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## David Katzman, MD & Jennifer DeLaney, MD Internal Medicine Specialists

### COVID-19 Update

David Katzman, MD

Lately, I've been asking my patients what silver linings they have found in this coronavirus pandemic cloud. It is refreshing to hear the answers: enjoying time outside, connecting with friends, reading more novels, working on puzzles, spending time alone, and cooking—to name just a few. In our typical busy lives, we seldom take the time to enjoy such activities and the reflection they provide.

While the pandemic remains problematic, there has been some optimism on the treatment front. Several clinical trials are underway to test the effectiveness and safety of hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin—a combination of drugs that has shown some promise in very limited clinical trials but certainly not yet proven to work. Additional investigation is being done on Remdesivir, an anti-viral designed to treat Ebola. Although it was ineffective against Ebola, in early clinical trials it seemed to have some activity against SARS and other coronaviruses. In addition, 60 other therapies, some new but several already existing, are being tested.

The use of antibodies from previously infected patients to treat current active patients is on the fast track, particularly here at Washington University, where several of our patients who have recovered from COVID-19 have generously donated their plasma to treat others with infection. A vaccine is also being quickly developed, although none is expected for at least a year. Trials looking into the vaccine BCG, which heightens the immune system and is used for tuberculosis prevention, is being evaluated as well.

I think it is easy to be overwhelmed and scared when confronted with serious issues like the pandemic. One way to combat this anxiety is to do something positive for others. The New York Times article "[The Science of Helping Out](#)" offers insight on the benefits of helping others in times of crisis.

One way we've been trying to help others is by preventing infection in health care workers. Thanks to you, this is on the fast track too. As many of you know, we have been working to get the newly-developed Powered Air-Purifying Respirator (PAPR) in the hands of local doctors and nurses exposed to patients infected with COVID-19. This would not be possible without your donations of CPAP equipment, masks, components, and resources. We have submitted an emergency application to the FDA to approve our novel PAPR, with the assistance of our friends at Hunter Engineering, local robotics instructors and Washington University. In fact, Dr. DeLaney was featured as the [Channel 2 news lead story](#) this week and on the [Fox National News broadcast](#).

Remember, this pandemic is still with us. **It is crucial to continue practicing social distancing, sheltering at home, and impeccable hygiene.** We remain dedicated to guiding you through this crisis and are available 24/7 to answer your

questions.

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