

*As the world steps back, healthcare professionals from around the globe are going above and beyond to serve those in need during this COVID-19 crisis. Dr. Kristofer Smith, naviHealth's President of Home-Based Medical Care, is one of these dedicated workers, tirelessly answering the call to volunteer for the cause despite not practicing acute care medicine in over a decade. These are his daily stories - uncut and untouched, as told from the front lines.*

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## **Day 5 - If food is love**

If food is love, then we are all rich. As if channeling [Tomie dePaola's memorable children's book Strega Nona](#), donations of food overflow our breakrooms. And much like the famous story, the currency is largely carbohydrates. The generosity has been so plentiful that for days we have had a grateful family who has wanted to buy the clinical staff lunch. Awkwardly, we have been unable to take them up on their offer as others beat them to it.



For breakfast, lunch and dinner we can choose from bagels, pastries, cookies, chocolates, barbeque, pizza, more pizza, pasta, gyros - and what has become the most sought-after delicacy - salads. It is hard for non-clinical folks to participate in the health care response, though clearly many would, so food has become a vehicle for contributing, for finding meaning during such an unusual time. We are thankful.

On the unit, too, food is love. Many patients have been in the hospital for days even weeks. The familiar is a memory. So, for those who will be with us a few days, we start with a simple question: what do you like to eat?

As a result of the coronavirus, many patients can't taste their foods, but many can. Ice cream is the most common request; orange juice says another. "McDonald's!" our patient

with diabetes smiles hopefully. And without any prompting, the staff bring these little delights to our patients. It is done quietly, with no expectation for praise. And our patients are thankful - that is enough.

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