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U.S. Supreme Court’s Ginsburg, a liberal dynamo, championed women’s rights



FILE PHOTO: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg attends the lunch session of The Women’s Conference in Long Beach, California October 26, 2010. REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni/ File Photo

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Ruth Bader Ginsburg became a heroine to the American left after overcoming entrenched sexism in the legal profession to ascend to the U.S. Supreme Court, where she championed gender equality and other liberal causes during 27 years on the bench. Ginsburg, who died on Friday at age 87 of complications from pancreatic cancer, was a fierce advocate for women’s rights - winning major gender-discrimination cases before the Supreme Court - before being appointed to the top U.S. judicial body by Democratic President Bill Clinton in 1993. The diminutive dynamo became the court’s leading liberal voice.

Rising from a working-class family in New York City’s borough of Brooklyn, Ginsburg overcame hostility toward women in the male-dominated worlds of law school and the legal profession to become just the second woman ever to serve on the nine-member Supreme Court.

During her final years on the court, Ginsburg became something of a pop icon for American liberals, the subject of the 2018 feature film “On the Basis

of Sex,” the 2018 Academy Award-nominated documentary “RBG” and sketches on the popular TV show “Saturday Night Live” - even inspiring an action figure.

Her small stature - she stood 5-foot, 1-inch tall (155 cm) - and frailty in later years belied an outsize persona and clout. Fans called her “The Notorious R.B.G.,” inspired by the late American rapper The Notorious B.I.G.

“I ask no favor for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks,” Ginsburg said in the documentary, summing up her lifelong work toward gender equality.

Ginsburg was a reliable vote in favor of liberal causes on the court on other issues as well including defending abortion rights, expanding gay rights, preserving the Obamacare healthcare law, and advancing the rights of racial minorities the poor and disenfranchised.

Her death gives Republican President Donald Trump the opportunity to make his third appointment to the court and expand its conservative majority to 6-3.

Ginsburg had experienced a series of

health issues. In July she disclosed she had a recurrence of cancer after bouts with pancreatic cancer in 2019 and 2009. She also survived bouts with lung cancer in 2018 and colon cancer in 1999.

Even amid these health scares, she remained vigorous, seen in the 2018 documentary working out and lifting weights with a personal trainer while donning a blue sweatshirt emblazoned with the words “SUPER DIVA.”

President Jimmy Carter made Ginsburg a federal appellate judge in 1980 and Clinton elevated her to the Supreme Court 13 years later. She joined Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, who became the first woman justice in 1981, on the bench. During her tenure, two more women were named to the high court: Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

When asked how many women there should be on the court, Ginsburg, with an impish smile, always gave the same answer: “Nine.”

Before joining the judiciary, Ginsburg was an intellectually fierce lawyer in New York and New Jersey who endured the death of her mother shortly before

her high school graduation and went on to be elected to the law reviews at both Harvard and Columbia Law Schools. In the 1970s, she won five of six gender discrimination cases she argued before the Supreme Court, in fields as varied as military and Social Security benefits, property tax and rules governing jury duty.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
By 2010, after the retirement of more senior liberals, she became leader of the court’s liberal wing.

Ginsburg’s most well-known majority opinion came in 1996 when the court invalidated the state-run Virginia Military Institute’s exclusion of women. Expansively interpreting the Constitution’s equality guarantee, Ginsburg wrote that while Virginia “serves the state’s sons, it makes no provision whatever for her daughters. That is not equal protection.”

She also became more outspoken in the media, at one point finding herself in a war of words with Trump after calling him a “faker” during the 2016 presidential campaign. Trump responded by saying “her mind is shot” and called on Ginsburg to quit. She later voiced regret

over making her comments. In 2018, Ginsburg voiced support for the #MeToo movement, which focused on women who had endured sexual assault or harassment, on the eve of a Senate hearing into allegations of sexual misconduct by Trump’s nominee to the court, Brett Kavanaugh.

