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QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Ben Franklin.

HERE COMES THE FLU:

Flu shot – yes, definitely, but don’t be running off to CVS quite yet. This year’s flu vaccine is touted as being especially good – effective against three strains of the flu, and for folks over 65 – a vaccine effective with four strains of the virus. Timing of your shot is important as the immunity loses its strength over time.

Since flu season peaks in mid winter, better not to get your flu shot too early. Authorities (not your scribe) are recommending late September to mid October. After receiving the shot it takes a full two weeks for the full immune effect to take hold.

Additional good news; it is theorized that this year's flu season will be moderated due to the fact that so many are wearing masks, washing hands and maintaining social distancing in conjunction with Covid- 19 (CV) prevention. Hey, works great with flu as well.

The good news is tempered with the coming confluence of CV and the flu at the same time. The patient's dilemma becomes, "Do I simply have a winter cold, the flu or CV?" There are several companies close to coming out with multiple virus detection tests that would enable a determination to be made as to whether a patient has the flu or CV. BioFire and Qiagen have already developed tests that can scan for the CV and more than 20 bacterial and viral pathogens, including the flu. Cepheid and Hologic are two other companies finalizing tests that will detect both the flu and CV. The big caveat – how quickly and for how many people will these tests be available?

CDC QUESTIONABLE AGAIN:

The CDC has made a number of questionable calls since the early days of the pandemic

which have been catalogued in earlier issues. The latest is a doozy. CDC now recommends that if you have no symptoms there is no need to be tested. Obviously, people with symptoms should have priority in testing, but with Dr. Fauci estimating that 35 to 50% of the public who have CV are asymptomatic, it's pretty obvious that efforts should continue to test as many as possible.

ANTIBODIES NOT HELPING ANYBODY:

The current thinking is that just because a patient is positive for antibodies after having had CV, "We really don't know if you are protected." According to Dr. Caliendo from Brown University's Alpert Medical School. He continues, "If you were sick back in March, you probably don't have antibodies anymore; and if you were only mildly sick, you may not have gotten any antibodies."

A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER:

Unbelievably, some schools are keeping quiet about CV cases. On the first day of school in Camden County, Ga. One of the teachers tested

positive for the CV. The next day a warning was sent to school administrators in the county.

“Staff who test positive are not to notify any other staff members, parents or their students or any other person/entity that they may have exposed them.” Hopefully, the district’s deputy superintendent, Jon Miller, who wrote that missive has already filed for unemployment benefits.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated case; a school district in a coastal Florida community where there has been a substantial outbreak has refused to confirm a single case. There is fear that the few known examples as cited above are commonplace throughout the country.

A FUTURE LOOK:

Two mindboggling photos in two national papers over the past two days: The first photo, in Wuhan, China, the very folks who gave Covid 19 to the world. Apparently their contagion rate is down around 1%. We are treated to a view of thousands of people swimming or tubing, literally on top of each other. No water

**to be seen- only bodies. “Where’s Waldo?”
pictures can’t compare.**

**Then there is the photo of the jammed
restaurant scene in London’s Soho. Scores of
diners, zero social distancing and only three
masks to be seen. But, it’s an approved
government function. “How’s that?”
Seems the government knew the restaurants
were really hurting, so for the month of August
everyone gets to dine out with a 50% discount
paid for by the government – a happy time for
all, except, of course, for those who wind up in
the hospital with CV.**

LORI, LORI, LORI –WHAT WERE YOU THINKING

**OK, by now we all know the story; Lori
Loughlin and her husband, Massimo Giannulli
entered into a fraudulent deal to get their two
daughters admitted to USC as “Athletes” for the
rowing program. Those acceptances were
engineered for a fee of \$500,000, the couple
were caught and convicted. She is headed to
jail for 2 months with a \$150,000 fine, and
Massimo is off to the pokey for 5 months with a
\$250,000 fine.**

Country Club membership gone, loss of career, disdain from former friends and the community, this is a tragedy of Greek proportion. It seems no one is shedding a lot of tears for the couple. That they would use their vast wealth to the detriment of other worthy candidates is hard to forgive.

The case, however, has caused a lot of soul searching on campuses around the country. It's not just the big sports programs that have special admissions programs. Enhanced entrance opportunities are available in dozens of categories – a great high school singer, an all state tuba player – to say nothing of legacy programs – not the automatic they used to be, but still very much in existence. Not to overlook mega donors, of course. It would not have been out of the question for Lori's daughters to have been given most serious consideration, if not admission, had Massimo given USC a gift of \$500,000.

One U.S. Senator has proposed that no one may take a tax deduction for any contribution given to an institution where one of his/her children

are applying. Nice idea, but impossible to police and, for the mega wealthy, who cares? Changes are afoot, but, for sure, no one is getting on the rowing team at USC based on a photo of the candidate on a Concept II rowing machine.

ANXIETY AND THE YOUNG:

Black and Latino people of all ages are reporting higher levels of anxiety during the pandemic for many well known reasons – higher susceptibility, poorer health care, riskier face to face jobs, or the extreme aggravation that comes with being unemployed and unable to provide for family or pay bills.

Right up there with those two groupings are young people between the ages of 18 to 24. In a survey of 5,400 in late June, “The prevalence of anxiety symptoms was three times as high as those reported in the second quarter of 2019, and depression was four times as high. Nearly 63 % had symptoms of anxiety or depression that they attributed to the pandemic, and nearly a quarter had started or increased their

abuse of substances to cope with their emotions.” Mark Czeisler, a psychology researcher, says, “It’s ironic that young adults who are at lesser risk than older adults of severe illness caused by Covid 19 are experiencing worse mental health symptoms.”

TEACH YOUR DOG TO TALK:

Time on your hands? Tired of speaking with your wife, husband or, special other during these long inactive days? Do we have a deal for you: It’s “FluentPet”. Thousands of kits have been sold for prices up to \$200. Yes, you too can have a talking dog. “FluentPet comes with a series of buttons that your dog will learn to press when it wants to communicate with you. Early on the learning curve comes, “food”, “Go golf cart.” Well you get the idea. But wait a minute, for \$200 I get to train my dog to give me orders? Not me. All I have to do is say, “car” and he goes nuts. Same with “chow” and “go run”. Come on, we can’t have the inmates running the asylum, and I still have this control thing.

Your faithful scribe, PB

