

WHO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SITUATION REPORT-72

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

Total (new) cases in
last 24 hours

Globally

823 626 confirmed (72 736)

40 598 deaths (4193)

Western Pacific Region

106 422 confirmed (1554)

3701 deaths (30)

European Region

464 212 confirmed (40 266)

30 089 deaths (3395)

South-East Asia Region

5175 confirmed (960)

195 deaths (29)

Eastern Mediterranean Region

54 281 confirmed (3932)

3115 deaths (161)

Region of the Americas

188 751 confirmed (25 737)

3400 deaths (564)

African Region

4073 confirmed (287)

91 deaths (14)



Daily wagers are already feeling the impact of the lockdowns—*M Arif, White Star*

Global News

- Pandemic could create global food shortage.
- New estimates show 25% to 50% of coronavirus carriers don't even feel sick and can infect others blindly.
- After weeks of resistance, Florida governor issues stay-at-home order.
- Belarusian leader bucks coronavirus 'psychosis,' plays hockey.
- President Trump warned of “a very, very painful two weeks” ahead as his medical experts issued their first official predictions of the virus’s toll.
- 80pc of US under lockdown as death toll crosses 4,800.
- Pakistan-origin doctor lauded for ultimate sacrifice on frontline of UK pandemic.

Global Response

- Coronavirus: Germany extends social distancing restrictions until April 19.
- Ventilator firms are racing to boost production as the pandemic accelerates.
- Finding patient zero could help us prevent another pandemic.
- Debt restructuring discussed during G-20 moot, KSA tells Pakistan.
- Google introduces new features to assist Pakistan's coronavirus effort.
- British American Tobacco is trying to make a coronavirus vaccine.

Local News

- PM Imran says China gave priority to Pakistan after curbing COVID-19.
- Usman Dar says 90,000 applications received for 'Corona Relief Tigers Force'.
- Genetic make up of locally-transmitted coronavirus may have mutations, say experts.
- \$2 billion export losses feared.
- Govt. stands with virus patients in hour of difficulty: Shahryar Afridi.
- Rapid reaction teams formed in Quetta.
- Hoarders won't be forgiven at any cost: KP CM.



Sitting in circles made with lime, people wait to get food at the Numaish traffic intersection, Karachi.—*White Star*

