

# *Scientific American* and the lessons the Harvard Professor failed to learn “for fighting COVID-19”

Taiwan, China, and New Zealand have suppressed, contained and eradicated the Covid-19 pandemic. These countries have accomplished this feat not with drugs or vaccines but with tried and true Public Health Science: Mass testing, contact tracing and strict quarantine (isolation). Despite this obvious fact a major article has just appeared in *Scientific American*, October, 2020, which ignores this reality.

Doctor Haseltine, former Harvard Medical School professor, writes “What we learned from AIDS”, lessons for fighting COVID-19. After 40 years of the HIV pandemic, 1.7 million people around the world and 40,000 in the US still get

infected every year with HIV. Dr. Haseltine, who has funded many biotech companies, writes that “the hope of beating COVID-19” lies with vaccine development, treatments with drugs and changing human behavior. Surprisingly the author concludes the article by saying that he was in Wuhan, China at a Health Summit in November 2019. Some weeks after returning home he got a call from Wuhan, and was informed that China was aggressively confronting the COVID-19 epidemic with mass **testing, contact tracing and strict quarantine (isolation)**. Dr. Haseltine acknowledges “our failure to contain this pandemic”. He also has failed to learn the most important lessons--only a robust public health infrastructure can protect the population and contain, suppress and eradicate an infectious pandemic. The first order of business is **prevention of infection**. Investment and commitment to a Public Health Infrastructure is essential to protect the public and prevent millions of infections, disease and deaths. Treatments and vaccine are helpful additions and

make biotech and pharmaceutical corporations billions in profits, *but cannot prevent a new pandemic.*

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