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Pandemic's Footprint

I get the unique opportunity to speak with all types of patients throughout my working day. I see the gamut: children, young parents, older parents, grandparents, students, professionals, and all other kinds of humans. I am grateful and humbled that you come from the city of Chicago, the suburbs, as well as the surrounding states. We have all sorts of fun conversations. Lately, the recurrent topic of discussion is the lasting effects of the coronavirus, as in when COVID-19 leaves our lives, what imprint will it have made? There seem to be more questions than answers.

Here are a few things that came up:

Children who should be developing socially are learning from home and sitting still while watching a computer screen for hours throughout the day. Will this increase the need for more children to need glasses or corrective lenses? How will this affect their posture or expectations of how school should be? Kindergarteners aren't exactly playing with others and forming friendships and learning social and emotional skills (the main point of kindergarten). Neither are college and graduate students (an important part of college and networking, which also affects many business professionals). How much do they learn by seeing their teacher on a screen in 2D versus being live in front of a teacher and in the surroundings of a classroom with peers? It's like watching a play at the theater versus seeing it at home on the TV. Are the kids learning more or less by doing so?

I see this when I watch my webinars. I typically take 3-6 trips a year to conferences and lectures. This year, obviously, they were all canceled and some had webinars instead. Although the information can still be very interesting, the speaker is not able to engage with the audience as effectively and asking questions is more difficult. But it also becomes a wonderful vehicle to share information with people all across the globe. It's great to cut down on commute time, and the ability to watch from the comfort of your home with a cup of tea is enjoyable.

It has also affected many parents. Some had to rearrange their schedule so they can work remotely and attend meetings while playing IT support for their kids. And with young kids, it's hard to leave them alone when there are classes at 20-minute intervals. Some parents have chosen to home-school — another task for them to do. Some parents have lost their jobs because they are unable to leave their child at home to e-learn unsupervised. Others have been laid off because their industry is still not open or the business had to downsize. Many establishments have changed their hours, limited hours, or closed completely. It's also affected moms who are giving birth to newborns but family isn't allowed at the hospital. Some dads

aren't even allowed! And babies are born into a masked world where they aren't seeing facial expression from their caregivers. Will that affect them?

How about those who are single and looking for "Mr. or Mrs. Right"? It's a bit strange meeting someone masked. Or going on a date. Or even being inside. Coffee shops don't even have indoor seating right now! Many long term care facilities and senior assisted living homes are still on lockdown (9 months and still counting!). No one is able to leave, even to go to the grocery store. Temper tantrums are increasing, especially with their mandatory weekly COVID tests for everyone inside. And those who are in the hospital don't get emotional support from their family and friends. They're not allowed in. During difficult procedures or at the end of their life, they're not allowed to have anyone near them as they're taking their last breath. What will be the emotional toll on those who weren't near their loved ones as they passed? Funerals have a limited amount of people allowed as well. The bereavement process is different now. Weddings have also been moved, cancelled or postponed indefinitely. Some have went on to celebrate but have cut their guest list from 300 to 50 or 10 depending on the mandate at the time.

There's a wide spectrum of beliefs regarding COVID-19, especially at our practice. Some people think it's very deadly, and if you get it, you will die. Others believe it's a big hoax and we should all go on living our normal lives. Most are 50 shades in between. Wherever you lie on the spectrum, it's best to look at the data. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Aug. 26, 2020, 6% of people who died from COVID-19 didn't have underlying conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, or heart disease, and they didn't experience any medical complications, such as kidney failure or sepsis. Many of these 6% had a condition but it was undiagnosed. So if you are in good health, you have a high chance of getting through COVID-19 just like any other cold or flu virus. We have found this to be true for many of our patients who reported having the virus and recovering without any complications.

However, a segment of the population is immunocompromised and at a higher risk for complications from catching COVID-19. When calculating the amount of people in the U.S. who have died from the virus, it is 0.07% of the population. When calculating COVID deaths in all countries, 0.15% of the world population has died of COVID-19.