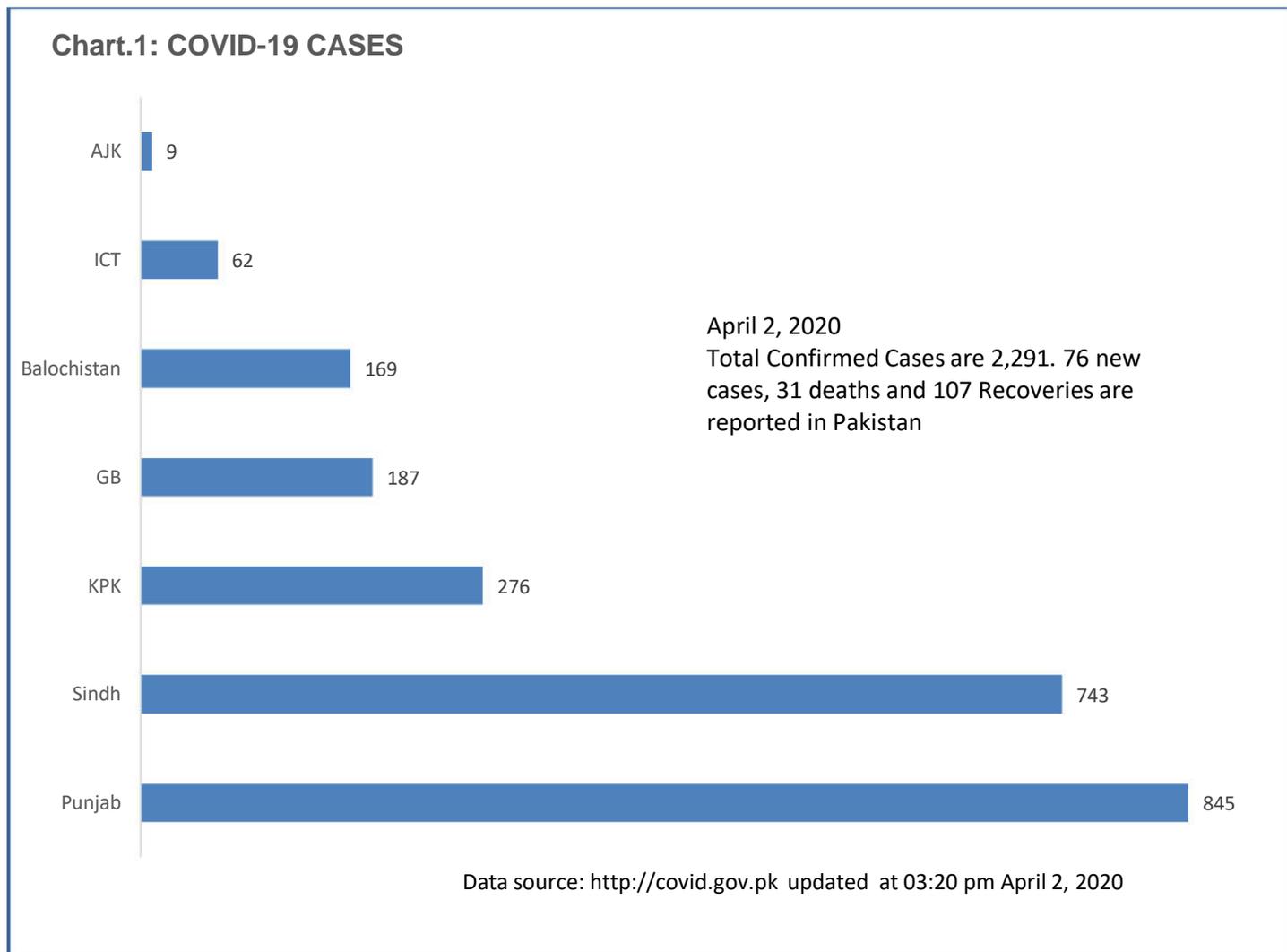
Local Response

- Federal govt. extends 'restrictions' till April 14 to curb spread of coronavirus.
- 54 patients in Sindh have recovered from coronavirus: Murtaza Wahab.
- Punjab has conducted nearly 15,000 Covid-19 tests but other provinces are lagging behind.
- Pakistan's fashion industry is stepping up to fight Covid-19.
- FM Qureshi says govt's first priority is to bring back Pakistanis stranded in transit.
- Government to announce Rs100 billion package for construction industry: PM Imran.
- Govt gives people three months to pay electricity, gas bills Deadline extended because of coronavirus lockdown.
- Human Rights Watch asks government to take special measures to protect workers' welfare.



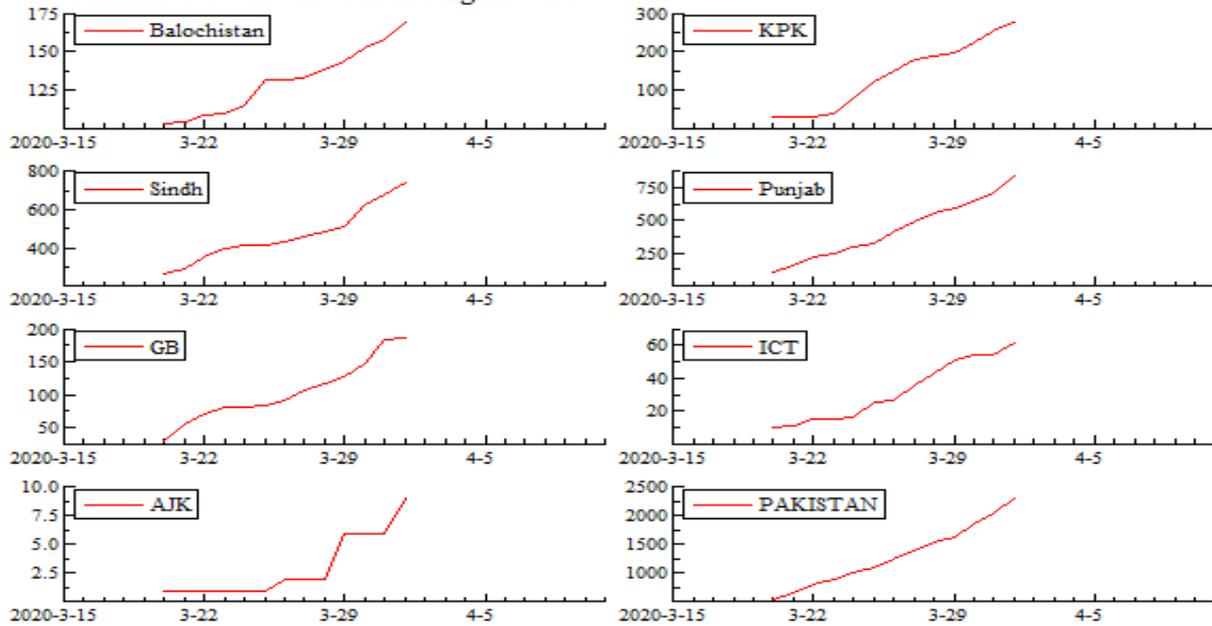
People sitting on ground waiting to collect ration as a philanthropic activity by people in Quetta- Reuters

