

COVID-19: Preparing & Responding

Dr Kavipriya's discussions

Online series for teacher community



Creating awareness

The responsibility of a teacher extends beyond classrooms and at times like the pandemic, their roles become diverse. To help them cope better with the pandemic and be informed on how Puducherry was addressing issues related to Covid-19 situations, Azim Premji Foundation had invited Dr Kavipriya, a Senior Dental Surgeon at Jipmer and volunteer for Covid-19 response team, to hold a discussion with teachers. The hour-long session conducted over a telephone conference, was found beneficial and informatory by all those who participated in the session.

Here, we share here some briefings from the discussion.



Dr Kavipriya's explanations:

What is novel Corona virus (COVID-19)?

It began in the Wuhan city in China and WHO declared it a health emergency of International concern on 30th January, 2020.

By March 11, many countries were affected by this and WHO declared this to be a pandemic. Since this cannot be named after a city, the virus was named after what it appears to be like - 'a crown'. 'Corona' in Latin means, 'a crown'.

Where does it spread?

It can spread over living beings as well as non-living things like tissues, clothes, etc.

What are the common symptoms?

Cough, fever, palpitation.

Which population is of higher risk of being infected?

Immuno-compromised individuals like cancer patients, those with kidney failure, diabetes, healthcare workers, are in the higher risk category.

How to test for Corona virus?

RT-PCR is the current procedure to test for the virus. A swab is collected from the nose and throat and anti-body testing is done in the lab to check for the infection. All of these tests done in India adhere to ICMR guidelines.

What is the treatment once detected?

No specific cure is available. Plasma therapy is on the trial. The chloroquine drug is offered only to healthcare workers as precaution.

Dr Kavipriya's explanations:

What are some of the preventive measures to be taken?

Social-distancing, handwashing, maintaining cleanliness, thorough cooking of sea-food, meat and items purchased from outside are essential. The N-95 masks have to be worn by health workers and those infected. Others are supposed to wear ordinary masks when they are outside of their homes, at all times. Surface-cleaning is also very important.

What is a containment zone?

A zone with a positively detected person will be under strict surveillance and anybody showing any kind of symptoms will be checked regularly. The people in the containment zone will be set aloof from the remaining population in the region. Frequent check-ups will be ensured in the area to prevent the spread.

What is the major source of COVID-19 infections in Puducherry?

The 3 cases of Corona infection in Puducherry (as of now) have been identified as those who attended the Nizamuddin congregation in Delhi. This has been the major cause of the spread in our region.

How is Puducherry addressing the issue at present?

The strict implementation of section 144 along with regular cleaning of roads by disinfectants is a measure we have taken. We have also made it compulsory to wear masks while on the streets. Apart from all of these, the disinfectant tunnels that were placed at the vegetable markets, were found unsatisfactory and not serving the purpose. It is also possible that these tunnels may lead to other respiratory issues, and therefore have been removed.

As Cuddalore and Villupuram have been identified as hot zones, our government has also made it strict at entry points to the UT, constraining travel across regions.

Dr Kavipriya's explanations:

(contd.)

We have also begun with SARI surveillance on our territory and these have been setup systematically and they have been conducting checkups at the Kathurgamam Government hospital and Indira Gandhi hospital.

104 is the Pondicherry helpline number for Corona cases. And, I also insist that everybody uses the Arogya Setu App to ensure safety. This app helps detect the presence of any Corona infected person in your surrounding so that you may be able to safeguard yourself.

While the quarantine period is only 14 days, there have been cases when we have extended it 28 days, as we found that the infection persisted. The time frame for a containment zone, too, is 28 days.

Tele-consultation, helpline numbers, emergency services and follow-up check-ups are some of the services that the government has ensured.

Multiple organizations like Azim Premji Foundation, anganwadis workers and volunteers are helping to combat the sickness.

Q & A Session with Teachers

Lakshmi PST, GPS Mullah Street: Does the patient completely recover after quarantining for 14-28 days?

