

As with all information on the Internet, TRUST BUT VERIFY

Good advice from a nurse on Twitter if you should get the virus: I know we're all tired of hearing/talking about it, but one thing I HAVEN'T really seen going around is advice for what happens if you DO get coronavirus (some will), we're only seeing advice for how to try to AVOID it. So as your friendly neighborhood RN, a wee thread:

Things you should *actually* buy ahead of time (Erm, not sure what the obsession with toilet paper is?): Kleenex, Acetaminophen (Tylenol) in 325 mg tablets, Ibuprofen (Advil) in 200 mg tablets, Mucinex, Robitussin or DayQuil/NyQuil, whatever your cough medicine of choice is.

If you don't have a humidifier, that would also be a good thing to get. (You can also just turn the shower on hot and sit in the bathroom breathing in the steam). Also a good time to make a big batch of your favorite soup to freeze and have on hand.

If you have a history of asthma and you have a prescription inhaler, make sure the one you have isn't expired and refill it/get a new one if it is.

You basically just want to prepare as though you know you're going to get a nasty respiratory bug like bronchitis or pneumonia. You just have the foresight to know it's coming.

For symptom management, use the meds I mentioned. For a fever over 101, alternate Tylenol and Advil so you're taking a dose of one or the other every 3 hours. Use both cough suppressants and expectorants (most cough meds have both). Drink a ton, hydrate hydrate. Rest lots.

If you're sick, you should not be leaving your house except to go to the doctor, and if you do, wear a mask (regular is fine, you don't need an N95). You DO NOT NEED TO GO TO THE ER unless you are having trouble breathing or your fever is very high and unmanaged with meds.

90% of healthy adult cases thus far have been managed at home with basic rest/hydration/over-the-counter meds. We don't want to clog the ERs unless you're actually in distress. The hospital beds will be used for people who apamctively need oxygen/breathing treatments/IV fluids.

If you have a pre-existing lung condition (COPD, emphysema, lung cancer) or are on immunosuppressants, now is a great time to talk to your PCP or specialist about what they would like you to do if you get sick. They might have plans to get you admitted and bypass the ER entirely.

One major relief to you parents is that kids do VERY well with coronavirus— they usually bounce back in a few days, no one under 18 has died, and almost no kids have required hospitalization (unless they have a lung disease like CF). Just use pediatric dosing of the same meds.