

10 common misconceptions about China's coronavirus

"There is so much misinformation out there," said [Edward C. Halperin, M.D., M.A.](#), the Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer at NYMC, who spoke at the [coronavirus public information] session. "We're seeing government conspiracy theories and the dark side of racism. People saying that you shouldn't go to Chinese restaurants or racist things about people of Chinese descent."

Indeed, with social media fueling the fire, plenty of misconceptions are spreading faster than the 2019-nCoV. Here are some of the more common ones:

Misconception 1: 2019-nCoV is more contagious and spreading faster than any other pathogen.

Not even close. The measles virus is one example of a virus that is much more contagious than the 2019-nCoV. The only reason why the measles virus may not seem like it has spread as quickly during recent outbreaks is because, voilà, most people are already vaccinated against the measles.

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The challenge is immunizing the public against such nonsense. [NYC Department of Health's Mary] Foote said, "Proper risk communication is so important. One of the biggest enemies is panic and fear. You want to make sure that people don't panic from misinformation but at the same time are aware of the real risks so that they take appropriate action."

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