted Henry and his meager forces at the Village of Agincourt. Today's estimates place the English army at 6000 and the French at 20-30,000 including the crème of French nobility and knights.

Here is the rousing speech that Henry gives as played by Kenneth Branagh. It is one of my favorite speeches of all time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvFHRNGYfu0> and then

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0uwp\\_eoMW4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0uwp_eoMW4)



The fighting commenced at 11:00 am. As the French knights advanced, the deadly English longbows sent their arrows flying and the first line of French were unable to overcome the archers who had also driven sharpened stakes into the ground at angles to protect themselves. The next line of French knights poured in and found themselves tightly packed and unable to use their weapons well; and they too failed. Finally, the last line of French advance was repelled because of the pile of corpses before them and Henry's victory became a story of vast historical proportions. This is a very brief description and many books have been written about this battle and I encourage you to read one, to learn what life was like for these people. Below is the scene from the same movie with its amazing climax with the famous Non Nobis and Te Deum, the music starts at about 3:31. If you are only interested in the music and visuals you can start at this point. It is simply a gorgeous piece of music with stunning cinematography. I cannot suggest strong enough you watch this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmYcpUtvR9U>