

Dr. Debra's Covid Pandemic and Infectious Illness Reflection List

Dr. Debra's Reflections on the Three-Year Pandemic

With insight into how to create the better outcomes

1. Stay home when you are sick to take care of yourself and not infect others. Stay there until you are no longer infectious. If you are not sure, talk to your doctor.

~I look forward to better solutions than current employment policies (that are not abused by employees or employers) that support workers staying home when they are ill
2. If you must go out when you are ill (or even suspect you are infectious), wash your hands frequently for all infections, including those causing diarrhea, and wear a mask if the infection is respiratory (runny nose, cough, congestion). Most of us have an abundant stash of masks by now, so use them when you are ill!
3. Be covered by health insurance – private, Medicare, Medicaid, Obamacare, anything!

~what society does to solve our health insurance coverage, cost, and access crisis on a myriad of levels remains elusive as do solutions for the effect of poverty and race on illness. May some solutions be found by the next pandemic.
4. Get vaccinated and boosted for all the infectious diseases vaccines available. Vaccines have been developed to keep humanity from dying, transmitting, and suffering from deadly infectious diseases. Think polio and smallpox.
5. Learn about and respect science. Continue to educate yourself about science - read science journalists and listen to scientist reporters and podcasts. Lifelong learning is good for your health and your brain!
6. Know what sources of science and health information you can trust. This does not include Facebook, now known to be rife with misinformation from sources seemingly beyond the site's control. There are myriads of conspiracy theories and much fake news including science out there. Be discriminating.

7. VOTE, and in particular, vote for science and representatives that understand, support, and respect science. Vote for representatives that you trust and whom you can trust to be transparent and honest in a crisis.

~Government representatives, both elected and appointed, including those in science, have much room for improvement in communicating scientific messages to the public. I applaud the efforts of Thurston County Health Department. In particular for their communication thru the pandemic and this winter's catch-up respiratory infections.

8. Build your interpersonal trust. Being educated, informed, and having the background to follow emerging science and/or those writing will help. Trust helps you make good choices for both yourself and the greater good. It will reduce your fear of being exploited.

~I look forward to those responsible for building corporate trust in modern society, in particular pharmaceutical companies' ethics and profit margins. We need to trust them. They pulled off a most remarkable feat in developing the Covid19 vaccines in record time using new and sophisticated techniques.

9. Remain vigilant and informed to make good health choices in the future. Pandemics and epidemics of infectious illnesses occur in cycles and scientists expect another in less than 100 years.
10. Breathe a sigh of relief that this season and pandemic are declared over. Though Covid19 will be with us for the long haul, it is no longer an epidemic.
11. Reflect on who and what was lost in this pandemic, what you learned about yourself, and your priorities. Some learned they liked to be less busy and social. Others that they wilted without social activity.