

SPS member profile: Ralph R. Ocampo, MD

April 2022 member spotlight



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Past President, San Diego County Medical Society (1982)

Past President California Medical Association (1994)

California Medical Association (AMA Delegate Member 1996-2002)

Q: How have you managed to stay positive during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: My wife of 60 years and two months passed away in 2019. We met while I was an intern at Cook County Hospital in Chicago in 1959. The disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19, appeared in San Diego around 6 weeks after her death. Below is a photo that was taken shortly after the onset of the chronic ailment that took her life. During the last part of her illness, I learned to take care of her, cooking food and taking caring of her hygienic needs. It taught me how to do the same for me after her death.



Q: How has COVID-19 affected you both physically and emotionally and what would you suggest helping other families cope?

A: Fortunately, even though I'll be 91 next month, I have never contracted COVID-19. I have been vaccinated with the Moderna vaccine X3 and followed all the hand-washing precautions. Bathrooms are prepped for easy handwashing and with alcohol disinfectants. One of the most vital prophylactic tools is regular exercise. I use a version of the Canadian Air Force Basic Exercises originally developed for use in remote northern latitudes by airmen monitoring the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BEMEWS). There are at least two articles in *JAMA* indicating the positive effect on longevity of walking fast by seniors that have been helpful to me.

Q: What efforts are needed to coordinate long-term health and well-being of physicians through COVID-19?

A: Reach out to friends and family members. In San Diego, this could mean trips to the Zoo or Sea World. I have used Zoom to access continuing medical education at the University of California San Diego and Scripps-Mercy Hospital. If you live in a condominium like I do, try to keep in touch with your HOA leaders in person and at Board meetings when possible. This is the best way to stay abreast of any changes in COVID-19 or other issues of importance to your community. It is also important to return to your regular social or religious meetings whenever the body in question says it is OK to do so. Finally, try to look on the lighter side of life for a while. Yesterday I created my latest pun (yes, the numbering is correct): 461. When lions lay down with lamb chops it's hard to swallow.

Contact us

Have information about SPS members doing great work? Email us at sps@ama-assn.org.