Dr Kavipriya: Virus shedding time is 28 days. If a person is infected, people living with him/her are also constantly checked. In the first check-up if they show negative, they may show positive even after a while. So it is important to follow-up and recheck. The approach of checking is constantly changing. First, we check for viral load. IgG antibody is checked for presence. This helps in boosting immunity.

Pacheammale TGT, GHS Kalapet: So far, the number of positive cases in Puducherry has been identified as 3. How do we confirm this? I live in Lawspet and my area has not been checked for cases.

Dr Kavipriya: Lawspet is one of the biggest areas in Puducherry. Governments do not have enough funds to conduct tests for large population. Generally, we do random sampling and based on that, we declare the results. For the upcoming 3 days we have planned SARI surveillance. ILS surveillance is also done. Early testing can show negative; but, follow-ups are essential.

In the case of a containment zone, anybody showing the slightest symptom will be checked immediately. Even in other regions, anybody reporting of symptoms will be checked immediately.

To get the exact amount of infected persons, we are planning to check all healthcare workers, policemen, press members as well as public workers for any infection.

Pacheammale TGT, GHS Kalapet: Once identified, what medication do you give?

Dr Kavipriya: Once detected, we treat them with antivirals, antibiotics given for pneumonia, and even oxygen supply in some cases. We also support in their home quarantine and recheck with them.

Q & A Session with Teachers

Tamilmalar PPST, GPS Kundupalayam: I have a neighbor who has recently moved in from London. We wear masks while we step outside but I would like to understand how this spreads.

Dr Kavipriya: We get infected through the droplets discharged through cough or cold. Close contact with infected person is to be avoided. Wearing a mask will reduce the risk. People who have come from foreign visits are checked regularly by healthcare workers themselves, instead of volunteers or anganwadis workers. But be assured, this is not air-borne disease.

Jayashree PST, ARGSS Pillaichavady: 60-80% of positive cases do not show symptoms but test positive. Does this mean they have better immunity or show symptoms later on?

Dr Kavipriya: Asymptomatic cases is the most in India. They check this through contact-tracing. This is a concept that has been changing on a regular basis. Asymptomatic people can cure by themselves or show symptoms later on and get cured.

Jayashree PST, ARGSS Pillaichavady: I read about a news article where the mothers who gave birth, were healthy while the babies were infected with Corona virus. In such cases, won't such patients infect their homes when discharged? This can also happen of other patients in visiting hospitals for treatments. How are we addressing this?

Dr Kavipriya: Government has also taken measures to disinfect houses. We are using a similar protocol that they have used in other countries. Patients who have been sent for home-quarantine have also been retested and there are regular follow-ups.

Tamilmalar PPST, GPS Kundupalayam: How do we then find asymptomatic cases?

Dr Kavipriya: For this we planned to conduct a test and screen everyone. We have to screen healthcare workers and others working from the front. Still, identifying can be a huge challenge. 80% show mild symptoms and like previously said, those with low immunity like diabetic/cancer patients and old people are prone more to infection.

Q & A Session with Teachers

Kasturi PPST, MGGMS Nellithope: There is good follow-up and checking done in the containment areas. However, in a non-containment area if a person shows symptoms, they have to be checked in 5-7 days. So how is this ensured?

Dr Kalaipriya: That's right – in the containment area there is strict checking and surveillance that is done. Since the requirement is not so severe in other areas we have not been strict with other areas. However, we believe all those showing symptoms are being scrutinized with test and treated appropriately. Remedial measures to scrutinize this are being devised and improvised regularly.

Antoine Joseph PST, GPS Periyar Nagar: Many of our students live in unhygienic conditions. So, how to create awareness for them? There are chances that they would be infected and transmit the virus. How do we create awareness in their locality?

