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Covid-19: Allergic to the Cure?

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Before the era of the new coronavirus, at least in Cuba it wasn't common in our daily walks, the going and coming, from home to work, to the market, to the bakery, or the children's school, to see in the streets, the surgical masks much needed and demanded today. Before, some other tourist, mainly from the Asian continent, wearing a surgical mask won all the looks of bewilderment of Cubans, like an alien arriving on planet Earth.

The surgical masks, although they have not become the definitive cure to face the Covid-19 disease, nor the only and main strategy for the control of transmission chains, they have worked in recent months as protective and preventive accessories against SARS-CoV-2, as well as shields from dust mites, and other polluting elements in the environment for those who are allergic.

During this 2020, as the scientific community has established through several studies, people suffering allergies who have complied with hygiene measures, like the constant and responsible wear of the mask in open and closed spaces, the frequent washing and disinfection of hands, they have experienced fewer symptoms, nasal congestion, therefore they have experienced better breathing, and they have needed less medication.

Although this group has been lucky with this respiratory pandemic, since they are not considered of risk, like when it was thought that those who suffer from bronchial asthma were going to be a serious problem, in recent days, with the start of vaccination of hundreds of people in Britain, the alarm has already been raised that people suffering from major allergies will not get the vaccine developed by Pfizer-BioNTech.

Among the most dangerous reactions, according to specialists in the investigation, appears the anaphylactic shock, which can be serious even lethal, since the respiratory system can be affected, but also the skin, also the digestive and circulatory systems could be threatened. These failures happen suddenly so a person can get worse in a matter of minutes.

Other milder effects like skin rashes, heavy breathing, and swelling of the tongue and face have also been reported. For all these reasons, the British government has instructed those who suffer from allergies to inform their

doctor of their medical condition in advance. Allergies, for those who think that they are nothing more than watery eyes and constant sneezing, in moments of acute crisis, can threaten life itself.

The matter of the vaccine against Covid-19 still remains a challenge for scientists and an ambitious competition for large pharmaceutical transnationals. Likewise, it would be very premature and risky to certify its greater effectiveness with such a short trial period of some of the already approved vaccines. Hopefully, in the hands of those who market it, prevail the respect for human life, and a safe immunization begins, medical transparency and good communication with patients will be guaranteed.

**Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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