This puts a few things into perspective. Thankfully, this virus is not as deadly as many have predicted it to be at the beginning of the pandemic. But people are still getting sick and some are

JOIN OUR SOCK DRIVE! HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

Many people are surprised to hear that socks are the least-donated clothing item yet the most in demand for disadvantaged locals. The combination seems obvious, but it doesn't occur to most donors. Hosting a sock drive for homeless neighbors can supply much-needed care while also raising awareness — a winning combination that benefits everyone involved.

There are two main reasons socks are among the most valuable piece of clothing to individuals without permanent housing:

1. Feet work overtime when there is no cozy home (or laundry room) at the end of the day.

2. They're not a commonly donated item.

Warm socks can really be a true treasure for individuals without homes, and for this reason, our team at Wrigleyville Dental has decided to make a difference by hosting a sock drive for the homeless throughout this upcoming holiday season.

A donation box can be found in our waiting room. If you would like to join our mission and donate new, unused socks, please stop by and drop them in our "Sock-box." We will have it displayed all of December to then distribute in January.



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dying. It's harder to believe this when one doesn't know of anyone who has been affected. People who are in an at-risk category should take proper precautions. And as a society, we should all take responsibility to help contain the virus and not spread it to others. We can take simple precautions, like wearing masks and strengthening our immune systems through vitamins, eating an anti-inflammatory diet, moving our body daily, reducing stress, brushing our teeth, and doing something every day that makes us smile.

What about those people who wear hazmat suits to the grocery store? We can make fun of someone for doing it or truly understand their reasoning. I've learned not to judge, but to put myself in their shoes instead. A worker frequently exposed to COVID-19 must wear special gear to protect themselves so when the known virus is present, they don't come down with symptoms. Even if you aren't in a high-risk group yourself, it's good practice to protect those around you. Wear a protective mask, wear glasses and/or a visor, and don't touch your face, eyes, nose, ears, or mouth with your fingers after you've touched anything in public. If the hazmat suit man has a compromised immune system and is high risk for having complications but needs to go shopping for food, it's perfectly understandable to be wearing a spacesuit nowadays. It's totally 2020 fashion. Hopefully fashion will change in 2021.

It takes about 21 days to form a habit. Many of us have started to accept the "new norm" around that time. We got the hang of needing to wear masks before going into a public place and keeping distance from others. How long will it take for us to undo all that was done in nine months? It'll be very challenging to request for shopping carts NOT to be wiped down between every customer. But it'll be nice not to have to wait in line and have 6-foot markings around us. What about the anthropophobia (fear of being with other people) that's on the rise? We've been isolated from others for so long that being in a room without a mask and socially close is scary for some. We're distancing ourselves from family members and close friends. What if the neighboring person has a contagious disease?

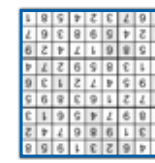
It'll be interesting to see how long it'll take for us to be okay with going to indoor restaurants or a party or flying on a plane. Many long for these aspects of life we took for granted a year ago. But thanks to the magical world of modern technology, we are able to see and hear one another despite the distance. Let's take the last month of the year to reflect on this crazy, uncertain, roller coaster of a year 2020 and hope for a better, healthier, joyful, and more "normal" 2021. Have a happy and healthy new year.

-Dr. Bernice Teplitzky

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GOOD TO THE BONE

Why You Should Make the Swap to Bone Broth



Broth is the base of many of our favorite soups, gravies, and casserole dishes. It's a basic ingredient often found tucked away in the cupboards of any kitchen, but until recently, it was only seen as an ingredient, not an essential way to get the proper nutrients your body needs.

Bone broth is changing that.

Bone broth has been around since prehistoric times, but until recently, nutritionists didn't know just how beneficial this liquid can be. Made by simmering bones and connective tissues from animals, bone broth sucks out all the good nutrients that make bones and tissues of an animal strong and healthy and mixes it into one digestible broth. It's fairly easy for any kitchen novice to make with a pressure cooker, slow cooker, or stovetop, but not all bone broths are created equal.

