**SomarMed COVID-19 Blog 24th March 2020**

**Importance of social distancing**

**Stay two metres apart**

It is sad to see we are not heeding the lesson from Italy where on Friday night 793 people died

This is evident by the number of people continuing to populate our parks and beaches in close proximity.

My concern is that the population still consider this as a flu rather than a potential untreatable pneumonia and the younger people feel they will only contract a mild illness at worst.

You will note the recent excellent report Inside Bergamo (by Stuart Ramsay) which captures in picture far more than I can express in words ([www.somarmed.com](http://www.somarmed.com))

Remember we are now only 13 days behind Italy and without everyone practicing social distancing we have no immunity to avoid the same fate

As you can see from the COVID 19 Worldwide Growth Rates ([www.somarmed.com](http://www.somarmed.com) ) there is no evidence as yet of flattening of the curve unlike South Korea (currently 4 days ahead of Italy) where flattening of the curve started 10 days before Italy’s dramatic increase of COVID -19 cases

This is not the time to be complacent but a time for action to support our community

No one is invincible, there is currently a 35 year old lady on a ventilator in the ICU in the UK who contracted the virus 10 days ago, not while working as a health care worker but while on her holidays at home.

The major concern is if we lose control there will not be enough resources in our health services to provide for all our citizens as currently evident in Italy.

Incubation Period 2-14 days represents the current official estimated range for COVID-19

 (Possible outliers (0-27 days) Reference [www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/](http://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/)

Mortality rate 3.4% estimate by the WHO as of March 3rd

Median Days from first symptom to death were 14-data from China National Health Commission

In Italy to date more than half of infected cases require hospitalization because of breathing difficulties and 10% require treatment in the ICU

**COVID-19 Fatality Rate by AGE:**

\***Death Rat**e = (number of deaths / number of cases) = **probability of dying if infected by the virus** (%). This probability differs depending on the age group. The percentages shown below **do not have to add up to 100%**, as they**do NOT represent share of deaths by age** group. Rather, it represents, for a person in a given age group, the **risk of dying** if infected with COVID-19.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| AGE | DEATH RATEconfirmed cases | DEATH RATEall cases |
| **80+ years old** | **21.9%** | **14.8%** |
| **70-79 years old** |  | **8.0%** |
| **60-69 years old** |  | **3.6%** |
| **50-59 years old** |  | **1.3%** |
| **40-49 years old** |  | **0.4%** |
| **30-39 years old** |  | **0.2%** |
| **20-29 years old** |  | **0.2%** |
| **10-19 years old** |  | **0.2%** |
| **0-9 years old** |  | **no fatalities** |

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Where the above statistics are encouraging and the majority of people recover with a mild illness the focus must be on prevention which involves engagement from everyone in the community

 **Here's what you should do.**

To protect yourself and others from coronavirus (COVID-19) it’s important to think about how the virus is spread.

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets. To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth. This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces). Keep this in mind. It will help you remember all the things you need to do to protect yourself and others from the virus.

**Social distancing**

Social distancing is important to help slow the spread of coronavirus. It does this by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals.

**What you require to do**

**Do**

Keep a space of 2 metres (6.5 feet) between you and other people

Reduce interactions with people outside the workplace and home

Reduce the number of people you meet every day

Avoid communal sleeping areas

Avoid crowded places

Work from home if possible

**Don't**

Do not shake hands or make close contact

**Help slow the spread of coronavirus**

To help slow the spread of coronavirus:

* anyone who has symptoms should self-isolate for 14 days
* everyone should limit unnecessary social contact as much as possible
* Elderly/ at risk groups ([www.somarmed.com](http://www.somarmed.com) )should avoid close contact with people outside the home