

5 Million Cases Worldwide, 650,000 Deaths Annually: The Seasonal Flu Virus is a “Serious Concern”, But the Wuhan Coronavirus Grabs the Headlines

Tom Clifford Reporting from Beijing

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First published on January 27, 2020, this article is of relevance to an understanding of recent developments including the so-called Second Wave. The similarity of the symptoms of Covid-19 and seasonal influenza was known and documented from the very outset, reported in numerous peer reviewed articles.

The politicians are liars. The media are liars.

According to The British Medical Journal in a November 2020 report:

“Politicians and governments are suppressing science. They do so in the public interest, they say, to accelerate availability of diagnostics and treatments. ... Science is being suppressed for political and financial gain. Covid-19 has unleashed a state corruption on a grand scale, and it is harmful to public health.[1] Politicians and industry are responsible for this opportunistic embezzlement. So too are scientists and health experts. The pandemic has revealed how the medical-political complex can be manipulated in an emergency—a time when it is even more important to safeguard science.

The liars confirm their own lies: The studies of Dr. Anthony Fauci et al in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) as well as the WHO acknowledge that Covid-19 has similar features to seasonal influenza (Viruses A and B). What these scientific statements convey is that SARS-2 (which causes Covid-19) is not a killer virus. In fact quite the opposite.

But neither the governments nor the media have reassured public opinion. The fear campaign not only prevails, it is gaining momentum.

At this juncture of the Covid-19 crisis, governments have launched extreme lockdown measures in response to a so-called “Second Wave”, which starting in October-November coincides in the Northern Hemisphere with the annual surge of seasonal influenza.

These totalitarian measures adopted by corrupt governments are based on “science being suppressed for political and financial gain”.

Below is the incisive analysis of Tom Clifford reporting from Beijing in late January 2020 at the very outset of the corona crisis.

Figures quoted for the coronavirus pertain to late January 2020

The common flu virus will infect millions across the globe. It can be easily spread and will especially strike the young and the elderly. But this is not what has been described as the Wuhan virus. The common flu is far deadlier. This is not to downplay the Wuhan coronavirus flu, or to give it its medical name, 2019-nCoV.

The common flu causes up to 5 million cases of severe illness worldwide and kills up to 650,000 people every year, according to the [World Health Organization](#)

In the US:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [estimates that](#) so far this season, there have been at least 15 million flu illnesses for the 2019-2020 season, 140,000 hospitalizations and 8,200 deaths in the U.S. The CDC reports there have been 54 reported flu-related pediatric deaths this season from Influenza B viruses. ([The Hill](#))

China's Coronavirus

Keeping track of Wuhan virus figures is difficult, not least because of the two-week incubation period. The coronavirus outbreak, which is concentrated in Wuhan, a major transport hub in central eastern China, has so far killed 56 and infected almost 2,000.

The initial symptoms of coronavirus are typically similar to those of a cold or flu, which means it is hard for people to know if they are infected, especially given that the outbreak has coincided with flu season. The mayor of Wuhan said on Sunday evening that he expected another 1,000 or so new cases. But the National Health Commission in Beijing said the number of people currently under medical observation for the virus is 30,453. This raises immediate questions about how and where they are being observed.

The response to the outbreak has been criticized with people complaining that announcing restrictions hours before they could be properly implemented allowed people to evade quarantine. The strict restrictions also risk causing resentment and distrust of authorities and the health messages they deliver.

A massive construction effort is being undertaken in Wuhan to build a 1,000-bed hospital for the virus patients.

In the past week [mid January], the number of confirmed infections has more than tripled and cases have been found in 13 provinces in China, as well as the municipalities Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing and Tianjin. The virus has also been confirmed in Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, Nepal, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam.

The virus seems to have a 3 percent mortality rate. However, this could be an overestimate since there may be a far larger pool of people who have been infected by the virus but who have not suffered severe enough symptoms to attend hospital and so have not been

counted in the data.

Consequently, it is difficult to gauge just how contagious it is. A crucial difference is that unlike flu, there is no vaccine for the new coronavirus, which means it is more difficult for vulnerable members of the population – elderly people or those with existing respiratory or immune problems – to protect themselves.

The common flu does not grab the headlines. But attach a foreign name to a virus – such as Ebola, Zika and Wuhan – and then the headlines flow.

Apart from the obvious health concerns, there is a political dimension. Some countries, including the US, France, Australia and Japan have suggested that they want to evacuate their citizens from Wuhan and nearby areas. Just how this would take place is unclear.

Images of foreigners being airlifted or bussed out of Wuhan, while Chinese citizens remain, could see passions rise. At the very least, it will appear that there is special treatment for foreigners.

The streets of Beijing this morning are eerily quiet. Residents of the capital would normally be celebrating Chinese new year, the year of the rat, that started on Saturday, by attending temple fairs.

All such fairs have been cancelled. Apart from the family fun on offer at the fairs, they provide a setting where families can pay homage to deceased relatives. Fake money and food would be burnt to appease the spirits of the deceased and ensure good health prosperity for the year ahead.

There is no anger on the streets but a sense of confusion and apprehension. This coming week should see hundreds of millions of people return from the hometowns where they celebrated the new year to their cities of work.

A clearer picture will then emerge of the scale of the problems facing the authorities.

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