

### **'It didn't have to be this way'**

Top Trump administration officials failed to *heed early warnings* to stock up on masks and other supplies to combat the crisis, and failed to *level with the public* about the severity of the threat. As a result, lives were endangered and lost.

The government also needs to develop a vaccine distribution plan right away to avoid shortages. Without rapid action, *the country is in for* the darkest winter in modern history.

However, some scientists oppose the widespread distribution of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine, two antimalaria drugs that President Trump publicly promotes. Neither had been shown to do Covid-19 patients any good (they still haven't), and both carry significant risks.

### **Russian doctors are falling ill at an alarming rate**

Medical workers *on the front lines* in Russia are becoming infected with the coronavirus in large numbers. At least 180 have died so far, and thousands more have fallen ill.

Desperate stories are emerging from inside Russian hospitals. At one Moscow facility, three out of four staff members of one department became sick. Three doctors who complained about hospital conditions have died falling from windows in recent weeks; they are believed to have been possible stress-related suicides, not homicides.

Our Moscow correspondent Anton Troianovski said the elevated death rate among medical workers *stems from a dire shortage of protective gear* and a "very rigid, top-down bureaucratic system" in the country that puts out contradictory information and does not allow local leaders to take the initiative in responding to the fast-moving crisis.

Russia has announced a total of 252,245 confirmed coronavirus infections, more than any other country except the United States. Even so, President Vladimir Putin *lifted* a

*nationwide lockdown* on Monday, saying that the country's hospitals were prepared and that doctors had everything they needed.

"Putin and the government have essentially declared that the worst is over and it's time to start going back to normal," Anton told us. "But how can you go back to normal when you still have doctors getting sick and dying at such dreadful levels?"

### **Virus risks fail to fade, as symptoms and cases grow**

Even in hard-hit countries, *small fractions of the population* have caught the coronavirus so far, new studies in England, Spain and France show. On the surface, that's good news. But it's also *sobering evidence* that the vast majority of people may still be susceptible to infection.

The findings support experts' warnings that populations are still far from achieving "*herd immunity*," which occurs when enough people are resistant to slow a virus's spread.

And because so many people are susceptible, public health officials fear that relaxing social distancing rules risks causing new waves of the pandemic.