

Treating the virus

I am not a doctor and am not about to propose how to treat this virus. I am however willing to give a day and a blog to inviting comments from those who are or those who think they understand the medical issues sufficiently to comment on what is happening. It would be useful if qualified contributors would mention their qualification. The true end of the crisis comes by finding a cure or a vaccine or both. Nothing on this site is medical advice for any individual and anyone needing treatment should of course seek professional advice.

Buying time by restricting the spread of the virus is a very good strategy if we use that time to find a cure or vaccine. Clearly much resource is going into just that all round the world. Some argue that there are already treatments and preventative measures that can help.

Some say Chloroquine or Remdesivir could play a role. Others favour Ritonavir and lopinavir with or without interferon beta. Some urge the case of azithromycin. President Trump recently did more than send best wishes to Boris, by instructing two US companies to contact the PM's doctors to recommend treatments they think could help.

Some say bigger doses of Vitamin C help build resistance and fight back against the virus.

The official treatment seems to include doses of oxygen when impaired lung functions leave the patients with low oxygen levels in the blood, and the capacity to operate organs as well as the lungs in intensive care if fighting the disease causes too many strains on them.

Questions it would be good to have answered include

1. How many placed on a ventilator subsequently recover?
2. What trials have now been completed of existing drugs that might help?
3. How do doctors work out whether a death was the result of Covid 19 or some other condition the patient suffered from?
4. Which if any of the named drugs do show potential? Do they have to be administered from first discovering the presence of the virus?