



## Why are We Not Afraid of the Flu, But Coronavirus?

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In the last couple of months, the press has been filled with news about Coronavirus. Since it appeared in China in December, more than 2000 people have died due to it. However, flu should not be less important. Remember the Spanish flu (1918), which wiped out 50 million people around the world in the time span of just two. In fact, Influenza, the virus behind the flu, causes more deaths annually than Coronavirus [1]. So, why this alarm?

The main reason is its ability to spread itself (higher than other viruses of its family: SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV). It can infect a lot of people in a short time. Furthermore, the incubation period is 6 - 14 days [2], therefore an infected subject can spread the virus before noting any symptom for a quite long period. Closing borders in China and controlling its population is crucial to avoid an increase in the number of cases outside there.

Another important aspect is the absence of a vaccine yet [3]. Therefore, it is impossible to prevent people from Coronavirus. All we can do, at this moment, is trying to reduce the pain of those who are infected, try to recover them, and protect ourselves from places where it is easier to get the virus.

As if the above were not enough, the virus owns the ability to mutate [3]. It means that every time Coronavirus infects a new person, it exists the possibility that it evolves and becomes more dangerous, either improving its spread or its mortality rate, or even its resistance to a possible vaccine in the future.

Thus, research centres and national governments are trying to discover how to kill this virus. The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission shared samples of the virus, which has allowed a quick identification of the 2019-nCoV sequence [4]. Thanks to globalisation, outbreaks information can be easily shared between different research groups. The next step is to discover a vaccine to neutralise the attack of the virus.

Having all this in mind, it is easily understandable why China government has forbidden its citizen to travel [5] (and spread the

virus) and why some international conferences (such as Mobile World Congress in Spain) [6] have been cancelled. As long as no vaccine is found, controlling or reducing people movements is the best option to guarantee global public health.

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