

Coronavirus: a global emergency?

It's all over the news: the Coronavirus epidemic is spreading all over the world, unfortunately.

Coronavirus gets its name because it looks like a crown under the microscope and “crown” in Latin is “corona”.

The Coronavirus was first detected in the city of Wuhan, China, a few months ago. Since then it has spread to fifty countries. The Coronavirus produces a disease called Covid-19, which is very similar to the ordinary flu, with symptoms such as fever, coughing and sneezing. Like the flu, it can spread quickly, through the air and person to person. Sometimes it's hard to detect, just because its effects are so similar to those of the flu.

Although the flu can also be deadly, Covid-19 is more dangerous because it is highly contagious and there is no vaccination against this virus. So far more than 110,000 people have caught it and about 4,000 died. Every day new cases are identified all over the world. Most of its victims were people already in poor health. In other words, a healthy person who contracts the virus will most likely recover from it. Indeed, some 80% of infected people report mild or no symptoms at all. On a minority the virus has caused severe pneumonia, that is lung infection.

Reactions around the world

Countries are taking measures against the spread of the virus, such as quarantining people from affected areas, cancelling public events or shutting down schools. These measures cannot stop the virus, but they are useful in slowing the contagion. This is very important because it allows the health care systems to deal with this emergency. There are not enough hospitals if too many people get sick at the same time.

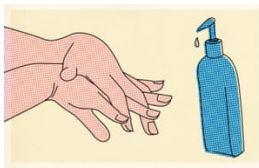
What needs to be done

Correct information is also very important. Some countries, such as The UK and Italy, are launching a mass public information campaign. Informing the public with solid science and good advice is a way to slow the epidemic and prevent mass panic and irrational behaviour. It is a problem, for example, if people hoard goods, medicines and surgical masks. It is more helpful, as the World Health Organization recommends, to take simple precautions to reduce exposure and transmission, such as

1. avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth;



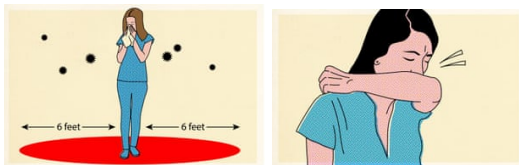
2. washing your hands regularly;



3. being at least five feet from another person;



4. cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the bin and wash your hands. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow rather than your hands;



5. wear face masks if you have a cold, a flu or Covid-19;



6. seek medical help if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing;



7. if you have returned from an affected area in the last two weeks, stay indoors and avoid contact with other people for 14 days. This is called “be in quarantine”.



Side effects

Many businesses that rely on tourism or international trade are in trouble. Some analysts warn that the Coronavirus could trigger a new financial, economic, global crisis.

Fear is also producing another, deadly virus: racism. In many places around the world Chinese people are accused of spreading the disease. There are also many reported cases of discrimination towards infected individuals.

Finally, the Coronavirus is distracting people from other deadly problems, such as pollution, climate change and international conflicts.

Here is some advice from the World Health Organization – Watch the video.

<https://youtu.be/mOV1aBVYKGA>

ESERCIZI DI COMPrensIONE DEL TESTO

COMPREHENSION

LEGGI L'ARTICOLO E COMPLETA LE FRASI CON L'ALTERNATIVA CORRETTA.

1. "It's all over the news" means

- a. Journalists are talking about it on TV, radios and newspapers.
- b. It is not an important event.
- c. Only TV programmes talk about it.

2. The Coronavirus

- a. first appeared in China.
- b. was created in Wuhan.
- c. produces only the flu.

3. Covid-19 is

- a. not as dangerous as the flu.
- b. caused by sneezing and coughing.
- c. very similar to the flu.

4. The Coronavirus can be very dangerous

- a. for people who are already weak and sick.
- b. for healthy people.
- c. for 80% of infected individuals.

5. The Coronavirus

- a. spreads slowly.
- b. is very contagious.
- c. is caused by Covid-19.

6. Countries all over the world are

- a. very worried about the Coronavirus.
- b. optimistic.
- c. pessimistic.

7. A person must seek medical help in case of

- a. fever.
- b. cough.
- c. fever, cough and difficult breathing.

8. Many countries are taking measures

- a. to stop the virus.
- b. to build more hospitals.
- c. to slow down the spread of the virus.

9. Governments are inviting people to

- a. hoard medicines, food and surgical masks.

- b. act rationally and try to stay at home.
- c. listen to the World Health Organization.

10. The fear of the Coronavirus is having a negative impact on

- a. world economy and international relations.
- b. the World Health Organization.
- c. China alone.

11. The Coronavirus epidemic is dangerous also because

- a. it's making many people fearful, irrational and racist.
- b. people with the temperature must stay at home.
- c. many people are not travelling.

VOCABULARY

COMPLETA LE FRASI SCEGLIENDO TRA LE PAROLE CORRETE NEL RIQUADRO SOTTOSTANTE

* pandemic	* pneumonia	* epidemic.....	* contagion.....	* spreading	
*Vaccinations	* are hoarding	* trigger	* side effect* health	* deadly
* recovered.....	*in quarantine				

1. An _____ happens when a disease spreads quickly and unexpectedly within a certain population.

2. A _____, instead, is when a new disease spreads quickly all over the world.

3. A lot of people _____ medicines and food: they are buying lots of them.

4. The Coronavirus can be _____ for people already in poor health.

5. An undesirable secondary effect of a medicine, or of an action, is called a _____.

6. People infected with the Coronavirus are _____, which means that they are isolated from the rest of the population.

7. I no longer have the flu and I feel great – I have _____ completely.

8. The Coronavirus epidemic is _____ all over the world.

9. Covid-19 is dangerous for people already in poor _____.

10. Slowing the _____ is very important.

11. The Coronavirus could _____ a new financial, economic global crisis.

12. _____ is a serious disease of the lungs.

13. _____ are medicines to prevent diseases.

_____ / **13**

WRITING (RIPONDI ALLE SEGUENTI DOMANDE SCRIVENDO LA TUA OPINIONE)

What's your opinion on the Coronavirus and this emergency? Is it a true, global threat or are we all overreacting? Do you agree with what your government is doing to slow down the spread of the virus? Write your opinion.

_____ / **6**