

We still have time to slow the spread: 4 things to know about the coronavirus

The experts are telling us that here in the United States, we can [avoid hitting that threshold](#) where sizable regions of the country will suddenly step into hell. We still have time to #flattenthecurve, [as a popular infographic put it](#), slowing the spread so that the number of cases never exceeds what our health system can handle.

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So everyone needs to understand a few things.

First, the virus is here, and it is spreading quickly, even though everything looks normal. Right now, the United States has more reported cases [than Italy had in late February](#). What matters isn't what you can see but what you can't: the patients who will need ICU care in two to six weeks.

Second, this is not "a bad flu." It [kills more of its hosts](#), and it will spread farther unless we take aggressive steps to slow it down, because no one is yet immune to this disease.

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Third, we can fight it. Despite early exposure, [Singapore and Hong Kong](#) have kept their caseloads low, not by completely shutting down large swaths of their economies as China did but through aggressive personal hygiene and "[social distancing](#)."

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Fourth, and most important: We are all in this together.

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