Editorial: Nutrition and COVID-19

Mario J. Soares¹ · Manfred J. Müller²

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The sudden appearance of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China and its quick worldwide transmission has all of us in the grips of a deadly pandemic, last seen with the Spanish Flu of 1918. Front-line healthcare workers and public health experts around the globe, battle to save lives and prevent further cases. Although some pharmacological studies and even vaccine trials are underway, the COVID-19 pandemic presents us with incomplete knowledge and stretches the limits of best medicine. As a consequence, COVID-19 brings us back to the historical rules of prophylaxis recommended by old heroes of medicine like Christoph Hufeland (1762–1836), Ignaz Semmelweis (1818–1865) and Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902). Thus, today, preventing COVID-19 is all about hand washing, wearing facemasks, keeping a

safe distance from each other and quarantine. It is tempting to speculate that this COVID-19 infection may also become an issue of clinical nutrition. This may relate to prevention of the infection, treatment of infection-associated malnutrition and possibly the infection itself. In addition, long-time quarantine may add to unhealthy behaviours including unhealthy eating practices and, thus, may increase the risk of non communicable diseases. There is, however, little hard evidence of nutritional and other allied health approaches in assisting COVID-19 treatment or its management. We recognize that these will take time through more formal research designs. In this special issue, we present a small collection of papers that address some aspects related to COVID-19 infection.

✉ Mario J. Soares
m.soares@curtin.edu.au

✉ Manfred J. Müller
mmueller@nutrfoodsc.uni-kiel.de

¹ Curtin University, School of Public Health, Perth, WA, Australia

² Institute of Human Nutrition and Food Sciences, Christian Albrechts Universität zu, Kiel, Germany