

## COVID Defense

Have you ever been driving your car on a hot summer night with bugs splatting all over the windshield? At some point the bug splats covering the windshield potentially get so dense you can no longer see and must turn on the windshield wiper to clear a view else you will wreck your car. I want you to visualize that as viruses in certain public places (“covid splats”) and the reason we wear masks and eye protection as I will explain.

The nouveau coronavirus that causes COVID-19 infects us through our mucous membranes (eyes, nose, and to a lesser degree, the other bodily openings). It has been shown that when we speak, and especially when we yell, sing or sneeze, we project a fine mist of droplets that linger in the air for a long period of time. Should you have been exposed to the virus, it is likely that these droplets will contain the virus. When we encounter one of these invisible clouds, any contact with our mucous membranes will potentially start a COVID infection.

Our body’s defenses are actually very good at recognizing such viruses as foreign, initiating measures to remove the danger. And for most of us, minor exposure will not be sufficient to cause full blown COVID illness and the associated virus shedding.

However, should we be inundated by a large number of these viruses at once, there is a potential for the invasion to overwhelm the bodies defenses putting us at risk. In other words, the larger the number of viruses trying to invade us the higher the potential for a serious or fatal COVID-19 illness. I suspect this is why we see health care workers succumbing after working the front lines for so long, regardless of the protective gear they wear – the virus load just became too large and the body’s defenses were overrun.

And for everyone that does become infected, there is the potential of a more virulent mutation released in the reproduction and shedding.

Our goal in wearing masks and eyewear (your windshield and wipers) is to have a defense against picking up too many viruses at any one point to minimize the infectious rate to a level our body can handle. Masks also help us reduce the potential to add to the droplets in the air and the potential virus load everyone is walking/driving through, thereby protecting others.

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