

# **Top Hong Kong medical expert predicts more than half the global population will contract coronavirus**

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The rapidly spreading coronavirus may infect more than 60% of the global population, a top Hong Kong medical expert said this week.

Epidemiologist Gabriel Leung, the chair of public health medicine at Hong Kong University, told The Guardian on Tuesday that experts believe each infected person will pass on the disease to 2.5 additional people — meaning the disease’s “attack rate” would be 60% to 80%.

“Sixty percent of the world’s population is an awfully big number,” Leung said.

Leung believes the disease’s fatality rate will eventually hover around 1%. If Leung’s predictions are correct, that means upwards of 40 million people will die from coronavirus.

“Is 60 to 80% of the world’s population going to get infected? Maybe not. Maybe this will come in waves. Maybe the virus is going to attenuate its lethality because it certainly doesn’t help it if it kills everybody in its path because it will get killed as well,” Leung said.

According to The Guardian, Leung is one of the world experts on coronavirus and played a “major role” during the SARS outbreak in 2002-2003.

Last month, Leung and a team of medical experts published a paper that claimed the number of reported coronavirus cases is significantly too low and that the disease is likely doubling every 6.4 days.

The reported coronavirus death toll rose above 1,000 people this week. All but two fatalities have been in China; the other two occurred in the Philippines and Hong Kong.

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