



Coronavirus **Heroes**

A salute to people on the
front lines of America's
battle with COVID-19

Doctors and Nurses

Even in normal times, doctors and nurses play a heroic role in saving lives.

Now, however, they are working tirelessly to protect citizens who are susceptible to the COVID-19 virus while working under, in some cases, unthinkable conditions.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Doctors are working under extreme pressure and high risk to save the lives of citizens who are defenseless to the coronavirus. At the same time, many hospitals are short on personal protective equipment — including gloves, masks and gowns — due to high demand during the global outbreak. This means the staff who need to treat patients are more at risk of catching COVID-19 themselves.

Luckily, some people who are sheltered at home and have plenty of time on their hands have found ways to be helpful. By doing a simple Google search, anyone can find the best methods and materials for making basic face masks that are almost as efficient as the factory-made ones.

Coffee or vacuum filters offer more protection than scarves, according to a New York Times article. If the fabric is dense enough to not let light pass through it easily, it is dense enough to help slow the transmission of viruses.



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People have begun to craft these masks, and many donate what they make to their local hospitals for the doctors and nurses to use while treating and testing patients with symptoms of the coronavirus. Others may donate the masks to people who need the extra protection, including elderly neighbors.

If you're interested in donating masks or supplies to your local hospital, make sure to check with the hospital and find out what they need first.

ACCURATE INFORMATION

Another role medical professionals are playing is delivering accurate health information at a time when it is in high demand.

The spread of information online — not all of which is accurate — has created a need for trained medical experts to help journalists and the general public separate fact from fiction.

Many doctors and nurses have stepped up to help individuals and public policy makers decide on the best course of action. Without their science-based input, the pandemic could have been much more deadly.

THEY NEED SUPPORT

During this time while health care needs in the midst of this pandemic are immense, doctors and nurses need help from the public.

One, we should heed their advice. As more information

about the reality of the coronavirus's impact becomes available, Americans should trust doctors and follow their recommendations — whether that is things we can do as a society or what we should do as individuals who may be sick and worried.

Supporting medical professionals may be even more critical, though, in the aftermath of this pandemic. In many cases, they are dealing with a lack of proper equipment and an overwhelmed medical system, both of which could be improved with proper planning and quick response for future disease outbreaks.

Right now, the best way people can help is by staying healthy. Making homemade

masks is fine, but it is much better if those masks aren't needed in the first place.

Following the recommendations of public health authorities — recommendations that are likely to change over time — is the best way to support the doctors and nurses who are fighting on the front lines of a war on the coronavirus.

The choice to order groceries instead of going out and buying them in person when you have a cough could help slow this pandemic and let our doctors and nurses breathe.

And going forward, they deserve the public's support to make the nation's entire health care system better equipped and prepared.

Hospital Support Staff

Janitors, technicians and food service staff are just a few examples of the people working behind the scenes of the coronavirus pandemic.

Hospitals around the nation are staying functional and open in part because of these frequently overlooked groups of people.

CLEANING STAFF

Dusting, sweeping, mopping and changing out bed sheets are all normal duties of hospital janitorial personnel. However, with the outbreak of COVID-19 in America, hospital maintenance and cleaning crews have had to step up their game.

An important part of their job is sanitizing every surface in every room the staff visits, and these workers are rising to the occasion.

Hospital housekeepers risk infection every time they walk into a patient's room, whether that patient shows symptoms of the virus or not. Keeping a hospital clean and functional is no easy task and these professionals are keeping up with admirable persistence.

MAINTENANCE WORKERS

The technicians who keep respirators and other essential equipment functional are also



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indispensable.

Machines that provide life-giving air to those suffering are in high demand, so the technicians who maintain them are of utmost importance.

The workers who specialize in other systems in hospitals are also doing their part to fight this illness. They keep the lights on, the water running, the heaters and air conditioners functioning at their optimal levels and the hospital grounds up to a high standard.

TECHNICIANS AND THERAPISTS

While COVID-19 is showing

up everywhere in America, there are patients who are in the hospital for other reasons.

Patients still need physical therapy, dialysis treatments, and other life-saving procedures.

Technicians and therapists continue to carry out and perform invaluable services for their patients while risking exposure to the disease. While it's true elective procedures are on hold at many hospitals, there are many patients who benefit greatly from therapy services.

The therapists and technicians who offer those treatments are still showing up

every day and helping those who need it. Respiratory therapists are helping COVID patients with breathing problems, but they're not the only ones.

Therapists are also playing a key role in making patients strong and capable enough to safely leave the hospital, making more beds available when they might be needed the most.

FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Most hospitals across America have shut down their public cafeterias. Preventing the spread of the coronavirus

this way is very important by keeping people from congregating in public eating areas.

However, hospital food services continue to feed and nourish patients under their care. Hospital patients need to eat, and someone has to prepare those meals.

Food service in hospitals continues without a hitch, delivering meals to patients throughout the day. It's a mark of kindness and bravery on the part of all those who continue to provide nutritional meals and do so with a smile. Keeping the spirits up of those who fight off COVID-19 is a rare gift.

