

Fresh Air Enemy of “Flu”

Flu Files: Sep 15, 1919

On September 15th, 1919 *The New York Times* released an article with suggestions from physicians on how to guard against the Spanish Flu. This article contains 14 health suggestions intended to warn the public against a possible recurrence of the deadly influenza. These same suggestions were distributed from the New York Association for Improving the condition of the Poor. The “rules” were laid out for daily guidance and had the approval of the physicians of said organization.

Some of the rules laid out were as follows; **Obey all regulations of the City Health authorities**, Avoid crowds, Drink plenty of fresh water, Sleep with the windows open, get plenty of rest, Eat a uniform three meals a day, Keep warm and dry, Bathe frequently, If you feel sick stay in bed.

These rules (although some may seem arbitrary) are quite similar to the guidelines put out by our local and federal governments today. Much of what we can do to prevent airborne illness has stayed the same. While masks have no mention in this article, the techniques of social distancing and staying healthy are consistent over 100 years later.

While this article stays focused on the safety guidelines, one could imagine the climate among the public. There were likely people that cared quite little about the virus thinking their immune system could handle it, while some (most likely the majority of people) were quite terrified of the flu. The flu did take many more lives then in comparison to how it does now thanks to modern medicine. Which would suggest that the flu was probably taken a bit more seriously then.

Still, Coronavirus is not to be taken lightly. It has taken the lives of nearly a million people worldwide and although our medical advances have allowed people to survive in much higher numbers, this virus still has deadly capabilities. It is extremely infectious and poses a threat to the lives of innocent people. People today should listen to the first suggestion laid out in the article, "**Obey all regulations of the City Health authorities**". If the general population actually listened to those qualified to make statements on public health, our world today would be safer.

FRESH AIR ENEMY OF "FLU": PHYSICIANS ISSUE SUGGESTIONS FOR GUARDING AGAINST
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FRESH AIR ENEMY OF "FLU"

Physicians Issue Suggestions for Guarding Against the Disease.

Health suggestions to warn the public against a possible recurrence of the influenza epidemic will be distributed today among the 12,000 New York city families under care of the New York Association for Improving the condition of the Poor. The following rules are laid down for daily guidance, all having the approval of the physicians of the organization:

1. Obey all regulations of the City Health authorities.
2. Avoid crowds.
3. Stay away from any one having a cough or a cold.
4. Drink plenty of fresh water.
5. Keep the home well ventilated and be sure there is plenty of fresh air day and night.
6. Sleep with the windows open.
7. Avoid fatigue and get plenty of rest; in particular, avoid fatigue of the stomach and excessive eating of unsuitable foods. Sleep is one of the most important things, and the thing that is most neglected.
8. Be as much as possible in the open air and walk to your work if practicable.
9. Eat three uniform meals a day, and avoid a breakfast of mere coffee, and a mere piece of cake or something of the kind for lunch. Special precautions should be taken against gorging at dinner time, when the stomach is least able to cope with the largest meal of the day, and which practice is bound to lower the resistance of the system.
10. Keep warm and keep dry; wrapping up the neck or exposing the neck and arms unduly are undesirable in the changing weather of the Fall.
11. Bathe frequently. The skin is part of the breathing system of the body and must be aired.
12. Exercise regularly, both in the open and indoors if possible.
13. Avoid the common drinking cup or glasses.
14. If you feel sick and have a cold coming on, go to bed. Call the doctor. Stay in bed until the doctor says you can get up and don't receive callers or visitors until the doctor says that danger of infection is passed.