

**- Virus**

## How to continue to survive the pandemic

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**MASKS on.** Stay 2 meters apart. Wash your hands often. Even if we are already two years into a pandemic, we still cringe when we hear someone sneeze or cough in public, more so when it's someone near us. We have never been this cautious about our health, or as interested in knowing the latest updates on cases and variants. We even know the ideal daily dosage of Vitamin C.

But before you stock up on those fruit juices, hear this out. In the season-ender of the popular "Superhuman" podcast on Spotify, host Wil Dasovich and his finale guest, Dr. Dex Macalintal, a registered nutritionist and life-style medicine physician, talk about the nuances of our immunity and how to best double down on our health. Here are the best takeaways from the episode, to help you stay in the best of health during the pandemic.

- **NUTRITION IS KEY.** The best time to address sickness is before you get sick. The risks related to the top non-communicable diseases in the Philippines, such as coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, can be greatly reduced by reducing salt, sugar and unhealthy fats from our diets. Keep it simple. Read the labels when choosing what food to buy for your weekly grocery run. The shorter the ingredient list, the better; if you can go for the non-processed food item, even better. If you are unsure about the ideal mix of food on your plate, you can ask your doctor or a nutritionist.

- **JUST MOVE.** Begin the day with exercise. Raising your heart rate releases endorphins. Moreover, it improves your metabolism, which allows your body to burn more calories in its resting state and process nutrients better. If you can't get your sweat on earlier in the day, exercise at a time most sustainable for you. What matters is not the time of day, but the long-term viability of your lifestyle change.

- **COMMUNITY HELPS YOU STAY HEALTHY.** The mental stress and anguish caused by long periods of isolation can impact your immunity. The pandemic limited many of our in-person interactions. However, physical distancing does not have to mean social distancing. Community and meaningful interactions with other people are crucial to our mental and physical health. Connect with your loved ones as much as you can (while still following minimum health safety protocols, of course).

- **A MEDICAL CONSULT IS JUST A BUTTON AWAY.** Given the constraints of mobility and the recommendation to avoid risky areas, people have been visiting the doctor's office online. Telemedicine and the applications that enable it are now available to many. With more health-care professionals joining networks, the medical expert you need can easily be recommended by the one you initially consulted.

For example, AIA Philippines ([aia.com.ph](http://aia.com.ph)), one of the country's premier life insurance companies, recently introduced Total Health Solution, an ecosystem accessible through a single touchpoint platform that can help you live better so you are able to maintain a healthy lifestyle, protect yourself better so you have peace of mind that you are prepared for life's uncertainties, and get better by giving you access to health-care needs should you find yourself unwell.

For the full season finale and more podcast episodes on ordinary people doing extraordinary things, tune in to Superhuman with Wil Dasovich on Spotify. You can also visit the Youtube page of Dr. Dex Macalintal to get your weekly dose of nutrition information.