Choosing Wisely in the Face of COVID-19 for Employers

April 9, 2020
Presenters

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- Mark Cunningham-Hill, MD
- Ray Fabius, MD
- Diana Han, MD
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- Bruce Sherman, MD
- Christa-Marie Singleton, MD
Questions

Raise your hand
### Symptoms and Signs of COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COVID-19</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>Flu</th>
<th>Allergies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Common (Dry)</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Common (dry)</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aches &amp; Pains</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny or Stuffy Nose</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes for Kids</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of Breath</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding Spread

- **First Symptoms:** Infects Others, FEVER 5.4 Days
- **Incubation Period:** Day 0
- **First Symptoms:** Day 2.2
- **Well:** Day 5.1
- **Infects Others:** Day 11.4
- **No Longer Infectious:** Well – 8.4 Days
Following the course of COVID-19 Internationally
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country, Other</th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>New Cases</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
<th>New Deaths</th>
<th>Total Recovered</th>
<th>Active Cases</th>
<th>Serious, Critical</th>
<th>Tot Cases/1M pop</th>
<th>Deaths/1M pop</th>
<th>Total Tests</th>
<th>Tests/1M pop</th>
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<td>173</td>
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<td>10,871</td>
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<td>336,462</td>
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<td>1,109</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>40,437</td>
<td>82,897</td>
<td>6,931</td>
<td>2,923</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>16,523</td>
<td>+636</td>
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<td>93,187</td>
<td>3,898</td>
<td>2,192</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>721,732</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>+5,171</td>
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<td>265</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>252,958</td>
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<td>46,100</td>
<td>1,559</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>252,958</td>
<td>3,726</td>
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<td>88</td>
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<td>18,776</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>3,986</td>
<td>15,196</td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>1,796</td>
<td>141</td>
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<td>6,040</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>1,409</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>426</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>330,901</td>
<td>8,762</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender of Confirmed Cases

- Male: 47.7%
- Female: 45.9%
- Pending: 6.4%

Age Groupings of Confirmed Cases

Demographic data reflects information received to date on persons with confirmed COVID-19 disease reported by local and regional health departments.

Flu vs COVID-19 death rate, by age

Flu death rates:
- Flu: 0.01%, 0.02%, 0.06%, 0.83%

COVID-19 death rates:
- 0-18: 0.02%, 0.02%, 0.02% (three times lower than Flu)
- 65+: 14.8%

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
### Predicted Outcomes after 3 Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Estimated Cumulative Infected</th>
<th>Estimated Date Hospitals Overloaded</th>
<th>Estimated Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited action</td>
<td>&gt;70%</td>
<td>Sun Apr 26 2020</td>
<td>305,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Months of Stay at home (poor compliance)*</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>Sun May 31 2020</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Months of Stay at home (strict compliance)*</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>never</td>
<td>19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Months of Lockdown**</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>never</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A second spike in disease may occur after social distancing is stopped. Interventions are important because they buy time to create surge capacity in hospitals and develop therapeutic drugs that may have potential to lower hospitalization and fatality rates from COVID. See full scenario definitions here.

### Projected hospitalizations

Texas

- **Hospitals Overloaded**
  - Stay at home (poor compliance)
- 101,734 hospitalizations expected by April 29

- **Available hospital beds**
- **Limited action**
- **3 months of Stay at home (poor compliance)**
- **3 months of Lockdown**
Presenters

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National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions

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WellOK, The Northeastern Oklahoma Business Coalition on Health
Coronavirus

You’ve seen your doctor because of **cough**, 100° **fever** and general aches. You have **nausea** and no appetite. You have no shortness of breath. You got a COVID-19 nasal swab on a parking lot line which was **positive**.
Your doctor says treatment may be effective

Both she and you have read reports about the combination of hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin.

Both are generic, not terribly expensive. (The brand names are Plaquenil and Zithromax.)

Zithromax is used for certain bacterial respiratory infections. Plaquenil is used for malaria, certain other uncommon infections and for autoimmune diseases such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.
Your doctor says she can send a prescription to your pharmacy.

What do you say?
Shared Decision-making

Shared decision-making is a model of patient-centered care that enables and encourages people to play a role in the medical decisions that affect their health. It operates under two premises:

- First, consumers armed with good information* can and will participate in the medical decision-making process by asking informed questions and expressing personal values and opinions about their conditions and treatment options.
- Second, clinicians will respect patients' goals and preferences and use them to guide recommendations and treatments.

*AKA evidence-based medicine
Old

“I’m sending out a prescription for two meds. Your pharmacist will give you instructions.”