Emergency Medical Technicians

While people working inside hospitals are clearly playing a heroic role, the first interaction many people have with the health care system happens in their own homes and offices.

Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are in the middle of it all, out in the community as a first line of defense against a potentially deadly virus.

CHANGING JOB

According to reports in the *New York Times*, first responders in New York City are playing different roles than their usual routine.

Always a high-stress job with life-or-death consequences and tremendous time pressure, New York's EMTs took on the added task of screening who should and shouldn't go to the hospital in the heat of the coronavirus pandemic.

Some callers even fake symptoms, or exaggerate their conditions, in hopes of getting better care, the newspaper reported.

EMTs now have the uncomfortable role of telling some patients they shouldn't go to the hospital.

RISKY CONDITIONS

While hospitals are known



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for having sterile, somewhat controlled environments for treating medical conditions, EMTs have to work in the real world.

That means they're dealing with unknown variables.

In addition to working through all kinds of weather and fighting traffic to quickly get to patients, they have to be prepared for the possibility that every person they interact with could potentially be carrying the COVID-19 virus.

They are also dealing with the same supply shortages as hospitals. Personal protective equipment is in high demand all around the globe, and EMTs are forced to make the

best of a less-than-ideal situation in many cases.

HAZARD PAY?

United States Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has suggested that coronavirus first-responders deserve hazard pay because of the extraordinary conditions they are working through during the pandemic.

According to EMS1.com, which covers the emergency medical industry, the idea gets a mixed reaction among medical employees.

"Many say the pay isn't necessary, arguing, 'we knew what we signed up for when we climbed onto the rig,'

while others note the extraordinary circumstances, contending, 'while the job of paramedics and first responders has its inherent risks, the COVID-19 pandemic is outside the scope of everyday risks,'" an editor's note reads.

DISPATCHERS

While they are not physically on the front lines fighting the coronavirus, the dispatchers who take emergency calls and communicate with first responders are no less impacted during the pandemic.

Calls for emergency services are reaching record lev-

els in many areas. The same calls for regular emergencies continue to come in from car wrecks, heart attacks and other health problems, and the coronavirus only compounds an already stressful job.

The safety of first responders also rests on how well dispatchers communicate. They have to gauge whether a patient has coronavirus symptoms so EMTs can arrive with the right protective equipment. Not only that, but they have to relay accurate information about addresses and other details that can save lives when time is at a premium.

Grocery and Delivery Workers

Among those who are doing their part to keep the economy and Americans afloat are grocers, delivery people, pharmacists and long haul truck drivers. Not only do individuals need these people, but the economy does, too.

GROCERS

Grocery stores have seen unprecedented floods of people coming in to buy essential items to tide them over during mandatory stay-at-home orders or true quarantine.

They also deal with attempted hoarders who try to buy more than their fair share of items in high demand.

Many grocery retailers have decided to close earlier to help keep shelves stocked for the next day's influx of purchasers. Checkers, stockers, custodians and managerial staff have to face a nervous clientele each and every day and still manage to do so with a positive attitude.

Grocery workers' dedication to keeping their shelves stocked and customers safe makes them heroes of the coronavirus pandemic.

DELIVERY PEOPLE

UberEats, DoorDash, Favor,



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and grocery-store specific deliverers are just a few examples of the workers who are supplying needed items to the home-bound.

Special care is being utilized by many of these services to keep goods contaminant-free. They're also playing a key role in keeping small businesses afloat, including many restaurants that are only offering delivery and takeout services.

Many people who can eat at home are ordering in to help keep their favorite restaurants in business during this extremely unusual time when dining rooms are closed

and the option to eat out is impossible.

Many of us have that favorite restaurant where the ambiance is perfect, the wait staff is wonderful, and we make some of our happiest memories. Delivery people allow consumers to help out in the only way they can to keep those businesses operational during this difficult time.

TRUCK DRIVERS

Toilet paper, medical supplies, groceries and pet supplies are just a few of the items that are brought to Americans by truck drivers.

There are so many things long-haul and local drivers deliver that are necessary during this pandemic. Truck drivers are making things happen, one drive at a time.

People on social media are recognizing how vital this industry is. There's even been a call for a national long-haul truck driver holiday on Oct. 4, which references the famous radio call "10-4, good buddy."

We owe much to these men and women who keep our grocery stores shelves stocked and our medical personnel supplied with their protective gear.

PHARMACISTS

Where would we be if pharmacies shut down? Nowhere good. Maintaining the necessary medicines Americans need is one of the most important jobs during a pandemic.

Pharmacies and their staff are supplying people with their medications throughout this outbreak and deserve much praise.

Pharmacists are also helping to advise those who are suffering with symptoms to know how best to stay safe at home and when to call their physician or go to the emergency department.

Manufacturers Retooling

Manufacturers are switching equipment and machines to help make masks, ventilators and other critical supplies to help during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here is a look at some of the ways American companies are rising to the challenge.

AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURERS

With companies shutting down their manufacturing production while their employees are ordered to shelter in place, American automotive factories are changing gears.

General Motors is rallying more than 1,000 workers to scale the production of ventilators at its Kokomo, Indiana, automotive assembly plant.

