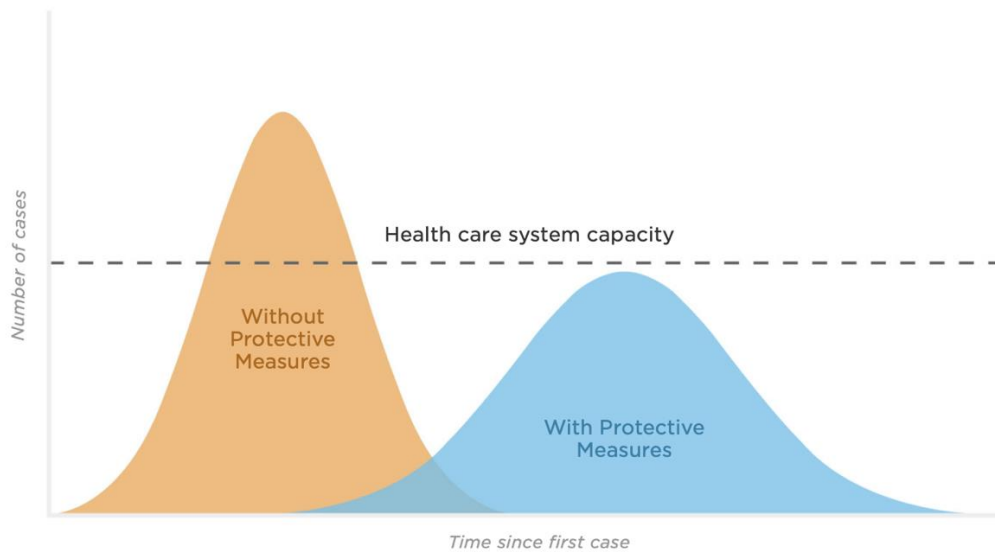


Why are social distancing and strict limits on social gathering so important? I am hopeful that by appreciating the answers to these questions we, as a community, will begin to realize how our actions can dramatically affect the impact the novel coronavirus has on others. What we do right now really matters. This is not about reducing the total number of individuals who get sick. This is about reducing the number of individuals who get sick at one particular time because our healthcare system has capacity limitations. While our hospitals have plans to handle traditional “surge,” they do not have anywhere near what is projected in the case of the novel coronavirus. This is the difference between having enough critical care beds and ventilators to care for our loved ones when they need them the most versus a very grim alternative. We have learned this by witnessing what is happening in other affected countries. The following graph “Flattening the Curve” illustrates the value of aggressive protective measures. Because it cannot be said enough, the best protective measures we can take are social distancing, limits on social gathering and thorough handwashing.



Source: CDC, Drew Harris

Credit: Connie Hanzhang Jin/NPR