

# Changes in the status of COVID-19 over time necessitate major changes in academics

Ken Inoue<sup>1</sup>, Sadayuki Hashioka<sup>2</sup>, Takuji Inagaki<sup>2</sup>, Haruo Takeshita<sup>2</sup>,  
 Yasuyuki Fujita<sup>2</sup>, Yoshiyuki Ohira<sup>3, 4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kochi University, Kochi, Japan

<sup>2</sup>Shimane University, Shimane, Japan

<sup>3</sup>International University of Health and Welfare, School of Medicine, Chiba, Japan

<sup>4</sup>Chiba University Hospital, Chiba, Japan

Over 20 million people worldwide have contracted COVID-19, and over 750,000 have died; the disease poses a major problem for society (as of August 15, 2020) [1]. In Japan, over 53,000 people have contracted COVID-19 thus far (as of August 14, 2020) [2], and it has killed over 1,000 people (as of August 14, 2020) [3]. Japan gradually declared a state of emergency at the national level, and it declared a nationwide state of emergency in April 2020. Later, the state of emergency was gradually rescinded based on epidemiological trends, and the nationwide state of emergency was rescinded in late May 2020. Starting on March 2, 2020, the government requested that elementary, middle, and high schools and special needs schools nationwide close temporarily (enforcement was left to the discretion of individual schools and local municipalities). Most schools closed, and over 80% of all schools were closed in mid-May 2020 [4]. Some schools began to resume classes by staggering attendance, but schools are now conducting classes as normal. Japan has 47 prefectures and major metropolitan areas. When those prefectures were asked whether they plan to conduct the general entrance examination

for prefectural high schools scheduled for the spring of 2021, 19 prefectures answered that the examination would take place “as usual”, 21 answered that it would take place “with modifications (a smaller scope of problems or multiple-choice options based on how much students had learned)”, and 7 answered that the item of the examination was “yet to be determined” [5]. COVID-19 is having a major impact on student learning. Current circumstances need to be fully understood, and in the future students will need both short-term and medium-term assistance to compensate for the delayed learning due to COVID-19.

## REFERENCES

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