

BIG NEWS



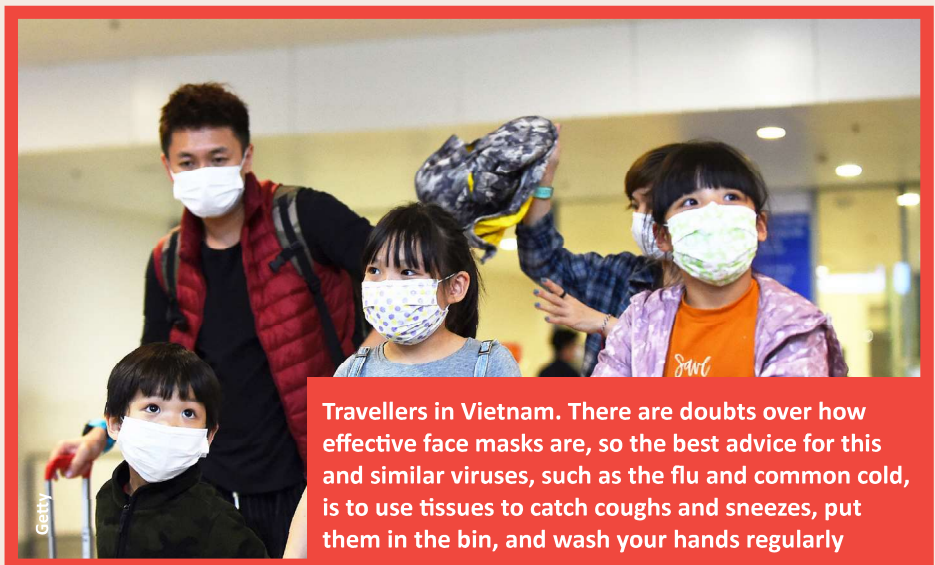
CORONAVIRUS: SHOULD WE WORRY?

IF you want the quick version, the answer to that question is no. If you want to know why, carry on reading.

A new virus from China has led to some scary pictures and stories (including lots that are completely made up), but medical experts want to reassure people that we're safe. Coronaviruses come from the same group that cause things like the common cold, but this new one, named 2019-nCoV, hadn't been seen in humans until New Year's Eve.

As First News went to press, the latest figures showed that the coronavirus had killed 427 people in China. Only two deaths, one each in the Philippines and Hong Kong, have been reported elsewhere. In the UK, 416 people have been tested, but only three tested positive. Around 98% of the people who catch the coronavirus get better.

Dr Michael Ryan, the Executive Director of the World Health Organization's Emergencies Programme, said that



Travellers in Vietnam. There are doubts over how effective face masks are, so the best advice for this and similar viruses, such as the flu and common cold, is to use tissues to catch coughs and sneezes, put them in the bin, and wash your hands regularly

“the world is pulling together” and that he'd never seen such an impressive response to an epidemic.

Most of the victims were old or already had a serious health condition, such as heart disease. The flu has the same effect, and killed 1,692 people in England alone in the winter of 2018-19.

Even if you think 427 deaths is still a lot, here's something for you to think about. Every year, there are around 6,000

deaths in the UK as a result of an accident in the home. In 2018, 1,784 people were killed in traffic accidents, including 456 pedestrians, and 429 people died by drowning.

All of the deaths are sad and we shouldn't ignore them, but instead of unnecessarily worrying about this virus, you'd be better off taking more care crossing the road, being careful around water, and telling your parents off if they drive too fast.



China has built a 1,000-bed hospital in Wuhan, the city at the centre of the outbreak, in just ten days

WORLD NEWS



GLOSSARY

virus – A microscopic organism that infects living things and causes diseases. It is made from protein and DNA (genetic code)

World Health Organization – The part of the United Nations that works to improve and protect the health of people around the world

epidemic – an outbreak of a disease where a large number of people are infected at the same time

1. What is the main message of this article?
2. Look at the first paragraph. What does the journalist say you will find out if you keep reading?
- 3a. Name a coronavirus that everyone will have come across.
- 3b. Name the new coronavirus.
4. Complete the table with the correct numbers.

The number of people that have died in China	
The number of people that have died in other countries	
The number of people in the UK that have had the disease	

5. “As First News went to press, the latest figures showed that the coronavirus had killed 427 people in China.”

Why has the writer added the words “As First News went to press” at the beginning of this sentence?

6. How is this coronavirus similar to the flu? How is it different?

Similarities with flu	Differences from flu

7. Name the part of the article that tells you the city where the outbreak first began.
8. What should people do to protect themselves from viruses like the coronavirus, flu and the cold?
9. How does the writer try to help you get the numbers into perspective and to not worry?

10a. Think about what you have heard about the coronavirus so far. Make a list of all your **sources of information**. Include what you have read, watched or heard and be as specific as possible. For example: Sky News, my headteacher, someone in the playground.

10b. Some sources of news like to make stories sound as dramatic as possible. But a good journalist should try to give people the facts without causing unnecessary worry.

Do you think the news you have read or heard has been **responsible** in how it has reported the coronavirus story? (Consider all the news reports you have come across.)