Lipkin infected with SARS-CoV-2

Starting around March 13–14, Lipkin said he had "a mild upper respiratory tract infection for about a week".[36] On Mar 20, his symptoms worsened, specifically, "a very painful headache that literally woke me from sleep... I had it for two, three days thereafter and some night sweats. That's when ...I went in and had myself tested by one of our (Columbia) faculty members."[15]

This time-frame indicates that Lipkin was potentially contagious around the time of his media appearances in a high community-contact environment. Lipkin noted from his investigative tour of China: "Anybody who has any sort of suspicious respiratory tract infection, they're gonna be all over it with diagnostic tests ... and the ability to isolate and contain - which we don't do."[37] Instead, Lipkin continued travelling across New York conducting interviews to spread his messaging. On March 18 he made his last pre-quarantined appearance on Dr. Oz, where he warned: "(This virus) will percolate below the surface - then suddenly it hits a community or an individual who's very susceptible - and then it takes off like wildfire."[38]

Later whilst recovering, he remarked: "The irony is I went to China and everybody wears masks ... no problems. I come back ... I come out of confinement - I'm doing media - I'm travelling around the city - most of the time I'm very cautious - but when you start doing media it's very difficult ... there's a lot of community contact."[39]

Treatment

Initially, Lipkin was "very eager"[40] to try plasma therapy. "My close friend, the Foreign Minister of Health of China ... Chen Zhu, was going to send me (his own) plasma ...so i could get infused."[41] Plasma therapy involves transfusing the liquid portion of the blood from a recovered patient into an infected one.[42] But finally, "I was unable to get anybody to agree to allow me to be infused with this unknown plasma from China."[40]

The "Columbia IV people" also counseled Lipkin against it, saying, "we'll just do the hydroxychloroquine".[43] A few days later Lipkin began to rally and "hiked about a mile and a half". However coming back home on a slight uphill gradient, Lipkin experienced "shortness of breath".[44] It's unclear if this excursion was on Lipkin's property or outside his quarantine zone.

As to whether hydroxychloroquine had aided his recovery, Lipkin said he had "no idea", but reported "800 mg certainly makes you feel light-headed."[45]

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