

AmCham Turkey COVID-19 Webinar Series

Webinar I: "Recent Developments Pertaining to the Covid-19 Outbreak"

Guest Speaker: Derya Unutmaz, Professor of Immunology, The Jackson Laboratory, U.S.

April 2nd, 2020

Key Take-aways

Professor Derya Unutmaz deems COVID-19 as the “trauma of modern history” and shares that the world will be split into two as before and after COVID-19, explaining the difference through governments investing in healthcare systems rather than military defense in the post-COVID-19 period. A positive takeaway from this trauma, according to Professor Derya Unutmaz, is that now, “we understand the importance of healthcare”.

Here are the key takeaways from the meeting:

- All common cold cases have a 30% chance of being coronavirus.
- COVID-19 belongs to a larger family of coronaviruses, including SARS and MERS which have a higher fatality rate than COVID-19 with around 1.8% death rate.
- 80% of infected COVID-19 patients have treated themselves and recovered at home.
- Antibodies in the blood of recovered COVID-19 patients will be very valuable in moving forward.
 - Germany is considering ‘COVID-19 Immunity Certificates’, designed to detect whether a person has developed antibodies to the novel coronavirus.
- Second or third wave of COVID-19 appears very likely as it cannot be said that the epidemic will completely die down by this summer. It can only be kept under control.
- We can only see the response to a vaccine as we test it on humans. The different phases of clinical research in the development of a vaccine are lengthy processes. It will likely take more than a year before a vaccine is available for the public.
- A lot of drugs are being tested against the COVID-19 (both old and new), the results of which we will see in a couple of months. The production of synthetic versions of COVID-19 antibodies is expensive and time-consuming, thus remains a disadvantaged method.
- Although official data from China suggests mid-December, we may assume that the disease started as of November. The data provided by South Korea is very robust and reliable owing to its very extensive testing.
- Maintaining a healthy diet (refrained from sugar, carbohydrates and processed foods), not smoking and consuming Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D are known to boost the immune system.
- For more accurate information on COVID-19, Prof. Unutmaz recommends the following links:
 - <https://www.massgeneral.org/news/coronavirus/treatment-guidances>
 - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/pages/coronavirus-alert>
 - <https://www.ynhhs.org/patient-care/covid-19.aspx>
 - <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>
 - <https://www.covid19-druginteractions.org>
 - <https://www.sciencemag.org/coronavirus-research-commentary-and-news#>