

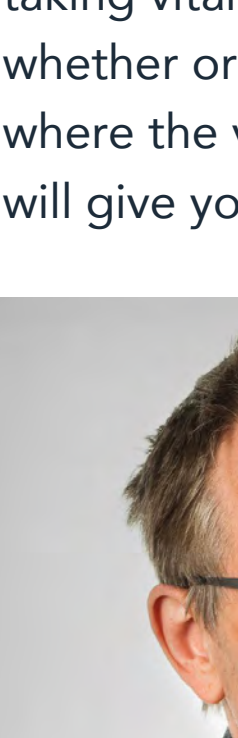
COVID-19:

What you need to know about the coronavirus and the race for the vaccine

By Dr Michael Mosley

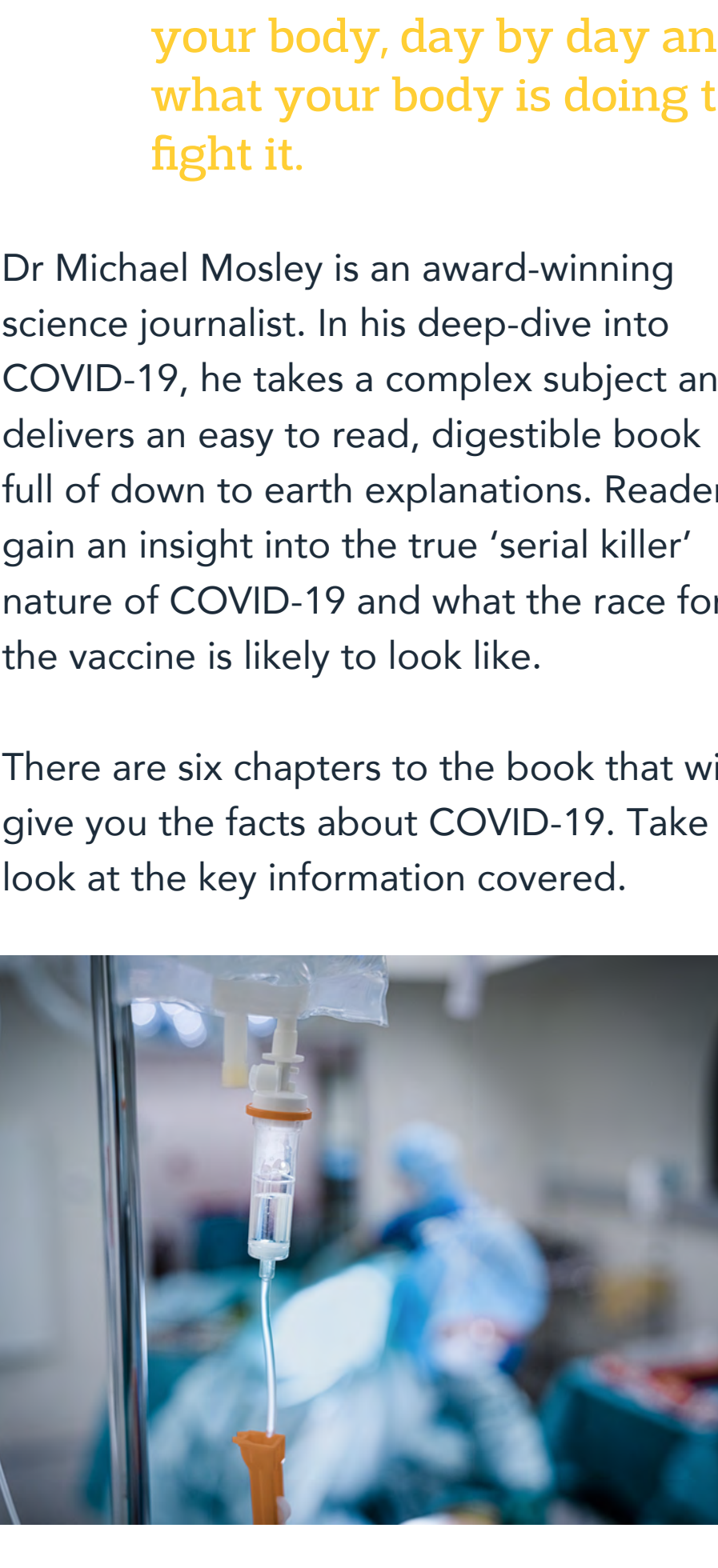


Want to know the secrets of the Coronavirus?



Are you after the facts about how it spreads, how it infects your body and how your immune system works to fight back?

If you have been overwhelmed by information but still have a lot of unanswered questions about whether taking vitamins will boost your immunity, whether or not you should wear a mask or where the virus really came from, this book will give you the answers.



