

COVID-19 questions answered by a Mayo Clinic expert

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There are many questions, misconceptions and concerns as the COVID-19 pandemic response continues. Dr. Gregory Poland, an infectious diseases expert and director of Mayo Clinic's Vaccine Research Group, answered some questions of the day:

Can drugs, including chloroquine, be used to treat COVID-19?

"There are laboratory reasons to think some of these drugs might work. However, what they require are [clinical trials](#) in order to know that for sure. We want to know that any antiviral or drug that we use will help and not harm in the context of this disease."

Can we use plasma from recovered patients to treat COVID-19?

"Using plasma or human antibodies to treat COVID-19 is an important strategy. It was used in 1918 with the influenza pandemic. Using plasma is a polyclonal approach. There are also laboratory

methods by which you can make a monoclonal antibody, and both of those are going to be tried."

What are misconceptions about COVID-19?

"There are a lot of misconceptions," says Dr. Poland. "Young people don't develop severe disease. That's not true. That [hand sanitizer](#) is better than hand-washing. That's not true. And some terrible internet rumors circulating that some people are sucking on [disinfectant wipes](#), gargling with dilute bleach, putting bleach into a cotton plug and putting them into their nose, or doing the same kinds of things to their pets. These are harmful, unhelpful, and (there are) no data to support their use."

What if a housemate has the virus?

"If you have someone in your home that you know is infected with this virus, or has symptoms compatible with it, they get their own room, ideally with an open window. They stay in that room unless they come out with a mask and others are not in close proximity. You don't have meals together. And the surfaces of anything they touch need to be regularly disinfected."

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