



Infodemics Case Study

A 45 year old man presents to an outpatient clinic for evaluation.

Chief complaint: Possible COVID-19 exposure

Past medical history:

- Hypertension
- Obesity

The patient has a coworker who tested positive for COVID-19 two days ago. His employer is now requiring him to get tested for COVID-19 before he will be permitted to return to work.

Over the course of your interview, the patient mentions that he is washing his hands more frequently, but he does not use hand sanitizer because of concern that it weakens his immune system.

Additionally, he is concerned that wearing a mask “activates” coronavirus and makes infections worse, so he is frustrated that his employer requires everyone to wear a mask. He is also distraught by the possibility of future mandatory COVID-19 vaccination, having read about the risk of injury from the vaccine. Lastly, he mentions a recent news article which reported that COVID-19 originated in a lab in Wuhan, China.

As a medical student, how should you respond to this patient and his concerns?