Dr Kalaipriya: There is awareness created through mass media that most of the general population are aware of precautionary measures to be taken. Social gathering has been discouraged and since this is a new habit, it takes time for some to adjust and adapt to it.

However, in cases like the one pointed out, knowledge on cleanliness have to be imparted. Teachers can volunteer in non-containment areas and by wearing games, teach them games that can be played by maintaining social-distance. We can also create and distribute pamphlets that can be given to students. (Dr Kavipriya took note of this and promised to get back with necessary information in the form of print material.)

Sivakumar PST, GHSS Oulgaret: Many are engaging in blood donation these days. Is it safe for me to do it?

Dr Kalaipriya: Unless it is an emergency, it is better to avoid blood donation in this scenario, as visits to hospitals can risk transmit.

Q & A Session with Teachers

Sivakumar PST, GHSS Oulgaret: The state and central governments were taking suggestions from the health department and deciding things. So, when can we expect schools to open and conduct health awareness to students?

Dr Kavipriya: This has to be decided by the administrative department. However, I will make note and forward the idea to the Directorate and the Chief Minister.

Teacher: Is it possible that Corona positive patients can transmit it on the second day itself?

Dr Kavipriya: Yes, there are chances. It can transmit even when there is no sign of symptoms. We are trying to deduct this through contact-searching. If X is infected and transmits to Y, the contact-searching will be done to the contacts of Y, as well.

5S to be maintained:

1. Social-distancing
2. Sanitization
3. Safety and wellness
4. Self-discipline
5. Self-cleanliness

The session came to a close with many teachers expressing their thanks. As promised in the interview, Dr Kavipriya too had forwarded the request (of creating awareness to children) to the Directorate and also sent us a print material that can be circulated amongst those whom it will benefit. The document, as received from Dr Kalaipriya, is attached in the forthcoming pages of this report.

COVID 19 – AN OVERVIEW

PUDUCHERRY

INTRODUCTION

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Place of Origin of Corona Virus: Wuhan City, China

December 31st 2019 : Flu like cases alerted by China to WHO

Jan 5th 2020: WHO advices travel restriction to China

Jan 7th : Causative organism is identified as Novel Coronavirus

Jan 11th : First death was recorded

Jan 31st : WHO announced -

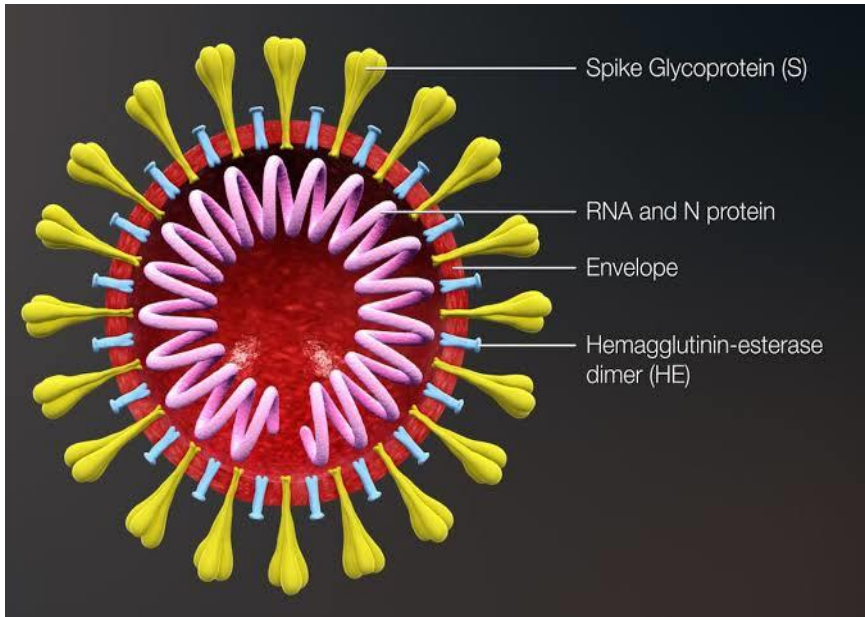
“Public Health Emergency of International Concern”

Feb 11th : Named as **“COVID 19”**

March 11th : WHO announced COVID 19 as a **PANDEMIC**

Corona Virus – First look

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They're called corona viruses because under a microscope, the virus has crown like spikes protruding from their surfaces.

