



## Dr. Drew Pinsky: Coronavirus Panic Must Stop, Press Needs to Be Held Accountable for Hurting People

Posted By **RCP Video**  
On Date March 10, 2020



Dr. Drew talks with CBS Local's DJ Sixsmith about coronavirus: "The panic must stop. And the press, they really somehow need to be held accountable because they are hurting people."

CBS NEWS: "So you've seen pandemics over the decades, how does this one compare with everything?"

DR. DREW: "A bad flu season is 80,000 dead, we've got about 18,000 dead from influenza this year, we have a hundred from corona. Which should you be worried about influenza or Corona? A hundred versus 18,000? It's not a trick question. And look,

everything that's going on with the New York cleaning the subways and everyone using Clorox wipes and get your flu shot, which should be the other message, that's good. That's a good thing, so I have no problem with the behaviors. What I have a problem with is the panic and the fact that businesses are getting destroyed that people's lives are being upended, not by the virus, but by the panic. The panic must stop. And the press, they really somehow need to be held accountable because they are hurting people."

CBS NEWS: "So, where do you think the panic started? Besides the press, like what was the impetus in terms of mass hysteria?"

DR. DREW: "I saw it, there's a footage of me on a show called The Daily Blast Live a month ago, going 'shouldn't we be scared about this?' and me going 'no, there's gonna be as potential for panic here, shut up everybody, stop talking about it, I could see the panic brewing, and I could just see it the way the innuendo and the every opportunity for drama by the press was twisted in that direction. Let me give you an example: so the World Health Organization is out now saying the fatality rate from the virus is 3.4%, right? Every publication from the WHO says 3.4% and we expect it to fall dramatically once we understand the full extent of the illness. No one ever reports the actual statement. We go 3.4% that's 10 times more than the, whatever five times more than the flu virus and yeah it's gonna be a little more [than the] flu probably. Still not a bad flu season."

CBS NEWS: "Right, we're gonna hear about more cases, more people died."

DR. DREW: "There are probably several people in this building that probably have it and don't know it."

CBS NEWS: "Right, well it was also just the process of letting the public know, the stock market, the number of tests that were available, there was so much happening, I think people were freaking out as a result of that."

DR. DREW: "I think there was it was a concerted effort by the press to capture your eyes and in doing so they did it by inducing panic. There's, listen, the CDC and the WHO, they

know what they are doing, they contain pandemics, that's how they know how to do it, they're doing an amazing job."

CBS NEWS: "What about the global implications of this because we were talking off-camera about Italy, there's China as well, there's some little outbreaks where you should avoid.

DR. DREW: "There are, I would look out where there flus out breaking bad to. I ended up getting the bird flu, I got H1N1 and it was horrible. It was no fun. ... There's certain things having been a physician for almost forty years, there are certain things I just know ... and there's certain things I just know by virtue of all the experience I've had and so when I saw this one coming, the corona, I thought I know how this is gonna go, I see kind of what it is and then I saw the excessive reaction the press, so I have to respond and then people, the weird part on social media towards me as people are angry with me, angry with me for trying to get them to see reality and calm down."

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