

Musings from a physician with active Covid 19

In times of drought, we seek water. And by the way we want our water to be pure and drinkable. In times of a public health crisis, we expect prompt deliverance from the plague.

Let's be honest – before the year 2020, issues of surveillance, contact tracing, virus jumping were not foremost in our minds. Not to say that the constantly underfunded public health community wasn't keeping constant pressure on the subject. There has always been a balance between making the case for the public health and being completely expunged from the legislative appropriations process. As Bill Gates says, this is the moment. This is the kick in the head for the United States. Over the past three years, our pandemic readiness capacity has been decimated and defunded. As a consequence we have reacted with lethargy and incompetence to the current viral crisis. The messages from the public health community have been clarion clear yet undermined by those who refused to consider the seriousness of the moment.

As for me, I have tested positive for the novel Covid 19 as of Saturday evening, March 28, at 10:30 p.m. as did a good friend and colleague. My work in the emergency room and his hospital work led to the encounter with a mutual patient. We are now part of the “curve” and not apart from it.

I must have done something wrong along the way to get the virus but for the life of me I cannot say what that was. In the process I have placed family, friends, and patients at risk.

Who am I to offer advice? We need to echo the experts of the moment from Mississippi, Dr. Thomas Dobbs and for the nation Dr. Anthony Fauci with his calm prescriptive truths. As I write this with some considerable fatigue, fever, headache and loss of taste I am prayerful that my friends, family and patients will be spared. I do so with the understanding that we have failed to feel the full gravity of the 2020 pandemic. It must get worse before it gets better. I am five to six days into my current infection and so far have escaped pneumonitis. I am hopeful that this old fashioned and crude vaccination that I am receiving now will allow me to return and care for patients soon. Please let's all listen to the experts and do our best to echo and amplify their words.

Best,

Timothy J. Alford, M.D.