

The Hagerstown Parkinson's Support Group

Hagerstown, MD and the Four-State Area

Monthly Newsletter

July 2020

Visit Our Website at:
www.fareshare.net/Parkinsons/

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Volume 10, Issue 7

This Month's Meeting

? Meeting

Due to the coronavirus issues at hand, our May caregiver's breakfast and lunch, as well as our June 4th meeting, have been cancelled. Our picnic planned for June has also been cancelled.

It is likely that July's meetings will not be held either, but we will let you know next month.

We feel it is better to be proactive in this matter and not risk further spread of the virus. We are a high-risk population. Let's pray this will be under control soon.

To keep our communications simple, I have decided to do a one-sheet newsletter until we can get back in full swing again.

Support Group Meetings are important.

Block off the first Thursday of every month on your calendars and try not to schedule anything else that day! It's just one day a month!



On a personal note, Jan and I are taking proper precautions here in Florida. We are staying at home; we have not been out more than a couple times over the past 6 weeks. We have been getting groceries delivered to the house and that has been working out well. We hope you are doing the same – stay safe until we can be together again.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Join us for our next
Parkinson Support Group Meeting
at the

Western Sizzlin' Steakhouse
17567 York Road, Hagerstown, MD

Sometime Soon, I Hope!

JUNE MEETING CANCELLED

JUNE PICNIC CANCELLED

JUNE CAREGIVERS MEETINGS CANCELLED

PLEASE STAY HEALTHY
SO WE CAN MEET AGAIN

Hagerstown Parkinson's Support Group Meetings in 2020

June 4, Lynda Janet, Somerford, Memory Loss
July 2, Katy Kobel, FOX Rehab, LSVT/BIG.
Aug 6, Peter McMillin, Somerford, Resources
Sep 3, Robert Lindsay, Author, Communicating
Oct 1, Dr. Zach Levine, Neurosurgeon
Nov 5, Shannon Murphy, Physical Therapist
Dec 3, Our Holiday Party! No Speaker.

SPOTLIGHT

Please stay safe and follow the guidelines the medical community is promoting. Stay at home, wash your hands frequently and keep a proper distance from others.

COVID-19 affects people in different ways. Infected people have had a wide range of symptoms reported – from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

Cough
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
Fever
Chills
Muscle pain
Sore throat
New loss of taste or smell

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

Trouble breathing
Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
New confusion
Inability to wake or stay awake
Bluish lips or face

The Hagerstown Parkinson's Support Group

Group Facilitator:

Art Guyer, 240-625-2722
4Parkinsons@gmail.com

The Hagerstown Parkinson's Support Group
is supported in part by:



17567 York Road, Hagerstown, MD
Stop by for lunch or dinner to support them!

Thanks to Paul Romsburg, his family, and staff of the *Western Sizzlin'* for supporting our group.

UNSUBSCRIBE: If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please contact the Group Facilitator, Art Guyer.

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What Happens to the Body After Contracting the New Coronavirus

There's a lot unknown about the coronavirus that's sickened more than 4.7 million worldwide, with more than 310,000 deaths reported. But one thing that's clear is that in serious cases, the virus can have a devastating effect on the body — and not just on the lungs. Here's what is known so far about how COVID-19, the disease the new coronavirus causes, affects the different systems in the body.

Lungs

As with similar illnesses, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, so the lungs are usually affected first. Early symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. These appear as soon as 2 days, or as long as 14 days, after exposure to the virus.

While fever is at the top of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's list of symptoms, not everyone who gets sick has a fever. In one study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers found that about 70 percent of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 didn't have a fever.

Cough is more common, but treatment guidelines found that cough occurs in 68 to 83 percent of people who show up at the hospital with COVID-19. Only 11 to 40 percent had shortness of breath. Other less common symptoms included confusion, headache, nausea, and diarrhea.

The severity of COVID-19 varies from mild or no symptoms to severe or sometimes fatal illness. Data on more than 17,000 reported cases in China found that almost 81 percent of cases were mild. The rest were severe or critical. Older people and those with chronic medical conditions appear to have a higher risk for developing severe illness. This variability also shows up in how COVID-19 affects the lungs. Some people may only have minor respiratory symptoms, while others develop non-life-threatening pneumonia. But there's a subset of people who develop severe lung damage.

One recent study of 138 people hospitalized for COVID-19 found that on average, people started having difficulty breathing 5 days after showing symptoms. Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) developed on average 8 days after symptoms. Treatment for ARDS involves supplemental oxygen and mechanical ventilation, with the goal of getting more oxygen into the blood. One curious thing about COVID-19 is that many patients have potentially deadly low blood oxygen levels, but they don't seem starved of oxygen. This has led some doctors to rethink putting patients on a ventilator simply because of low oxygen levels in the blood.

The lungs are the main organs affected by COVID-19. But in serious cases, the rest of the body can also be affected. Some people with COVID-19 have reported **gastrointestinal symptoms**, such as nausea or diarrhea, although these symptoms are much less common than problems with the lungs. While coronaviruses seem to have an easier time entering the body through the lungs, the intestines aren't out of reach for these viruses.

COVID-19 can also affect the **heart and blood vessels**. This may show up as irregular heart rhythms, not enough blood getting to the tissues, or blood pressure low enough that it requires medications. It's not clear that the virus directly damages the heart. In one study of hospitalized patients in Wuhan, 20 percent had some form of heart damage. In another, 44 percent of those in an intensive care unit (ICU) had an irregular heart rhythm. There are also signs that COVID-19 may cause the blood to clot more easily. It's not clear how much this plays in the severity of the illness, but clots could increase the risk of a stroke or heart attack.

When **liver cells** are inflamed or damaged, they can leak higher than normal amounts of enzymes into the bloodstream. Elevated liver enzymes aren't always a sign of a serious problem, but this laboratory finding has been seen. In one study of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in Wuhan, 27 percent had **kidney failure**. One recent report found signs of liver damage in a person with COVID-19. Doctors say it's not clear, though, if the virus or the drugs being used to treat the person caused the damage. Some people hospitalized with COVID-19 have also had acute kidney damage, sometimes requiring a kidney transplant. There's "little evidence," to show the virus directly caused the kidney injury, according to a World Health Organization report.

With any infection, the body's **immune system** responds by attacking the foreign virus or bacteria. While this immune response can rid the body of the infection, it can also sometimes cause collateral damage in the body. This can come in the form of an intense inflammatory response, sometimes called a "cytokine storm." The immune cells produce cytokines to fight infection, but if too many are released, it can cause problems in the body. Another thing about the immune system is that, so far, there are almost no cases of COVID-19 in children under 9 years old. Scientists aren't sure whether young children aren't getting infected or their symptoms are so mild that no one notices it. Children also have a less severe illness than adults during other kinds of infections, including measles and pneumococcal infections.