Ginsburg and the other liberal justices had some major successes toward the end of her tenure, including the landmark 2015 ruling legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide, a 2016 decision upholding the use of race as a factor in university admissions, and rulings in 2016 and 2020 striking down abortion restrictions in Louisiana and Texas.

While Democratic President Barack Obama was in office, she rebuffed suggestions from some fellow liberals that she should have retired and let him replace her to ensure the ideological balance of the court did not shift further to the right. A PASSION FOR OPERA
Ginsburg enjoyed a close friendship with conservative Justice Antonin Scalia despite their ideological differences. The former law professors traveled abroad together, shared a passion for opera and for decades spent New Year’s Eve at a dinner party in Ginsburg’s Watergate apartment in Washington. Scalia, who died in 2016, said Ginsburg would be remembered for her work on women’s rights and attention to fair civil procedure. “She is a tigress on civil procedure,” Scalia told Reuters. “She will take a lawyer who is making a ridiculous argument and just shake him like a dog with a bone. She has done more to shape the law in this field than any other justice on this court.”



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Stay Home!

BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

Dr. Fauci Advises To Get Flu Shot Later – Especially For The Elderly Or People With Weakened Immune Systems



Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, arrives to testify before the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hearing in Washington, D.C., July 31, 2020. (Photo/Kevin Dietsch | Pool | Reuters)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

“You really should get a flu shot.” That’s what top infectious disease specialist Dr. Anthony Fauci told actress Jennifer Garner during an Instagram Live last Thursday. Fauci is strategic about getting his own flu shot. He told Garner he gets the vaccine “towards the middle and end of October.” “I wouldn’t necessarily get it now, in September, because there is evidence that, in fact, the immunity might wear off when you get to February and early March...,” he said, calling the advice his “unofficial” suggestion on timing. Getting a flu vaccine is especially important this year, according to experts, because flu season will overlap with what may be a difficult fall and winter with respect to Covid-19. Given that, Fauci understands people may worry about the supply of the flu vaccines running out if they wait, but that scenario is

“really unlikely,” because “every year there’s a certain [amount] of flu shots that we just don’t use,” he told Garner.



Dr. David Hirschwerk, an infectious disease specialist at Northwell Health, agrees that waning immunity after an early flu shot can be a concern. In particular, he suggests that people who are immunocompromised or elderly should wait a “little longer before getting vaccinated.” However, if you are young and healthy, “you can get the flu shot any time,”

Hirschwerk tells CNBC Make It. “From year to year it can be challenging to know when exactly the influenza season begins and many experts have advised September and October are optimal times to get the flu shot,” he said.

Related

Fauci: “Prepare to ‘hunker down’ until 2021”

“Don’t ever, ever underestimate the potential of the pandemic. And don’t try and look at the rosy side of things.” So says Dr. Anthony Fauci. Fauci made the comment on Thursday during a panel discussion with doctors from Harvard Medical School. Fauci, a White House advisor and director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, warned Americans that they need to prepare for a second wave of Covid-19 infections as flu season approaches. “We need to hunker down and get through this fall and winter because it’s not going to be easy,” Fauci told Harvard Medical School.



Fauci, a White House advisor and director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, warned Americans that they need to prepare for a second wave of Covid-19 infections as flu season approaches. Fauci noted that while new Covid-19 cases have decreased to less than 40,000 cases per day in the U.S. (a 16% decrease from two weeks ago, according to a New York Times database), that number is still “an unacceptably baseline,” he said. “We’ve got to get it down, I’d like to see it 10,000 or less, hopefully less,” he added. As of Friday morning, more than 6.4 million people have been infected with Covid-19 in the U.S. and at least 187,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins.

Despite the gloomy outlook, Fauci said Covid-19 vaccine trials are “progressing very well” and he is hopefully that one will be available by the end of the year or by early 2021. Fauci’s comments come days after audio tapes were released by journalist Bob Woodward of President Donald Trump admitting that he downplayed the Covid-19 threat because he didn’t want “to create a panic.” (Courtesy cnbc.com)

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES
09/19/2020 CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Pandemic Cancels Texas African Business Summit

The International Trade Center planned to sponsor the Texas African Business Summit this fall, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, we will have to cancel the event.

