

Message (#10) from the President on COVID-19: (This time just a Nudge.) "Cultivate a Critical Intuition Towards Overflowing Information"

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Cultivate a Critical Intuition Towards Overflowing Information

A TV commentator recently commented on an expert's hope regarding the expansion of PCR testing, "It has not been proven". The expert pointed out that the expansion of free PCR tests has made them available to "anyone, anywhere, any number of times", and thanks to this the number of deaths has decreased to the point of reaching zero overseas. Indeed, there is no proof of causation. However, it is also irresponsible to consider it all "fake".

We wear masks in situations with the "Three Cs (closed spaces, crowded spaces and close-contact)". However, to my knowledge, there had been no evidence to suggest wearing masks prevents the spread of COVID-19 until July 15th when the CDC released some in a paper (*1). Compared to circumstantial evidence, evidence showing causation came out late (it usually comes out very late).

Expansion of inspection → Isolation of positive persons → Prevention of further expansion is not a process limited to COVID-19, but it is the basis for measures against infectious diseases. 30% PCR results are false negatives (although the number should be a lot less in Japan), but even if 70% of cases were positive, self-isolation for 10 days alone is expected to have a sufficient effect. For now, we should be proactive in doing things that are safe, even with circumstantial evidence.

There are still so many things we don't know about COVID-19. However, our knowledge is gradually increasing. Cultivate a critical intuition (rather than a hunch) towards overflowing information with critical thinking - think with your head and focus on what you can do now.

1. MJ Hendrix, et al. Absence of Apparent Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from Two Stylists After Exposure at a Hair Salon with a Universal Face Covering Policy - Springfield, Missouri, May 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2020 Jul 17;69(28):930-932.