According to the BBC publication "Good Food," bone broth can aid in digestion, support your bone health, help you sleep better, boost immunity, and help fight the signs of aging. This near-superfood has powerful tendencies, but the types of bones you use could impact which properties are most prevalent in your bone broth.

For example, Healthline reports that fish bones have higher levels of iodine compared to their mammal counterparts. This can benefit those with thyroid and metabolism conditions. Bone marrow is rich with super vitamins, like omega-3, zinc, iron, and vitamins A and K12, while connective tissues are shown to have better benefits for joint health.

The health benefits you need can influence how you produce your own bone broth. Regardless of what you choose, all animal bones are rich in essential nutrients, like calcium (for strong bones), magnesium (for better sleep), and phosphorus (for growth and repair).

And the best part? Bone broth tastes yummy and is super easy to make.

Connect with local farmers and agriculture communities to inquire about procuring your own bones for broth if you feel like giving it a try. (Check out our recipe, too!) If you're not one to mess with creating your own broth, you can purchase a number of varieties online or at most supermarkets.

YOU CAN ACHIEVE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

3 Tips for Success

We did it! This year is almost over, and 2021 is just in sight! If you're like the 60% of people in the U.S. who make New Year's resolutions, you may be promising yourself that this year will be different. Unfortunately, only 8% of us ever keep that promise. As for the rest, about 80% of resolutions are forgotten by February.

But you can beat those odds! As you set your goals this year, consider these three tips for conquering the New Year's resolution hump and make your goals tangible habits.

TIP NO. 1: FIND ACCOUNTABILITY.

Making a promise to yourself is easy. Sticking to it is difficult. Find something to hold yourself accountable so you don't give up when the goal gets tough. (And it will get tough!) For some people, this means journaling every night or mapping out their goals with steps. Others ask friends, relatives, online communities, and even apps to hold them accountable or to join them on their journey. Find what works for you and commit.

TIP NO. 2: MAKE THE GOAL TANGIBLE.

You're not going to drop 30 pounds by February, and if you do, that's not healthy! Setting tangible

goals with steps to achieve along the way creates a path to your success. If your goal is to lose weight, set a goal to exercise three days a week. Only got two days in? Hey, it's better than zero. Be positive and don't give up. Small, consistent steps lead to gigantic changes in the long run. Once you establish that habit, focus on food. Slowly, but very surely, you'll develop habits that ultimately lead you to your bigger goal.

TIP NO. 3: DON'T GIVE UP WHEN YOU FAIL!

You will mess up. You will eat sweets when you promised you wouldn't, or you will go a whole week without practicing your Spanish. It will happen, but what can separate success and failure is not giving up. Use the "one day" principle. If you mess up today, move on to tomorrow. Get back to doing what you were doing before the failure; don't fixate on it. You can't change the mistakes you made, so don't give up! Start again NOW.

Good luck to those of you setting goals this year! You can do this!

Instant Pot Bone Broth

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 lbs assorted organic meat bones
- 2 carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 1 onion, halved with skin left on
- 2 cloves garlic with skin left on
- Assortment of fresh herbs
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- Generous pinch of whole black peppercorns
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 8 cups of water (enough water to come to 1 inch below max fill line)

DIRECTIONS

1. Place the bones in the Instant Pot, filling it about half full with bones. Add in the vegetables, herbs, apple cider vinegar, peppercorns, and salt.
2. Fill the Instant Pot with water to 1 inch below the max fill line.
3. Make sure your sealing ring is in place on the lid. Lock the lid onto the Instant Pot and set the steam release knob to the "sealing" position
4. Press the "manual" button and set your Instant Pot for high pressure for 120 minutes. It will take about 15-30 minutes for the Instant Pot to come to full pressure, then the display will show a countdown timer.
5. Once the two hours is up, allow the pressure to release naturally. It will take about 15-30 minutes, then the float valve will drop.
6. Strain the broth through cheesecloth or a strainer and cool. A good broth will usually have a layer of fat on the top and will gelatinize when thoroughly cool. Remove the fat with a spoon and discard. or save it to use instead of oil in your meals.