Ford is partnering with 3M, GE Healthcare and the United Auto Workers to build Power Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPRs). The company is also assembling more than 100,000 plastic face shields per week.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles is ramping up to produce and donate more than 1 million protective face masks per month, the company says. The maker of Chrysler, Dodge, Ram and Jeep vehicles also is working with non-profit organizations to provide



GENERAL MOTORS

more than a million meals to school-age children in America.

Foreign auto brands with factories in America are helping in the effort, too. Toyota, for example, is readying to make masks, ventilators and other equipment. It is also offering its manufacturing expertise through its System Support Center and donating supplies to first responders.

OTHER INDUSTRIES

Hanes, a well-known manufacturer of undergarments, has shifted its production lines to create masks for medical personnel.

Gap Inc., which is known for its apparel brands including Gap, Banana Republic and Old Navy, is marshaling resources to help make masks, gowns and scrubs to keep medical workers pro-

tected.

Joann Fabrics has donated material to be used by a sewing team at Neiman Marcus, the upscale retailer, in making scrubs for medical workers.

ECHOING HISTORY

For many of these companies, their moves mirror American wartime history.

During World War II, for example, every major

American car manufacturer switched their production to help with the war effort. The same thing is happening with the war on the coronavirus this year.

As manufacturers use their expertise and machinery in new ways to tackle this public health crisis, they are helping America win a battle against a viral enemy that can't be seen.

Law Enforcement Officers

Law enforcement workers have some of the toughest jobs in America any time, but the difficulties and potential dangers of police work have only gotten more complex in the current pandemic.

Law enforcement authorities have taken on a major role in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Police officers have been under pressure to make sure shelter-in-place laws are being followed while still maintaining good relations with the community.

This means most officers are going to be face-to-face with multiple people in one day who may or may not be carriers of the virus.

Despite the importance of a police officer's job, they largely don't have many extra precautions they can take to protect themselves from catching a virus. In fact, the only defense they have is washing their hands, avoiding touching their face, and keeping a distance of six feet from other people, just like the rest of the population is advised to do. And due to the nature of their job, sometimes they have to be much closer to people than they would like.

This cannot be said



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enough: police officers are on the front lines, risking their lives, to protect other United States citizens. They are at risk of getting sick, just like everyone else, but they put others before themselves in order to stop the spread of the coronavirus and keep their communities safe.

The coronavirus is new territory for everyone, but at least doctors and nurses are well-informed on the behavior of the virus. Police officers and other law enforcement workers aren't typically medical experts. Most of them are having to take this situation

one step at a time, and they don't have the luxury of staying home and avoiding contact with others.

ROLE CHANGING

Much like every other profession in America has adapted, law enforcement has changed its operations to better suit these trying times.

Some departments are focusing on breaking up small gatherings that pose health risks. Others are changing the way they respond to typical service calls to minimize the risk of getting or spreading infec-

tions.

According to a CNN report, many police departments are closing their front desks to avoid spreading germs in public places. Some, such as the Syracuse Police Department in New York, have said they will not respond in person to non-urgent calls.

Others are encouraging people to report criminal incidents via online portals. The Arlington County Police Department in Virginia, for example, is encouraging citizens to use its online reporting system for non-violent

incidents such as theft, credit card fraud, vandalism or vehicle tampering, according to the CNN report.

STILL SERVING

Even in a pandemic, though, police officers are responding in a way that keeps communities safe and orderly.

If a crime requires an immediate response, or citizens are in danger of imminent harm, it's America's brave and often under-appreciated police officers who will show up, ready to help, as always.

The American Public

Finally, while there are plenty of heroes who are helping in big ways — the pastors comforting grieving families and many people who continue to work in essential professions — one hero is making a major difference: the ordinary citizen.

Many of the well-known virus-fighting heroes don't have the option to stay home in a pandemic. Doctors, nurses, hospital workers and other medical professionals are working harder than ever.

By following the advice of public health experts, everyone else can help them do their jobs.



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SOCIAL DISTANCING

Daily life has changed in communities nationwide with public events canceled and large gatherings prohibited during the coronavirus outbreak.

For those measures to work, everyone has to do their part by allowing America's medical system to avoid being overloaded at the peak of the infections.

AVOID EXPOSURE

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the best way to

stop the coronavirus illness is to avoid being exposed in the first place.

As the CDC states, because COVID-19 may be spreading by people who don't show any symptoms of illness, Americans may unknowingly be spreading the disease every time they go out in public.

Keeping your public outings to a minimum will help slow the virus' circulation.

GUIDELINES

In addition to avoiding close contact with other peo-

ple when unnecessary, the CDC also has these recommendations that can help us all fight the coronavirus pandemic:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.

- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.

- Do not use a face mask meant for a healthcare worker.

- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

STAYING INFORMED

Finally, one of the best ways to help bring an end to the pandemic is by staying informed with accurate, trusted information.

Look directly to public health officials — not your friends, unknown news sources or social media posts — for up-to-date details about COVID-19 activity in your community.

By paying attention to the public health experts and heeding their warnings and advice, everyday citizens can literally be life-saving heroes.