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# MDH COMMUNITY E-NEWSLETTER



**STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

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## **What it's like to be a healthcare worker in a pandemic?**

We have heard and read many remarkable stories of people from all walks of life, reliving what they had gone through. The fear and uncertainty of what could happen can be overwhelming even to the bravest of men.

By all accounts, frontline workers have responded very well to the call of their profession. Day by day, as the pandemic stretched into months. Nurses, along with other healthcare workers, continue to

demonstrate compassion and put up a brave front in battling this global pandemic. The story I would like to share with you is from someone closer in our midst. Ms. Aikee has been with us for 13 years. She started as a Staff Nurse at the OB-Gyne Complex and is now acting as one of the Nurse Professional Development Specialists of the Nursing Service Directorate. Let her story help us face our own fears and to keep our faith as well as inspire us to continue our duty to serve others. There really is courage in the selflessness of helping others.



“Depression is like a grapevine, creeping slowly into one’s soul, but I have two options, to let the depression sink me to oblivion or to fight and emerge stronger. I chose the latter.”

# A glimpse of my mortality

A first hand account from AIKEE - A COVID SURVIVOR

**I**t was the last day of my duty and I was excited to go home to my family, though secluded in a separate room, it has been a practice to distance myself to them, still I will be home. I did my usual chores

during the weekends, our laundry, cooking and general cleaning, suffice to say I was tired to the bone. Later that night, I felt feverish and weak. Thinking it was only fatigue, I tried to sleep it off. The wee hours came and I was awakened by intense chills and high fever. The possibility of contracting the virus is at the far back of my mind, or was being blocked by denial, up until now I cannot comprehend for certain. Being a nurse I managed myself, I took paracetamol, did tepid sponge bath on myself and drank plenty of fluids.

Morning came and I decided to proceed to the ER for consult, then my fears and doubts were realized when the doctor informed me that I will undergo nose and throat swabbing for Covid-19 testing. As I went home and waited for the results in strict isolation which was, may I add, the longest 7 days I have ever waited, I heard a chime from my cellphone, it was the Infection Disease Specialist (IDS) of our hospital, and there she told me the news I have been dreading to hear. My test was positive for Sars-COV-2 which is the

causative agent of Covid-19, we had a brief but very depressing conversation where she laid down my options, to be admitted at the hospital or be quarantined at home. I talked to my husband and we decided the latter.

I did all the precautions and recommendations of the IDS, treated myself as I would have treated my own patients. Enhanced my isolation strategies, for the fear of infecting my loved ones supersedes my fear of my own mortality, took medications as prescribed, added homeopathic approach to my treatment and prayed to the heavens for my recovery. On the 7th day from the onset of my fever, my symptoms started to wane and I was gaining more strength.

Come the 10th day for my second swab, I was certain that I have defeated this virus. The results came out and once again, the IDS informed me that I am Positive still. I would be lying if I will say that my faith was unmoved, but then I remembered the testimonies of our Covid-19 nurses, the patients I have seen and died without their families at their side, the families left behind by their loved ones and not able to say their goodbyes, and those less fortunate who do not have the means to battle this sickness. I am still fortunate to be able to manage my condition at home, to be with my family, though

there is a concrete barrier between us, I am home, I am with them.

My quarantine continued on, my management continued on. I was scheduled for the Rapid Testing to assess for the antibody formation, sadly, my IgG is still negative and other complications started to show.

I came back to the ER for my third swab with full positivity. I know I can surpass this for God does not present impediments one cannot beat. Three days after my third swabbing, the IDS informed me that I was no longer positive to the Covid-19 virus. The realization of this experience defined my mortality as a person, as a mother, and as a healthcare worker battling this war.

Finally, my month-long quarantine has ended. My road to recovery is riddled with fear, anxiety and doubt, but through this experience, I survived. I now know firsthand what it was like to be a victim, and my empathy will be coming from somewhere deeper, somewhere personal. Through this, I will be able to empower not only our patients but our co-workers as well. To take time and reflect, take time to heal, for how can we be able to take care of our patients if we deny care of ourselves, and when we are in our top shape, we will combat this pandemic and save lives one patient at a time.





breastmilk is the best source of nutrition for babies. However, mothers are understandably worried on whether it is still safe to breastfeed

during a pandemic. Can the coronavirus be passed on through breastmilk? What are the steps to do to protect both mother and baby?

