

IMPACT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS ON MENTAL HEALTH

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To the Editor,

the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted nearly every aspect of our lives [1], including our mental health. The lockdowns and other measures put in place to slow the spread of the virus have brought about unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety, and depression [2, 3]. The pandemic has disrupted our daily routines, caused financial uncertainty, and increased our fear of the virus [4]. All of these factors have combined to create a perfect storm of negative mental health effects [5].

The social isolation that comes with lockdowns has been particularly devastating for many people. Without the ability to see friends and family, or participate in social activities, many people have found themselves feeling lonely and disconnected [6]. The lack of physical interaction has also contributed to feelings of anxiety and depression, as we are social creatures that thrive on connections with others.

Financial uncertainty is another major stressor that has arisen as a result of the pandemic. With many people losing their jobs or facing pay cuts, the fear of not being able to provide for themselves or their families has taken a toll on their mental health [7]. The stress of financial insecurity can cause feelings of anxiety and depression, and can also lead to substance abuse and other negative coping mechanisms.

The fear of the virus itself has also had a significant impact on mental health. The constant media coverage of the pandemic and its effects can

be overwhelming, leading to feelings of anxiety and worry [8, 9]. Additionally, the fear of getting sick or passing the virus on to others can be a constant source of stress.

The disruption of daily routines has also contributed to negative mental health effects. Many people have found themselves struggling to maintain a healthy work-life balance, as they try to balance the demands of work, family, and self-care [10, 11]. Additionally, increased screen time as a result of remote work or school has been linked to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Finally, the decreased access to mental health services has also had a negative impact. Many people who might have otherwise sought help for their mental health struggles are unable to do so because of lockdowns and other restrictions. This lack of access to care can make it even harder for people to cope with the mental health effects of the pandemic.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns have had a profound impact on our mental health. It is important that we prioritize our mental well-being and seek support when necessary. Whether it's through therapy, exercise, or simply connecting with loved ones, taking care of our mental health is critical for our overall well-being.

Conflict of interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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