During last 24 hours, 76 new cases are confirmed by different laboratories, bringing the national tally to 2,291. The number of new cases added are about half of the new cases added a day before, it indicates decreasing rate of change. Total deaths due to COVID-19 are 31 across country while 107 recoveries are reported. Since the recovery time is about two to three weeks, as expected the number of recovered cases is increasing continuously. Current impact of the disease in Pakistan is declared as **High** by NIH, Pakistan, see Chart.1.



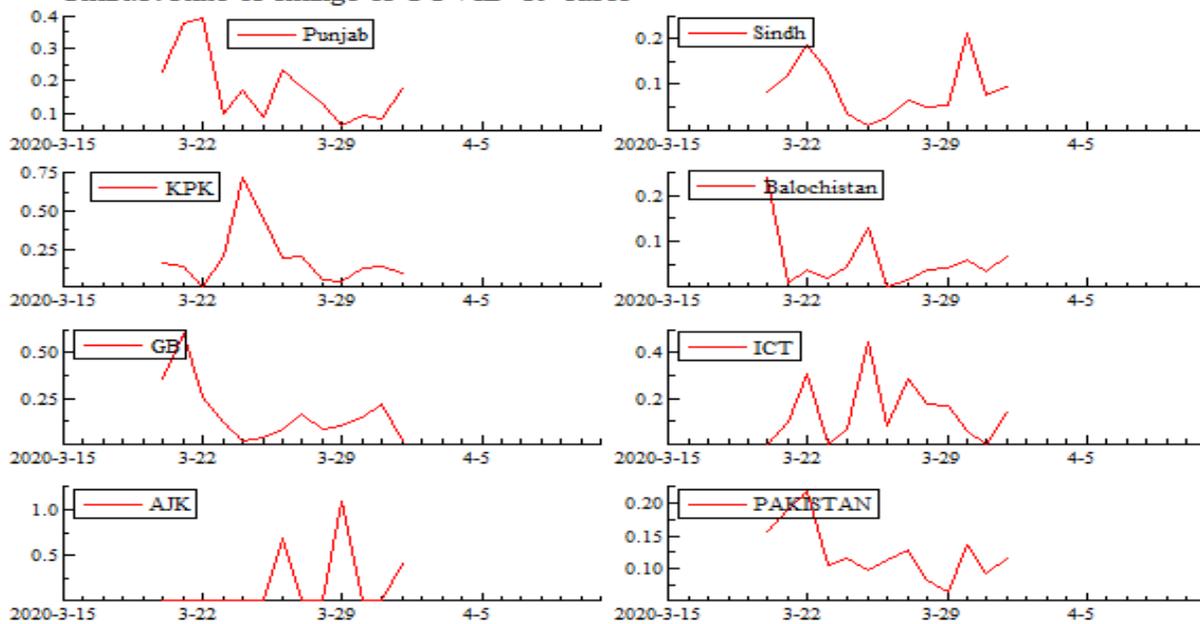
In all regions of Pakistan, COVID-19 infected cases increase manifold after mid-March 2020. Except for AJK the trend is increasing rapidly, see Chart.2. In last few days, in Punjab the number of cases has crossed Sindh, and GB crosses Balochistan.

Chart 2: COVID-19 Cases Region wise



Although the number of cases increased manifold in last ten days of March but the growth rate is decreasing since the first case was reported, it is a possible result of general public awareness, social distancing and the change of Personal Normative Belief (PNB) regarding pandemic, see Chart.3. With continuous awareness campaign to change PNB of masses, Pakistan will defeat the virus. Some swings are also observed in distinct regions e.g. Sindh, Punjab and ICT, it means an increasing pattern may be observed in few coming days but it is not unusual.