DR MICHAEL MOSLEY

The book includes an excellent summary on what the virus does inside your body, day by day and what your body is doing to fight it.

Dr Michael Mosley is an award-winning science journalist. In his deep-dive into COVID-19, he takes a complex subject and delivers an easy to read, digestible book full of down to earth explanations. Readers gain an insight into the true ‘serial killer’ nature of COVID-19 and what the race for the vaccine is likely to look like.

There are six chapters to the book that will give you the facts about COVID-19. Take a look at the key information covered.



Portrait of a serial killer

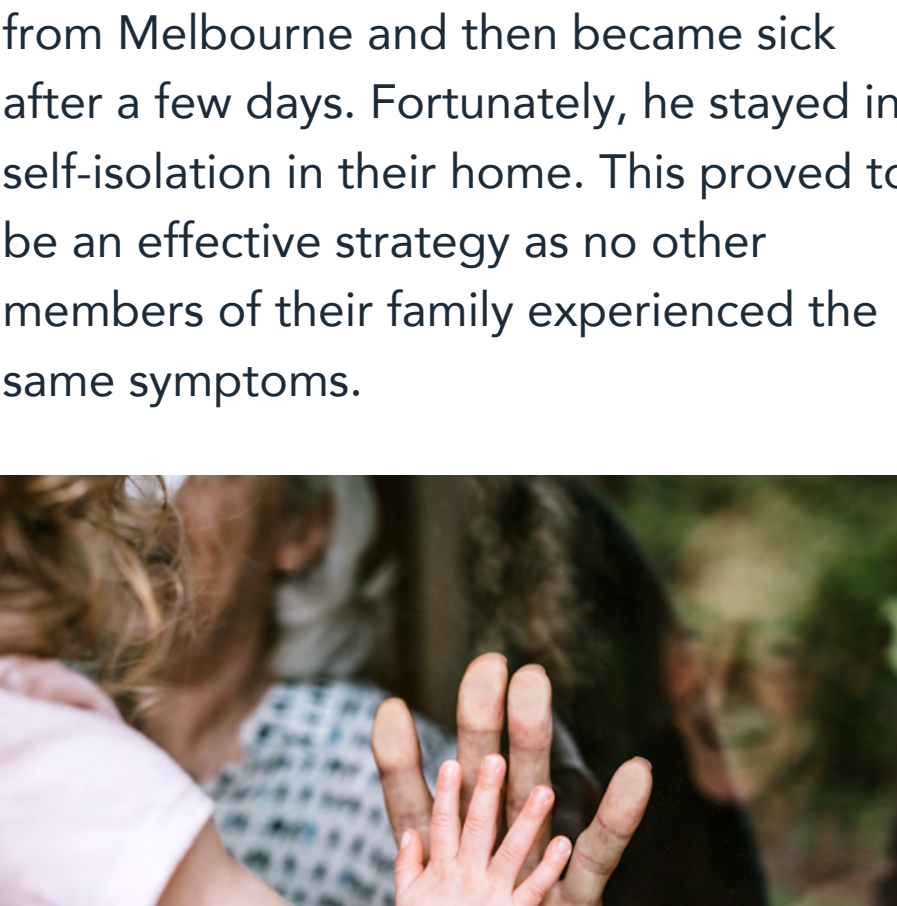
COVID-19 represents the greatest public health crisis of the last hundred years.

In the first section of Dr Mosely’s book, you will meet the enemy, find out how it spreads and learn how the virus is made up.

The author explains how the virus jumped from animals to humans and introduces a probable culprit, with some researchers suspecting the pangolin—an endangered mammal prized on the black market for its scales.

The book includes an excellent summary on what the virus does inside your body, day by day and what your body is doing to fight it. Our complex immune response is partly explained in this sentence:

“Macrophages: The great watchdogs of the immune system (are) scavengers whose job is to roam around and eat anything they come across.”

