



Artist Unknown. Relief showing Helios, sun god in the Greco-Roman mythology (detail) (c.390–315 BCE). Marble. 33.8 in × 33.9 in × 8 5/8 in/85.8 cm × 86.3 cm. From Wikimedia Commons. Holding institution: Pergamon-Museum, Berlin, Germany.

The Concept of the Crown and Its Potential Role in the Downfall of Coronavirus

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Coronavirus virions are spherical or variable in shape and composed of an outer layer of lipid covered with a crown of club-shaped peplomers or spikes. Within each spike is a helical single-stranded RNA-containing structural protein. Although the term *corona* was first used in English in the 1500s,

it was borrowed directly from the Latin word for “crown.” *Corona* is derived from the Ancient Greek κορώνη (*korōnē*), meaning “garland” or “wreath,” coming from a proto-Indo-European root, *sker-* or *ker-*, meaning “to turn” or “to bend.”

In the 1967 initial description of an electron microscopic image of a human common cold virus, June Almeida (née Hart) and David Tyrrell described the surface of coronavirus particles as being “covered with a distinct layer of projections roughly 200 Å [20 nm] long....[with] a narrow stalk

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