COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS **VS** INFLUENZA

WHAT IS A "CORONAVIRUS"?

According to the World Health Organization, a coronavirus is a type of virus that is transmitted from animals to humans. When a new strain first infects humans, it is known as a "novel coronavirus." Other famous illnesses caused by coronaviruses include Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). COVID-19, first discovered in 2019, is a novel coronavirus.

HOW IS THE FLU DIFFERENT?

Both COVID-19 and the flu cause similar symptoms, but the flu is caused by different strains of influenza viruses, whereas COVID-19 is caused be a single virus. The biggest difference between the two seems to be that COVID-19 may be able to be transmitted through cold air, even after the ill person is no longer near. The flu, on the other hand, typically requires closer contact, through a sneeze or talking.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

COVID-19
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Shortness of Breath

INFLUENZA
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Chills
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Sore Throat
- ✓ Runny/Stuffy Nose
- ✓ Muscle/Body Aches
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Vomiting/
- ✓ Diarrhea

NUMBER OF ILLNESSES*

COVID-19
87 THOUSAND
Globally. About 50 total confirmed cases in the United States.

INFLUENZA
1 BILLION
Globally. About 35 million in the United States alone.

*Between October 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020

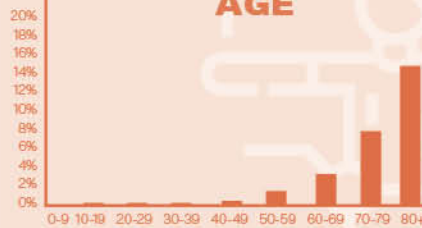## DEATHS CAUSED*

COVID-19
3,977

INFLUENZA
291,000 – 646,000

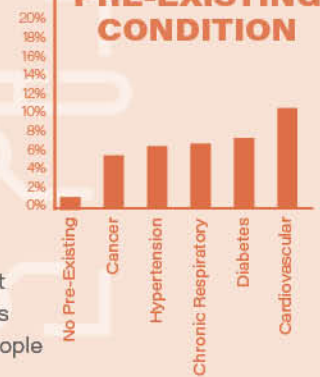*Globally between October 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020. Influenza estimate is a global average each year.

DEATH RATE BY FACTOR*

COVID-19

AGE

(Bar chart, y-axis 0%–20%; x-axis: 0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80+)

PRE-EXISTING CONDITION

(Bar chart, y-axis 0%–20%; x-axis: No Pre-Existing, Cancer, Hypertension, Chronic Respiratory, Diabetes, Cardiovascular)

*Numbers come from the WHO-China Joint Mission, published on Feb. 28, 2020. Deaths appear to come largely from elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions.

SUMMARY

While scientists are racing to learn more about this novel coronavirus, most indications are that the flu continues to be a far greater threat than COVID-19. Still, COVID-19 does appear to have a higher death rate overall and it is recommended to avoid making yourself vulnerable to the disease. It appears that the best way to stay safe from COVID-19 is to wash hands with soap and warm water regularly, limit contact with infected persons, and cough into crook of your elbow to decrease risk of transmission.

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