Corona in Latin means - Crown

Origin of COVID 19

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- Initially, it was speculated that the SARS-CoV-2 virus jumped from bat to humans.
- But recent genomes study show first it must have leapt from bat to an intermediary species before it latched on to humans
- The phenomenon is known as “Spill over”
- Another study indicates that a lineage of SARS-CoV-2 virus was circulating in humans before the disease outbreak.

Routes of Transmission

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- Transmission is mostly via droplets. This requires relatively close contact, less than 6 feet. This is why it is recommended that we stay 1.5 metres away from each other in public places
- Inanimate vector of disease, in particular phones, doorknobs, surfaces are a potential source for transmission, but not much is known about it.
- It is safe to sanitise our hands after touching doorknobs, lift call buttons and counters in public places.
- Interpersonal transmission occurs mainly via respiratory droplets and contact transmission.

Infectious period

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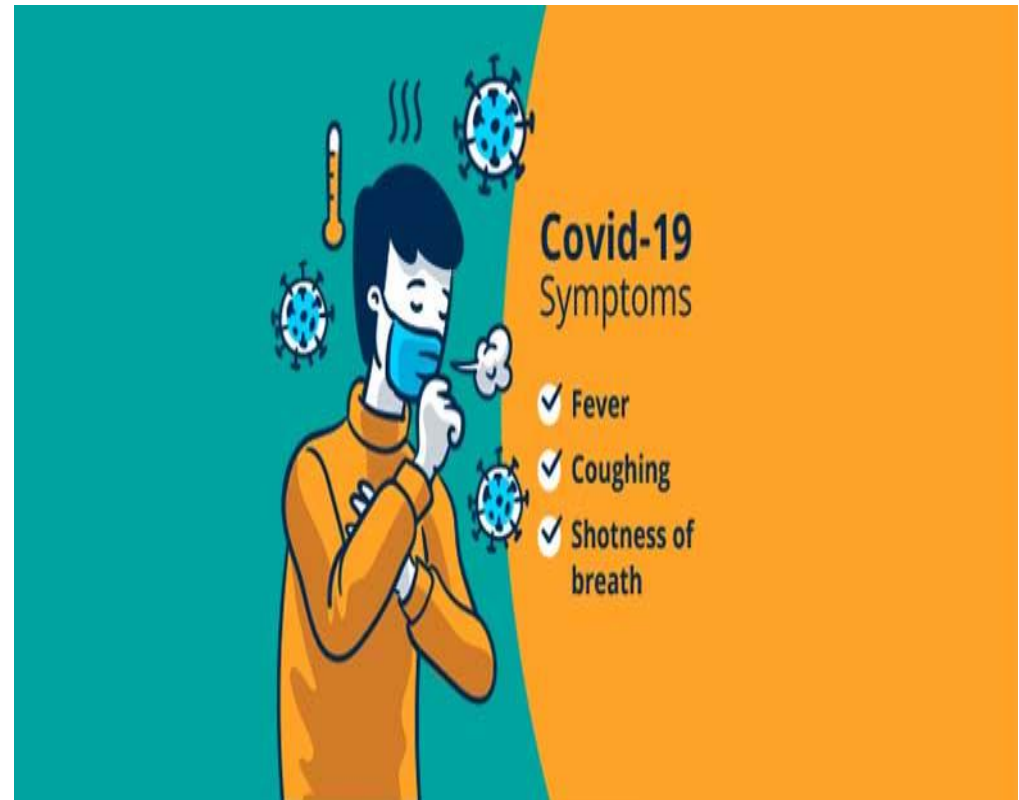
- Length of time an individual can transmit the infection to others is not known precisely, but possibly up to 10-14 days.
- The average number of new infections caused by a typical infectious person (human transmissibility range) (R_0) is between 2.2 to 3.1.
- One infected individual on an average infects about 2.2 to 3.1 persons.
- By physical distancing, we can artificially reduce the actual transmissibility, thus slow the rate of infection.