Last year on September 16, President Alpha Conde of the West African country of Guinea came to Houston for an official visit. We had the honor to welcome him and seventeen of his cabinet members to my house. He promised me and the President of ITC, Hon. Gezahgen Kebede, to participate this year in the Texas African Business Summit. We also invited many other heads of state from African countries to join us when they were at the United Nations General Assembly meetings in New York. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel the

summit this year.

In the last fifteen years, the ITC has provided an international stage to all countries and has welcomed hundreds of foreign visitors to Houston, especially from Africa. We are very proud that we have built this bridge between Texas and the world.

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The coronavirus pandemic has changed the world and our lifestyle. The ITC still

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Editor's Choice



An image of Ruth Bader Ginsburg is projected onto the New York State Civil Supreme Court building in Manhattan, New York City, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



A man kneels as he brings a megaphone to a vigil on the steps of the Supreme Court following the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago



A bouquet of flowers is left outside of the Supreme Court following the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago



The American flag flies at half staff following the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, outside of the Supreme Court, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago



A person places flowers in front of a painting in a storefront on Broadway of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Ruth Bader Ginsburg who passed away in Manhattan, New York City, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



People gather in front of the Supreme Court following the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago



People light candles in front of the Supreme Court following the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago



A pillow resembling Ruth Bader Ginsburg, is placed on the steps of the Supreme Court, following her death, in Washington, September 18, 2020. REUTERS/AI Drago

A Small Chinese Study Suggests “Preliminary Evidence” Of Protection, But With Many Caveats

Do Eyeglasses Offer Unseen Benefits Against COVID-19?



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

A smaller proportion of patients with COVID-19 reported wearing eyeglasses daily than the rate of myopia in the general population, suggesting a potential inverse relationship between glasses and contracting the virus, a small observational study in China found. Approximately 5.8% of COVID-19 inpatients (95% CI 3.0%-8.6%) wore glasses for more than 8 hours a day, while the myopia rate in prior research was 31.5%, offering “preliminary evidence” that patients who wore eyeglasses may be less susceptible to COVID-19, reported Yiping Wei, MD, PhD, of the Second Affiliated Hospital of Nanchang University, and colleagues, writing in JAMA Ophthalmology. So, does this mean everyone should wear eye protection, including a face shield, to prevent transmission of COVID-19? Not exactly, said an accompanying editorial by Lisa Maragakis, MD, of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, who cautioned not to infer “a causal relationship from a single observational study.”



Maragakis lists numerous caveats to the research, including that data for the general population comparison group was from a decades-old study in a different region of China, as well as confounding variables having nothing to do with wearing glasses. Moreover, since this study took place early in the pandemic (January 27 to March 13), there was no way to assess the impact of non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as face masks and hand hygiene. Despite this, Maragakis offered a potential reason eyeglasses could provide some protection from the virus. “They may serve as a partial barrier that reduces the inoculum of virus in a manner

similar to what has been observed for cloth masks,” she wrote, citing a recent preclinical study on masks that found in addition to protecting others, “cloth masks may also reduce the viral inoculum that the mask wearer inhales and thereby contribute to lessening the severity of the disease that subsequently develops.” Maragakis said this would mean there would be a stronger protective effect from goggles or a face shield, but future studies are needed to show that effect.



Wei and colleagues offered a biological explanation -- namely that angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 is on the ocular surface, where SARS-CoV-2 can enter the human body. It may also be transported to “the nasal and nasopharyngeal mucosa through continuous tear irrigation of the lacrimal duct, causing respiratory infection.” Indeed, ocular manifestations of SARS-CoV-2 were reported, and the virus was detected in patient tears. The researchers examined data from 276 inpatients with COVID-19 at a single medical center. Median age was 51, and 56% were men. Most patients were described as “moderately ill,” with 82% reporting fever and 79% reporting cough, while half reported fatigue. About a third had hypertension. Overall, 10.9% of COVID-19 patients wore glasses, including 16 cases of myopia and 14 cases of presbyopia. No patients wore contact lenses or underwent refractive surgery, and all 16 patients who wore eyeglasses for 8 hours or more had myopia.



