Twitter Thread by Nick Hudson ■



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@NickHudsonCT

Here is another very enjoyable conversation, with @Pandata19's scientific advisory board member, Dr Jay Bhattacharya. Key ideas in this thread.

We are making world-changing decisions on the basis of evidence that is not very good. Vast scientific evidence tells us that infection fatality rates are much lower than originally expected. A small fraction of people get severe illness. 2/10

The scientific community has been resistant to evidence not supporting the majoritarian view, preferring instead to gin up panic, focusing on the worst case for everything the virus does & the best case for everything lockdowns do, and ignoring the range of uncertainty. 3/10

Academe is a strange place now, with debate stifled. But there's a sense some are opening up to considering opposing views. This is key, since suppression of views stops knowledge from progressing—the end of science. Public health norms of unified messaging complicate this. 4/10

Why did we, from the start, assume we knew nothing about this virus, instead of assuming a reasonable prior? Low susceptibility was evident early on. Assuming any virus is new is hard to square with our deep-time co-evolution with viruses, & their slow evolution. 5/10

A lot of smart people changed their minds about what to do in March, and need to change them back. Our hope has to be that people will lose respect for scientific institutions, and not for science itself. 6/10

From the first day Jay heard about lockdowns, they felt like a violation of everything he knew about public health. Shutting down of schools has been their most shocking manifestation. 7/10

Asymptomatic people and children are at least much less efficient at transmitting. B- and T-cell responses persist after antibody levels have waned, so it is unlikely that people who are reinfected will get severely sick. 8/10

The issue of Long Covid is overstated by the media. Similar to the flu, there are occasional extra-respiratory manifestations, but they appear to be relatively uncommon and seldom serious. 9/10

Fear of the disease prevents young, healthy people from doing the usual thing & shouldering the burden of infection, so the elderly are spared ending up in the exposed group. Then there is an interesting discussion about vaccinations, including who should seek them. Enjoy! 10/10