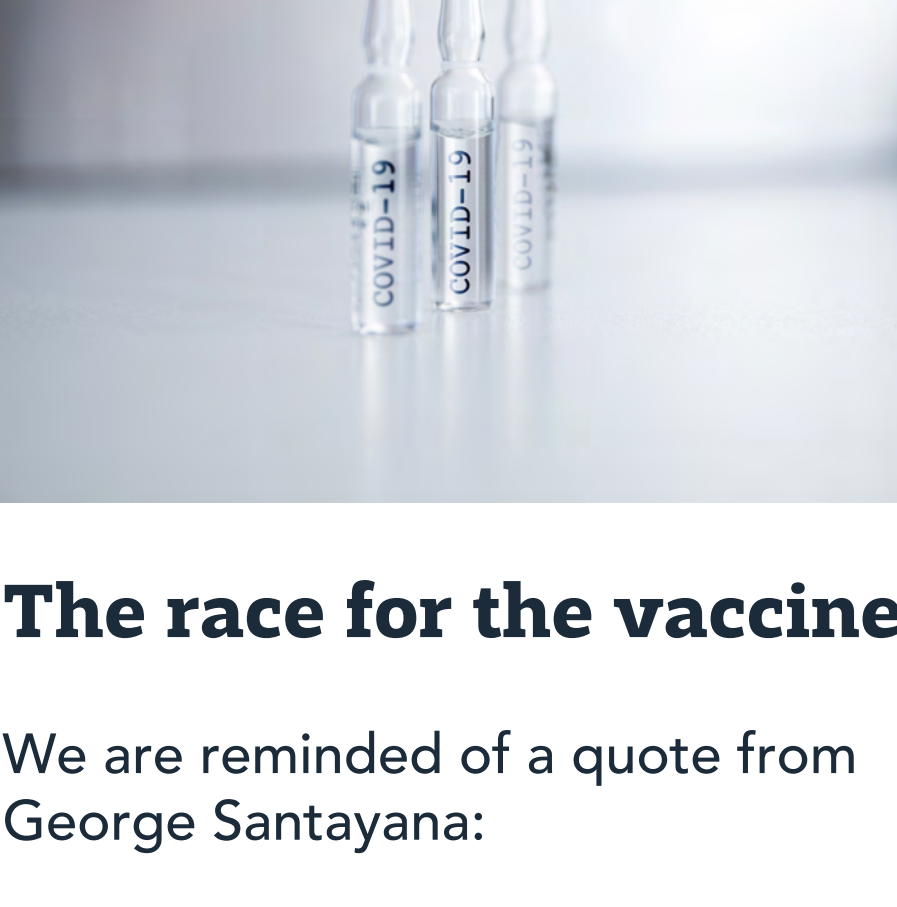


How the virus escaped

This section takes a timeline approach.

The history of the pandemic to date that we have lived through is outlined week by week. It is interesting to read that countries which had experience with MERS and SARS took early presentations of a new, pneumonia-like virus very seriously. Unfortunately, the rest of the world didn’t work it all out after the horse had bolted.

While the US border closure to non-Americans who had recently been to China was not the wrong move, the trouble was that at least 430,000 people travelled on direct flights from China to the US in the first three months of 2020 (according to The New York Times). This included 40,000 in the two months after President Trump imposed restrictions on such travel.



Frequently Asked Questions

In this chapter, Dr Mosley spends some time on the common questions he has been asked.

He covers areas including virology and the most likely places to get infected. His answer to the question ‘Should I wear a mask?’ is yes. He agrees with research that says wearing masks can potentially save a lot of lives.

Mosley’s personal insights into the virus also come from his own son who returned from Melbourne and then became sick after a few days. Fortunately, he stayed in self-isolation in their home. This proved to be an effective strategy as no other members of their family experienced the same symptoms.



How to bolster your immune system

Dr Mosley is well known as the author of six diet books, including the Fast 800 and the 5:2 diet.

With no vaccine on the immediate horizon, Dr Mosely shares his recommendations on avoiding a fatal encounter with COVID-19.

It is no surprise this section is full of evidence that supports the reduction of abdominal fat in favour of normalising blood sugar and reducing inflammation throughout the body. Other good health tips include switching to a Mediterranean style diet, getting good sleep, handling stress better as well as benefits of exercise and fermented foods.

While improving your overall health won’t give you immunity against COVID-19, it may boost your chances of recovery.

The race for the vaccine

We are reminded of a quote from George Santayana:

“To know your future, you must know your past.”

Consider the fascinating story of smallpox, the ‘speckled monster’. Early protection from this disease was offered with ‘variolation’, a dangerous method which introduced weakened but infectious scabs into the systems of healthy children. From there, increasingly advanced solutions were introduced, which worked to gradually and successfully eliminate smallpox from the planet.

Today, there are contenders working on over 100 different solutions for a COVID-19 vaccine. These solutions are currently being developed and tested throughout the world. Scientists at Oxford University and the Imperial College of London both believe it is possible to produce a vaccine before the end of 2020.

However, Dr Mosley warns us that there is likely to be a second wave of the virus. This will result in not just more infections but more mental illness in society. This, in turn, will lead to an increase in crime, suicide, and cause changes to the world as we know it.

Should you read this book?

If you’re after a detailed snapshot of COVID-19 and looking for information shared by a medical expert, you’ll find this to be a great reference book.

It is a quick read that’s full of clear explanations and historical references. The brief but informative chapters make it an easy way to get updated on all things COVID-19.

Despite the seriousness of the virus and worldwide pandemic, you’ll finish the book with a feeling that we are in good hands of the scientific community. You can be optimistic that the world is on a path to “develop more accurate tests and more effective treatments—as well as that all-important vaccine.”