*Here are some tips for keeping mothers and babies safe during the COVID-19 crisis.*

So far, the virus has not been found in breast milk and all mothers are advised to continue breastfeeding, while practicing good hygiene during feeding. According to UNICEF, always practice the 3 Ws:

**Wear** a mask during feeding.

**Wash** hands with soap before and after touching the baby.

**Wipe** and disinfect surfaces regularly.

If a mother suspects that she may have contracted coronavirus, she may wish to express her breastmilk and feed the baby using a clean cup and spoon.

*Continue to breastfeed even if you fall sick. Take additional hygiene measures.*

Mothers who become infected while breastfeeding will produce immune factors (antibodies) in their milk to protect their baby and enhance the baby's own immune responses. This means that continuing to breastfeed is the best way to fight the virus and protect your baby.

If a mother does fall ill with symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, she should seek medical care early, and follow instructions from a health care provider.

Mothers who are well enough to breastfeed should continue to do so, taking additional care with hygiene by practicing the 3 Ws including wearing a mask whenever near to the baby.

*Use a cup and spoon to feed babies with expressed breastmilk when too sick to breastfeed*

When mothers are too ill to breastfeed, they should seek immediate medical advice. It may still be possible to express milk and ask a non-infected member of the family to feed the baby using a clean

cup or cup and spoon. It will be even more important to follow the 3 Ws at all times to keep the baby healthy and safe.

*Take extra care when formula feeding*

Breastfeeding is the best way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of babies. However, there are instances where a mother is unable to breastfeed or where she has decided not to breastfeed. In addition, the widespread marketing of formula milk undermines the confidence of many mothers and encourages them to feed their babies using bottles and formula milk. In these cases, it is especially important that babies are being fed according to the instructions on the packaging and that extra care is taken with thoroughly washing bottles, teats and any other equipment used. The 3 Ws should be followed at all times.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said that mothers should be counselled that the benefits of breastfeeding substantially outweigh the potential risks for transmission.

It is still not clear whether the virus can or cannot be transmitted through breast

milk. Risk of transmission based on feeding practices have not been quantified, compared, or modelled against the benefits of breastfeeding and nurturing mother-infant interaction.

At present, data are not sufficient to conclude vertical transmission of COVID-19 through breastfeeding. In infants, the risk of COVID-19 infection is low, the infection is typically mild or asymptomatic, while the consequences of not breastfeeding and separation between mother and child can be significant. At this point it appears that COVID-19 in infants and children represents a much lower threat to survival and health than other infections that breastfeeding is protective against. The benefits of breastfeeding and nurturing mother-infant interaction to prevent infection and promote health and development are especially important when health and other community services are themselves disrupted or limited.

Based on available evidence, WHO recommendations on the initiation and continued breastfeeding of infants and young children also apply to mothers with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.



## Breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic

How to keep mother and baby safe

Source: UNICEF & WHO



In this critical time, everybody is taking extra measures to protect their health and that of their family. One of the most important questions stem from food consumption. How safe is the food we buy from the market? The grocery store? What are the best ways to ensure 'clean' food and how to 'disinfect' food items? The World Health Organization (WHO) answers some questions relating to food safety and COVID -19.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO)

## Q&A: Food Safety and Nutrition

### *Can I get COVID-19 from eating fresh foods, like fruits and vegetables?*

There is currently no evidence that people can catch COVID-19 from food, including fruits and vegetables. Fresh fruits and vegetables are part of a healthy diet and their consumption should be encouraged.

### *Is there a special way to wash fruits and vegetables in the time of COVID-19?*

Wash fruit and vegetables the same way you would in any other circumstance. Before handling them, wash your hands with soap and water. Then wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly with clean water, especially if you eat them raw.