Symptoms

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- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of Breath

- Other symptoms:
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Muscle ache



Diagnosis

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- Collection of specimens to test for SARS-CoV-2 from the upper respiratory tract(nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swab) is the preferred method for diagnosis.
- Reverse Transcriptase – Polymerised Chain Reaction (RT PCR) is the standard method for screening.

Treatment

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- The potential drugs for treatment of COVID-19 are being investigated for safety and efficacy against SARS-CoV-2. Only supportive treatment and antiviral treatment are currently available.
- Vaccine is yet to be discovered

Preventive measures

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1. Frequent handwashing

- a. Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an 70% alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water for 40 secs

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2. Maintain social distancing

- a. Maintain at least 1 metre distance between yourself and others.
- b. Avoid going to crowded places
- c. Avoid organising and attending events, prayers, parties

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3. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

- a. Because contaminated hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth

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4. Practice good respiratory hygiene

- a. Cover your mouth and nose with handkerchief or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- b. Dispose of the used tissue immediately in a closed dustbin.
- c. Wash your hands with soap and water for 40 secs or rub hands with 70% alcohol based hand sanitiser

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5. Stay informed and follow advice from ANM / ASHA/AWW

- a. Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19
- b. Check with the ASHA/ANM/AWW or PHC on any queries you have on how to protect yourself

Dr. Kaviprya Guttamane



Handwashing Steps

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Step-1



Rub palms together

Step-2



Rub the back of both hands

Step-3



Interlock fingers and rub the hands together.

Step-4



Interlock fingers and rub the back of fingers of both hands

Step-5



Rub thumb in a rotating manner followed by the area between index finger & thumb.

Step-6



Rub fingertips on palm for both hands

Step-7



Rub both wrists in a rotating manner
rinse and dry thoroughly.

Duration - Minimum 20 seconds

Respiratory hygiene/Cough Etiquette

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- Cover nose and mouth during coughing or sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow for others.
- Perform hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions.



If you don't have a paper tissue, cough/sneeze into your upper sleeve.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing



Dispose of the tissue afterwards



After coughing or sneezing, wash your hands with soap and water



Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing

5S and 5T

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The S – Stands for what the public should do

The T – stands for the actions government needs to take

5'S	 Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Government of India  NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION एकता वरिषा मृतम	5'T
1-SOCIAL DISTANCING 2-SANITIZATION 3-SELF ISOLATION 4-SAFETY 5-SELF DICIPLINE		1- TRACING 2-TESTING 3-TREATMENT 4-TEAM WORK 5-TRACKLING & MONITORING

Dr. Kaviprya Outtamane

“Masks” - The Most Wanted of The Hour

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- Wear a mask whenever you step out of your home.(Need not to be a proper surgical mask, it can be a properly sanitized cotton cloth or handkerchief)
- Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing.
- Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- If you wear a mask, then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly.

Masks – Contd....

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- ❑ Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- ❑ Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- ❑ Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- ❑ Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- ❑ To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

Aarogya setu

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- It is a government of India initiative to track individuals with symptoms of COVID 19.
- Considering the welfare of the people it is encouraged to download the app and do the needful.

