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## UA94/6/1 COVID-19 Diary

Anonymous

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What did you do today?

I went to my internship till 2 then worked till 11 p.m. They are both at the hospital so my daily life has not changed.

What would you have done pre-Covid19 – brief summary

I would have done the same. As I said, the hospital won't ever shut down so my life continues on.

Have you contracted Covid19? - followup questions if yes,

- how long did you have it?
- did you infect anyone else?
- what happened during your illness?

No.

Do you know anyone who has contracted Covid19? - see above for follow up questions

Not directly, but I have had patients on my floor with it.

When did you first notice the discussion of Covid19?

Late January. I had to take a flight and remembered seeing it on the news in the airport. I started noticing how many people were wearing masks. I fly frequently but it was the most I had ever noticed in an airport before. But, back then it was still mainly in China and was not anywhere near the forefront of our minds.

How serious did you take it at first?

Not incredibly serious. I could tell that the situation in China was very serious, but I wasn't sure if it would ever impact us the way it had impacted them, especially living in a rather small town in Kentucky.

How has your perception changed since then? Or has it?

It has completely changed. I'm much more fearful than I was when I first remember seeing that news story in the airport. As a healthcare worker, I'm very scared. And I'm scared of other things too, I'm scared of the panic, of grocery stores being looted, people becoming violent over groceries, etc. I'm terrified that we are absolutely clueless during this time and nobody knows what the future holds besides from some predictive estimates and graphs.

What emotions have you experienced during this time?

Mainly fear. Fear of the unknown. When will things go back to normal? When will this pass? How many people will it hurt? Will it hurt anyone I know? Will it keep me from graduating? What damage will it have done economically if it ever does pass?

Can you give a timeline of events impacting yourself and/or your family/friends?

The very first time I had heard about the virus was through a TikTok in January. I didn't think much of it afterwards. I had talked with a coworker in early to middle January about the virus and we both thought it was pretty scary about what was happening in China. Nevertheless, we went on about our lives.

On January 25<sup>th</sup> I was taking a trip and in the Chicago airport where I saw a news segment about it and began to realize how many people had masks on around the airport. It made me nervous because to me it still seemed so far away, but people here seemed to be taking precautions against it. I remember following the case mildly, especially once I had heard there was a confirmed case in Seattle, the first confirmed case in the U.S.

Throughout the entire month of February, I don't recall much fear or other worry about the virus.

I went on March 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sam's Club to buy toilet paper and paper towels simply because I was running low. I frequently buy my things in bulk from Sam's, so this was nothing out of the ordinary. I was the only one in the aisle, and there was an abundance of paper products shelved all the way to the ceiling. I didn't think for a split second that in a matter of days, those massive shelves would be completely wiped out.

On March 7<sup>th</sup>, Kentucky had its first confirmed case in Lexington. I knew it would be only a matter of time before it reached Bowling Green.

A few days after this, I started tracking the cases daily on the CDC website. I remember on March 11<sup>th</sup>, there were only 1,200 cases in the U.S. I was definitely starting to worry more, but was still relatively calm.

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, I had heard that cities were being placed on lockdown orders or shelter in place orders. I had tried to go to the grocery store the night before, but was at work until late. So, I had to go out that Friday to get groceries. The store scene had completely shifted from my last trip on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The canned goods were wiped out. There was no toilet paper or paper towels to be seen anywhere. The meat, milk, bread, oatmeal, ramen noodles, and so much more were just gone. This is the day I remember being particularly terrified because this was it. This is what

I figured would happen eventually, but wasn't sure when.

It was not even a week after the 13<sup>th</sup> that my wife's job closed.

And as I write this on March 24<sup>th</sup>, the stores are still out of most of the items that were wiped the first day of the panic. We now have 45,000 confirmed cases in the U.S.

We don't know how this continues or when this will stop, but it all seems to have happened so incredibly fast. I can't seem to wrap my head around the fact that 20 days ago, my life was going on completely normal and I purchased toilet paper and paper towels with absolutely no problem. I was sitting down and eating in restaurants, going to the movies, and shopping leisurely. Now, none of us have any idea when this stops or when the world goes back to normal.

As of now, 3/31/20, we have the most cases of COVID-19 in the world, which only builds on our uncertainty. I never thought we would top China in cases. I guess this goes to show how little of handle this country has on the virus. Now that we have nearly double the cases China does, there really is no way to know when or how this ends. It doesn't even make sense to me how we doubled our cases over China, a country that is nearly 5 times the size of ours in population, and quite densely populated at that. My anxiety and fear is growing as I worry that we aren't

even near the peak of the outbreak in this country. This is all completely out of our control and we can only take preventative measures while we sit back and hope for the best.

What did you miss most due to social distancing / self-quarantine?

I am not someone who can just sit at home, I would go crazy. So thankfully, I still can come to the hospital 55 hours a week and get out of my house. But I would imagine if I couldn't come to work, I would probably be taking a lot of leisurely drives just to get out of the house while staying isolated. But, I have to be hesitant going to see my family that lives in Owensboro and Clarksville, TN. Owensboro has a significantly higher number of cases than Warren Co, so I'm trying to limit my physical contact with my family, which has been hard.

What did you do during self-quarantine?

I have not been able to self-quarantine unfortunately. My wife however has completed numerous projects around the house and is in the process of completely redecorating our bedroom. She ordered all new furniture and bedding. Putting together the furniture will keep her fairly busy for a few days/

Did you face any hardships during self-quarantine?

The only hardship is that is has out of everyone being forced to quarantine and jobs being closed, we aren't sure when my wife will be able to return to work. That's the worst thing that has come from the virus so far.

Update 3/31: My wife's job was deemed medically essential and she will be able to return to work after being off for almost two weeks. She thankfully had PTO that was able to cover her time off, so thankfully, we came out of this situation still financially intact.

Do you feel that government / WKU / society response(s) have been appropriate?

Absolutely, at a state level anyways. I think our governor has done a tremendous job at "flattening the curve" and making sure our state isn't completely taken over by this. On a federal level, I think the government could have done more to prepare for this. It seems that the current administration didn't take any time to prepare while it still hadn't infected our country and stupidly assumed we would be fine instead of taking proper precautions.

Did you volunteer to help people? Who? When? What kind of help?

Unfortunately, no.

What was that experience like?

What impact did social media have on your experience?

Social media has been both a comedic relief of the situation but also can play into my anxiety. I have to be careful to not read too many articles because it just makes me so anxious. We're absolutely blind to what the future holds. But the memes are always a good relief.