### *Can the virus that causes COVID-19 live on the surface of food packaging?*

Coronaviruses need a live animal or human host to multiply and survive and cannot multiply on the surface of food packages. It is not necessary to disinfect food packaging materials, but hands should be properly washed after handling food packages and before eating.

### *Can the virus that causes COVID-19 be transmitted through the consumption of cooked foods, including animal products?*

There is currently no evidence that people can catch COVID-19 from food. The virus that causes COVID-19 can be killed at temperatures similar to that of other known viruses and bacteria found in food. Foods such as meat, poultry and eggs should always be thoroughly cooked to at least 70°C. Before cooking, raw animal products should be handled with care to avoid cross-contamination with cooked foods.

### *Is it safe to go to grocery stores and other food markets?*

Yes, it is generally safe to go grocery shopping and to markets by following the prevention measures:

- Clean your hands with sanitizer before entering the store.
- Cover a cough or sneeze in your bent elbow or tissue.
- Maintain at least a 1-meter distance from others, and if you can't maintain this distance, wear a mask and face shield
- Once home, wash your hands thoroughly and also after handling and storing your purchased products.

### *Is it safe to have groceries delivered?*

Yes, it is safe to have groceries delivered if the provider follows good personal and food hygiene practices. After accepting food/grocery deliveries, hands should be properly washed.

### *What foods should be consumed to support the immune system?*

The immune system requires the support of many nutrients. It is recommended to consume a variety of foods for a healthy and balanced diet, including whole grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, nuts and animal source foods. There is no single food that will prevent you from catching COVID-19.

### *Can micronutrient (vitamin and mineral) supplements prevent COVID-19 in healthy individuals or cure it in those with COVID-19 disease?*

Although there is currently no guidance on micronutrient supplementation for the prevention of COVID-19 in healthy individuals or for the treatment of COVID-19, micronutrients are critical for a well-functioning immune system and play a vital role in promoting health and nutritional well-being. Wherever possible, micronutrient intakes should come from a nutritionally balanced and diverse diet, including from fruits, vegetables and animal source foods.

### *Are vitamin D supplements needed if individuals are not exposed to sunlight due to lockdowns?*

Vitamin D can be made in the skin by exposure to sunlight or obtained through the diet from natural sources (e.g. fatty fishes such as salmon, tuna and mackerel, fish liver oils, beef liver, cheese and egg yolks), or from vitamin D-fortified foods or vitamin D-containing supplements.

### *Are there any herbal teas or herbal supplements that may help prevent or cure COVID-19?*

No. There is currently no evidence to support the use of herbal teas or herbal supplements to prevent or cure COVID-19.

### *Can eating ginger help prevent COVID-19?*

No. There is no evidence that eating ginger has protected people from COVID-19. However, ginger is a food that may have some antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.

### *Can eating garlic help prevent COVID-19?*

No. There is no evidence that eating garlic has protected people from COVID-19. However, garlic is a food that may have some antimicrobial properties.



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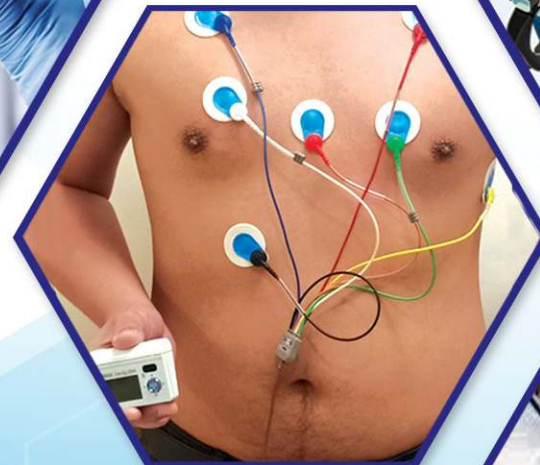
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# SABAY-SABAY TAYONG BABANGON PILIPINAS!



## ARAW NG MGA BAYANI

AUGUST 31, 2020

Ang Manila Doctors Hospital ay sumasaludo sa mga ordinaryong mamamayan na nagpapakita ng kakaibang tapang at tibay ng loob nitong panahon ng pandemia. **KAYO ANG MGA TUNAY NA BAGONG BAYANI!**