



Prevention in the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Covid-19 disease comes from SARS-CoV-2, a virus that attacks the respiratory system. The symptoms are those of a cold, with a headache and aching limbs, a dry cough, fever and temporary loss of the sense of smell. Very elderly patients and people with previous diseases of the cardiovascular system often have a severe course and sometimes have to be ventilated. Mortality is high in those patients.¹

Prophylaxis initially aims to prevent infection through protective measures such as hand hygiene, respiratory masks and contact bans. This can be supplemented by salutogenic measures, examples of which will be described below.

Maintaining Warmth – Getting Oneself Moving

For many people, fears, excessive demands, social constriction and isolation are a considerable challenge and danger. Fear narrows the soul. It hinders respiration. Seized by panic, people are in danger of hyperventilating. Ongoing worries and fears, such as concerns about economic survival, weaken the immune system. Thus, exercises that help to overcome fears are important preventative measures and they strengthen resilience – not just against microorganisms, but also helping us to overcome paralysis and frozenness. The following eurythmy exercises can be used to distinguish ourselves from our seemingly unpredictable environment:²

- *Affirmation/Negation*: These movements have a strong effect on the respiratory system by working through the life organization.³
- *Sympathy/Antipathy*: This exercise helps the forces of human individuality, which are particularly expressed in a person's warmth organization, to become increasingly active in relation to the whole organism, especially with regard to circulation and digestive processes.⁴

The most important measure for stimulating warmth development and warmth regulation is movement. Here too, balance is needed: too little exercise is associated with increased susceptibility to infection, as is excessive physical activity. On the other hand, our life processes can be promoted by movement permeated by soul and spirit. This is the aim in eurythmy. The following eurythmy therapy exercises have a strengthening effect on the warmth organism with its connections to specific organs.

- *Love E* has a warming effect on blood circulation
- *Hope U* has a warming effect on the respiratory system
- *Reverence A–H* helps support the organism in becoming more resistant⁵

To stimulate the warmth organism:

- Full body rubs (Rhythmical Einreibung) after showering or bathing, with lemon-Swiss pine massage oil Sonett (available as Zitrone-Zirbelkiefer Massageöl)

Warmth creates deepened relationships with other people. It is known that immunological functions can be hampered by feelings of loneliness. Cultivating interest in other people and in their deeper nature develops human warmth and promotes immunological competence.

Strengthening through Nutrition

Physical and socio-cultural life are linked by nutrition. A healthy, i.e., balanced diet adapted to one's lifestyle has important effects on one's own physical health as well as repercussions for the production and availability of food. Food and drink are thus inseparably linked to ecological and economic conditions in agriculture. Maintaining a healthy human diet, i.e., eating limited quantities of fish and meat, preferably from organic (or biodynamic) animal husbandry, and mindfully enjoying other animal products such as eggs and milk, selecting food that has not been produced in a monoculture and if possible is grown without herbicides or pesticides, is also a way of making an active contribution to the preservation of the planet as a living organism. Fiber-rich, low-sugar nutrition with lots of vegetables and fruit, supplemented by fermented foods such as sauerkraut, nurtures our intestinal flora.

In terms of medications, bitter substances can be taken to stimulate digestion, e.g.

- Gentiana stomach pilules WALA, 10 pil. 3x/d.

Bitter substances are also found in numerous salads, such as radicchio or chicory.

Freeing Respiration

Through breathing we connect ourselves with our environment. Speaking, singing, laughing and crying are directly connected with breathing, create closeness and familiarity and have a liberating effect on souls trapped in solitude.⁶

Singing⁷ helps to bring rhythm and deepening to our breathing. When we alternate between listening and singing actively ourselves, we stimulate our life forces. This strengthens our body's own defenses and enables better processing of foreign influences. With morning and evening songs and seasonal songs, we

can promote awareness for the rhythms of the course of the day and the year and strengthen our connection with the rhythms of the world around us. We can create a new relationship with time: I am present in musically shaped time, it is fulfilled time. Light is an important conveyor of rhythm. Light and darkness promote wakefulness and sleep. Body and soul regenerate during sleep. Light stimulates the formation of vitamin D and strengthens the body's defenses.

- Plantago Bronchialbalsam WALA (bronchial balm, oil for external use) as a chest rub (Rhythmical Einreibung) or as an ointment compress (warming, relaxing, expectorant) has proven its value in treating airway mucus
- The respiratory process can be additionally supported by medications such as Ferrum sidereum comp. Weleda or Meteoreisen Phosphor Quarz WALA (Meteoric iron, phosphorus, quartz), 10 drops/pilules 1–3 x daily
- Meditation, as spiritual activity, can strengthen respiration. An example mediation could be:

*In my heart
Shines the strength of the sun
In my soul
Works the power of the world.*

*I will breathe
The strength of the sun*

*I will feel
The warmth of the world*

*Sun-strength fills me
World-warmth penetrates me.⁸*

Looking Ahead

Ecological, social and economic issues cannot be solved by national egoisms. Dealing with the pandemic thus seems to move in the field of tension between isolation and proximity, struggle and cooperation, egoism and responsibility.

What can we do? We can try to take the perspective of the future, of those still unborn. To ask ourselves together with them: when I look back on myself and us today in the year 2030 – what will then, from that perspective, show itself to have been the essential in our thinking, in the way that we shaped our relationships, in our actions?

Further information on acute infectious diseases from the perspective of Anthroposophic Medicine:
<https://www.anthromedics.org/PRA-0551-EN>
<https://www.anthromedics.org/PRA-0911-EN>

- 1 Robert Koch Institute (as checked on April 24, 2020):
<https://bit.ly/2WVSs4Y>
- 2 Steiner, Rudolf: *Heileurythmie*. GA 315. 5th, completely revised ed. Dornach 2003, 5th lecture. English translation: Steiner, Rudolf: *Eurythmy therapy*. London 2009.
- 3 <https://bit.ly/2WY8Xon>
- 4 <https://bit.ly/2Wu9LED>; <https://bit.ly/2Z3Xpvk>
- 5 <https://bit.ly/2WxbzmR>
- 6 Good suggestions can be found in: von Bonin, Dietrich: “Gestaltetes Sprechen zur Lungenstärkung”, in: *Das Goetheanum*, no. 18, May 1, 2020, p. 14f. (<https://bit.ly/2yjiCLb>)
- 7 These are not choir activities, but singing in one’s own environment or in the family circle.
- 8 Steiner, Rudolf: *Mantrische Sprüche und Seelenübungen II*. GA 268. Dornach 1999, p. 85. English translation: Steiner, Rudolf: *Mantric sayings. Meditations 1903–1925*, Great Barrington 2015.