Prior research cited as comparison was a rate

of myopia in students ages 7-22 in Hubei province. The researchers said the students would now be age 42-57, and that is “close to the median age” of COVID-19 patients. The investigators noted that the previous study also included a small number of people with myopia who did not wear eyeglasses, but information on these people was lacking, which “partly affected the integrity and validity of our data.” (Courtesy https://www.medpagetoday.com/)

Related

Do Eyeglasses Offer Protection Against COVID-19?

(HealthDay News) -- Eyeglasses keep you from tripping over footstools and walking into walls, but they also might have a side benefit to spark envy among those with 20/20 vision. People who wear glasses every day might be less susceptible to COVID-19 infection, a Chinese study reports. Only about 6% of 276 patients hospitalized for COVID-19 at Suizhou Zengdu Hospital in China needed to wear glasses daily due to their nearsightedness. But the proportion of nearsighted people in Hubei province, where the hospital is located, is much higher -- around 32%, according to the study.



Eyeglasses might foil COVID-19 infection because they “prevent or discourage wearers from touching their eyes, thus avoiding transferring the virus from the hands to the eyes,” Dr. Yiping Wei, of the Second Affiliated Hospital of Nanchang University, and colleagues speculated. Eye protection also could potentially reduce the risk of virus-laden airborne droplets contacting the eyes, the study authors said in the report published online Sept. 16 in JAMA Ophthalmology. However, eyeglass wearers who did contract COVID-19 fell just as sick as those with normal vision, the

findings showed. “Although this is an observational study and you cannot infer anything definitive from it, there is a suggestion that eye protection of any sort may decrease your risk of getting infected,” said Dr. Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar with the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, in Baltimore. “This needs to be confirmed with other observational studies and more formal studies of, for example, face shield use. However, it is increasingly being noted that eye protection is important,” Adalja added.



Many hospitals -- including Mount Sinai South Nassau in Oceanside, N.Y. -- require doctors, nurses and visitors to wear goggles or a face shield along with a mask to fully protect them from SARS-CoV-2, said Dr. Aaron Glatt, chairman of medicine and chief epidemiologist. “Because we do make that a mandate, people frequently ask, ‘If I wear glasses, is that good enough?’ And our answer is no,” Glatt said. Regular prescription glasses don’t completely cover the eyes as do goggles or face shields, he noted. (Courtesy https://www.webmd.com/ and HealthDay)

Movie poster for "Movie Under the Stars for the Alief Community". It features a blue background with yellow stars and a clapperboard. The text includes: "E.L. KINGSLEY FOUNDATION PRESENTS A MOVIE UNDER THE STARS FOR THE ALIEF COMMUNITY", "SEPTEMBER 26, 2020 SHOWTIME: 7 PM", "DON'T FORGET YOUR BLANKET & LAWN CHAIR", "WHERE: MCCLENDON PARK 3770 SUMMIT VALLEY DR. HOUSTON, TX 77082", "MASK UP!", and logos for various sponsors like Louie's, E.L. Kingsley Foundation, and others.

Advertisement for Dr. Tang Ho, M.D., M.Sc., a facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon. It includes his photo, a list of services (rhinoplasty, blepharoplasty, etc.), and contact information for his clinic in Houston.

Advertisement for Bellaire Dental, featuring Dr. Li Dongfang (DDS MS PHD). It lists services like general dentistry, orthodontics, and emergency care, and provides the clinic's address and phone number.

Advertisement for Dr. Jerry Tsao, M.D., a family physician. It includes his photo, mentions his fluency in Chinese and English, and provides his clinic's address and contact details.

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Advertisement for Welcome Family Medicine, P.A., featuring Dr. Xudong Xu and Dr. Yongfang Chen. It lists various medical services, accepts Medicare/Medicaid, and provides the clinic's address and phone number.

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