Me: “OK, thanks.”

New

I’m sending out a prescription.”

Me: “Before you do that, I have a couple of questions.”
5 QUESTIONS to Ask Your Doctor Before You Get Any Test, Treatment, or Procedure

1. **Do I really need this test or procedure?** Medical tests help you and your doctor or other health provider decide how to treat a problem. And medical procedures help to actually treat it.

2. **What are the risks?** Will there be side effects? What are the chances of getting results that aren't accurate? Could that lead to more testing or another procedure?

3. **Are there simpler, safer options?** Sometimes all you need to do is make lifestyle changes, such as eating healthier food or exercising more.

4. **What happens if I don't do anything?** Ask if your condition might get worse — or better — if you don't have the test or procedure right away.

5. **How much does it cost?** Ask if there are less-expensive tests, treatments or procedures, what your insurance may cover, and about generic drugs instead of brand-name drugs.
Do I really need this test or procedure (or treatment)?

“Well, at your age of 30 and your overall health, your chances of serious illness requiring hospitalization is not high.”

“Most young people can recover at home.”
What are the risks?

“We only have scant evidence that the these medications are effective based on extremely limited studies. You could be taking meds of uncertain benefit for something that’s likely to improve on its own.”

“Hydroxychloroquine can cause eye, heart, skin and blood side effects that are unlikely for a short treatment. However, people with a certain heart problem (one they may not be aware of) can have a major heart rhythm problem*. It also interacts with one of your current medications.”

“Zithromax can cause diarrhea, nausea and vomiting. It can also affect the heart rhythm like hydroxycholoquine.”

* “prolonged QTc interval” that may lead to torsades de pointes
Are there simpler, safer options?

“Well, the simplest option is to stay home, use Tylenol if it helps you feel better and keep up your intake of liquids.”
What happens if I don’t do anything?

“Most likely you will get better. There’s a small chance you may get pneumonia and require hospitalization.

“You can let me know if you get any shortness of breath or believe you are getting worse. That may be a more appropriate time to consider unproven but possibly helpful treatment.”
How much does it cost?

If we treat you, the treatment would probably be around $20-30 in total. The drugs may not be immediately available. Your pharmacist would know.
More...

choosingwisely.org

An initiative of the ABIM Foundation

https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/www/resources-new/employer-resources-covid-19
Questions & Answers

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WellOK, The Northeastern Oklahoma Business Coalition on Health
COVID-19: The Importance of Shared Decision-Making

ACTION STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS

1. **Promote shared decision-making and patient-centered care.** Provide clear, consistent information to employees on the latest guidance and best practices regarding COVID-19. Encourage employees to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. This may include encouraging employees to discuss their health status with healthcare providers and to participate in shared decision-making processes.

2. **Promote the use of the Choosing Wisely initiative.** The Choosing Wisely initiative is a national, physician-led effort to reduce overuse of medical tests, procedures, and medications. Encourage employees to discuss their medical needs with their healthcare providers and to consider whether the proposed treatments are necessary and effective.

3. **Communicate about the spread of COVID-19.** Inform employees about the latest information on the spread of COVID-19 and the measures being taken to prevent its spread. This may include providing updates on vaccination efforts, guidelines for mask-wearing, and other measures to reduce the risk of transmission.

**Easing Stress on Patients, Providers, and the Healthcare System**

- **Transparency:** Provide clear and consistent information to employees on the latest guidance and best practices regarding COVID-19. Encourage employees to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. This may include encouraging employees to discuss their health status with healthcare providers and to participate in shared decision-making processes.

- **Choosing Wisely initiatives:** Encourage employees to discuss their medical needs with their healthcare providers and to consider whether the proposed treatments are necessary and effective.

- **Communication:** Inform employees about the latest information on the spread of COVID-19 and the measures being taken to prevent its spread. This may include providing updates on vaccination efforts, guidelines for mask-wearing, and other measures to reduce the risk of transmission.

**Choosing Wisely**

- **Simplify the decision-making process.** Provide clear and concise information on the latest guidance and best practices regarding COVID-19. Encourage employees to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. This may include encouraging employees to discuss their health status with healthcare providers and to participate in shared decision-making processes.

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**Choosing Wisely**

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**RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS:**

- [National Alliance for Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions](https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/)
- [Choosing Wisely](https://www.choosingwisely.org/)
- [National Alliance for Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions](https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/)

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

- [American College of Physicians](https://www.acp.org/)
- [American Medical Association](https://www.ama-assn.org/)
- [American Society for Dermatology](https://www.asderm.org/)

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**For more information, please visit:**

[https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/](https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/)