

Info from a noted physician in Guelph, Dr. Anne Marie Zajdik

Mandatory masks in new municipalities and an economy that is bouncing back.

We are so on the right track. As new municipalities have joined the mandatory mask army, welcome by the way, more and more questions and some hostilities are bubbling up. Many folks in areas with low or no numbers of COVID 19 are confused. Why wear a mask if there is no COVID 19?

A short review: This virus is spread by respiratory droplets that are coughed, shouted, sung or spoken out of your mouth. The droplets fall within six feet. Masks are worn to prevent you from spreading the virus to others. Cloth masks do not prevent you from getting the virus.

High level surgical masks and N95 masks which typically can only be purchased through medical supply chains, can reduce the risk of getting the virus. They are used in the health care setting by medical workers who must get close to ill patients and, ideally, they are changed after each patient interaction. These masks do not need to be used in public. If we are physically distancing, it is highly unlikely that you will be exposed to the virus. The cloth masks helps to reduce the risk of an infected person passing the virus on to someone else.

So, here's the drill. You live in a small town south of Warton where there are no cases of COVID 19. Masks are now mandatory but you are not happy about it. A person driving up to Tobermory, stops at your local grocery store. He does not feel sick yet, but he does have COVID 19. He enters your store with a mask on. You are picking up a carton of milk when this fellow comes around the corner. He coughs, ever so slightly. He doesn't even notice the cough. Congratulations, mask wearer! You just kept that virus to yourself and congratulations milk buyer, you avoided COVID 19.

Second scenario: That same fellow did not wear a mask because masks are not mandatory. Physical distancing did not occur and you were just exposed to COVID 19. You feel sick several days later and within a week you test positive for COVID 19. During that week, you came into contact with many people. You were not wearing a mask. You passed the virus on to 10 people. They are not wearing masks. They each pass the virus on to 3 people. Before you know it, your little town that has not yet seen a case of COVID 19 now has hundreds of cases. It is declared an outbreak and all of Grey-Bruce County is forced into lock down again. Only now, it is July and tourists are important for the economy, very important. The ripple effects are far-reaching.

This is not an attempt by your government to take control of your rights. Mandatory masks are part of a well thought out plan that protects your right to good health and the rights of others not to be infected by you!. The plan does not even come from governments; it comes from health experts. We have no desire to take over your life, believe me. If a mask makes you fearful, if it causes deep anxiety, if it makes an underlying lung issue more symptomatic, don't wear one but you many need to send someone else on that milk run for the sake of your health!

When COVID 19 is under good control, and believe me, it is under good control in Canada,

people who get the virus have easy access to a publicly funded health care system that is wide open to receive ill people and the risk of dying goes down. Our death rate is way down.

When COVID 19 is not under good control, the death rate is 8-15%. There is no room in hospital ICU's or COVID units when the system is overwhelmed so more people die.

Our low infection rate and death rate is the outcome of a coordinated national response that followed the science.

None of this points to a conspiracy aimed at making people wear masks so that our governments can rob you of your rights. Makes no sense at all. If governments did not have our best interest at heart we would have hundreds and thousands of cases and deaths....very much like our suffering neighbours to the south. No conspiracy here, just sound science and good leadership.

COVID 19 is a significant health threat. Science will lead us out of this pandemic and the science about wearing masks continues to evolve and it continues to tell us that masks work. Believe that, not the conspiracy theorists. When you wear a mask according to public health guidelines, you are part of the army we need to fight this thing. You are playing a significant role in reducing transmission. When I throw my mask on and walk into a grocery store, I am proud. I am showing my love for others and my respect and love for my country as it faces one of it's greatest challenges. I am part of the team.

Is the virus airborne?

This means, can the virus be picked up by air currents and transmitted to people 20 feet away? To a degree, maybe, but the environmental circumstances need to be right. Many people, crammed together, indoors, no masks, talking loudly for at least an hour, in a room with poor ventilation. In this situation, the virus that is initially carried in a respiratory droplet, can be released from that droplet as the mucous dries up and sets the virus adrift on an air current. The answer; don't let the above set of circumstances happen until the coast is clear and the virus is gone.

THE GREAT NEWS:

Over the last week, Ontario's 34 health units have reported an average of 137 new infections per day, well down from peak of nearly 600 in late April.

Canada's economy added almost a million jobs last month, as businesses reopened after COVID-19 shutdowns....and no second surge has happened.

More and more of our ICU beds are empty. Well done Ontario and Canada.

Follow the mandatory mask guidelines, don't expand your bubbles, stay six feet apart. Keep this up and we will not see a second surge. We will see small, containable outbreaks with a very low death rate.

Anne-Marie

And no, I don't wear a mask when I cycle.

And, the first step to better health and a better immune system is to quite smoking. Forgot that on my last post. Help is out there for smokers.

Please share.

Anne-Marie