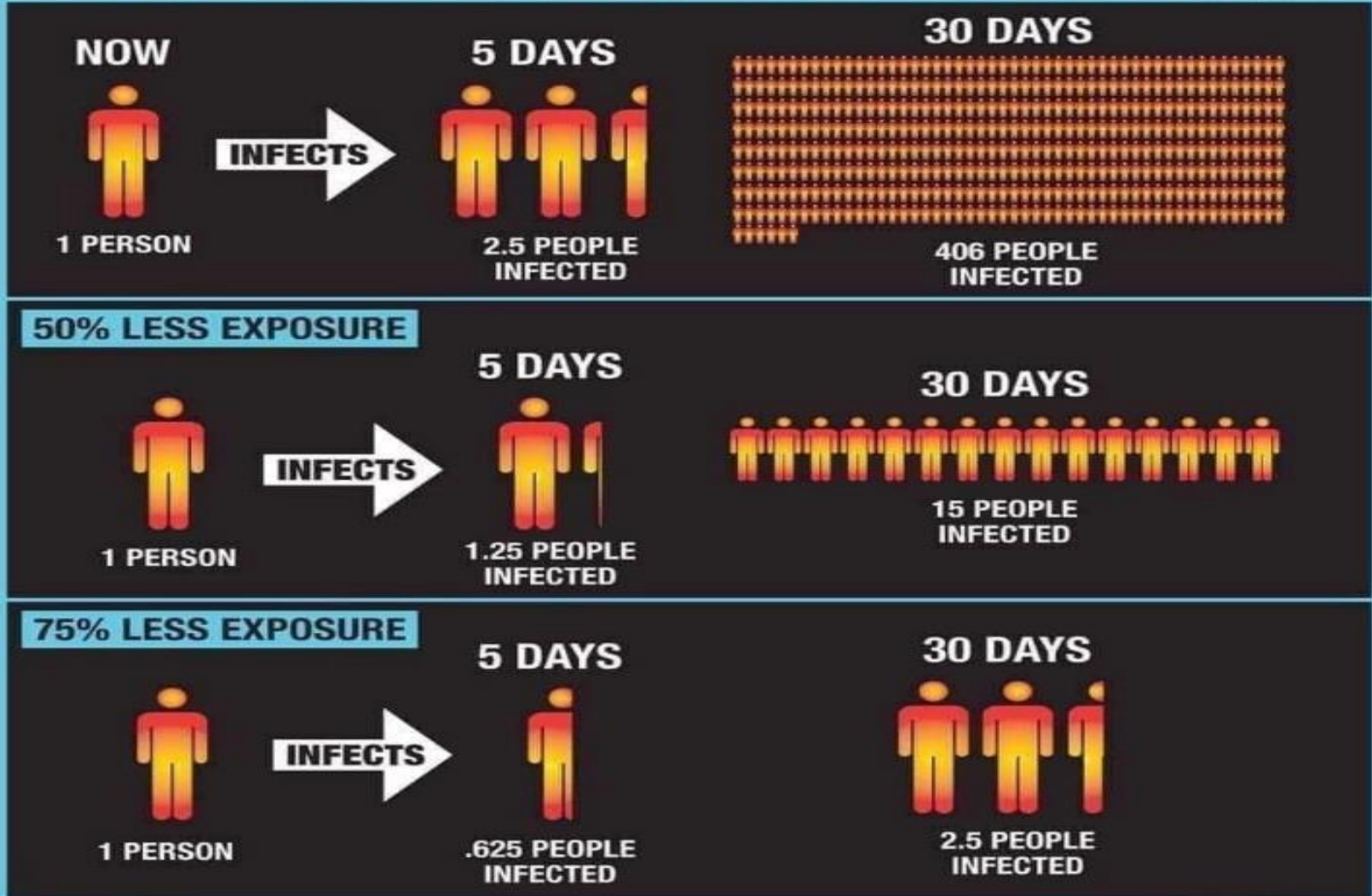


Helpline Numbers

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- Medical Toll Free Helpline: 104
- Relief work for persons with disability helpline –
6380677382 / 9790530052 / 8300509896
- The District Collector: 1070
- Women Helpline: 1091
- Children Helpline: 1098

THE POWER OF SOCIAL DISTANCING



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Thank you