Chart 3: Rate of change of COVID-19 cases



Pandemics in Human History

Diseases have spread with the spread of humanity on the planet Earth. Blame it on Pandora, but a myriad of epidemics and pandemics have affected the course of human history, affecting the human population and its distribution, rise and fall of civilizations, medicine, economy and even geopolitical relations. **Epidemics** specify diseases which affect a large number of a population at a time; a **Pandemic** is an epidemic which is spread over a large area including a country, continent all over the globe¹. Pandemics have been a part of human life since the beginning and are still very much in the presence in today's modern, highly evolved and advanced world where medicine and technology are at their historic peak. From the very first recorded pandemic taking out almost one-third of the human population to today's Coronavirus pandemic which has shaken up socio-economic and healthcare systems worldwide due to its spread, among other major pandemics in history are discussed here in a chronological order.

The Antonine Pandemic: The very first pandemic recorded took place was the Antonine plague, also referred to as the plague of Galen in the late second century, dating to the years 165-180 AD. The pandemic has been speculated to be either smallpox or measles as theorised under the descriptions provided by the Greek physician Galen. The death toll for the Antonine plague was around 5 million humans², wiping out one-third of the total human population. The plague is said to be brought by the Roman military from their siege of Seleucia, Mesopotamia and was spread to affect the whole of the Roman empire³. The pandemic is stated to be one of the initial points of the fall of the Roman empire. Magic and numerous mystical as well as early medical ideas were employed to fight the pandemic which slowly ended after completing its course of destruction.

Plague of Justinian: The pandemic was caused by bubonic plague in the years 541-542 AD claiming around 30 to 50 million souls. The pandemic was spread around Asia,

¹ Trisha Torrey, "Difference Between an Epidemic and a Pandemic", Verywellhealth, March 17th, 2020 <https://www.verywellhealth.com/difference-between-epidemic-and-pandemic-2615168>

² Nicholas LePan, "Visualizing the History of Pandemics", Visual Capitalist, March 14th, 2020 <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/history-of-pandemics-deadliest/>

³ "Outbreak: 10 of the Worst Pandemics in History", MPH online, March 2020 <https://www.mphonline.org/worst-pandemics-in-history/>

North Africa, Arabia and Europe through rodents via merchant ships⁴. Mass burials had to be conducted due to the extreme mortality rate from the disease while extreme food shortages were also witnessed. The pandemic was a major component of the end of serfdom in Europe where half the population had succumbed to the disease⁵. Like the Antonine pandemic, people turned to exorcisms and charms to stay away from the demons causing the disease while others referring to the wrath of God⁶.

Black Death: The most destructive pandemic in the recorded human history was the Black Death or the bubonic plague during the years 1347-1341 AD. About 200 million people died during this pandemic all over Europe and much of Asia⁷. The plague started when a fleet of “death ships” docked on the Sicilian harbour with most of the sailors dead and the alive covered in black boils all over their bodies⁸. The disease originated from fleas on rodents. An extreme social distancing started which slowed down the spread eventually, developing the term *quarantine*⁹. Superstition dominated proper medicine and the historic plague doctor dress was commonly worn by doctors.

Smallpox: 1520 onwards, the world saw another pandemic of smallpox which took an estimated 56 million lives. This is the second most destructive pandemic after the Black Death, killing 90% of the Native Americans and producing much similar havoc in Europe in the 1800s where 400,000 deaths were recorded annually¹⁰. The Americas were affected so greatly by the pandemic as the European settlers brought the disease

⁴ Ken Than, “Two of History’s Deadliest Plagues Were Linked, With Implications for Another Outbreak”, National Geographic, January 31st, 2014 <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/1/140129-justinian-plague-black-death-bacteria-bubonic-pandemic/>

⁵ Elizabeth Yetter, “ 10 scary facts about the Justinian plague”, Listverse, updated August 29th, 2018 <https://listverse.com/2016/10/17/10-scary-facts-about-the-justinian-plague/>

⁶ Elizabeth Yetter, “ 10 scary facts about the Justinian plague”, August 29, 2018.

⁷ Nicholas LePan, “Visualizing the History of Pandemics”, March 14th, 2020

⁸ “Black Death”, History.com, Updated March 30, 2020 <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-ages/black-death>

⁹ “Black Death”, History.com, Updated March 30, 2020.

¹⁰ Nicholas LePan, “Visualizing the History of Pandemics”, March 14th, 2020.

with them. Edward Jenner created a vaccine for smallpox in 1796 therefore advancing the medical knowledge and practice¹¹.

Spanish Flu: The Spanish flu took about 40-50 million lives in the years 1918-1919¹². The H1N1 virus pandemic affected one-third of the global population. The disease unlike most of such diseases affected the healthy young people too apart from affecting the old. The pandemic was controlled through isolation and quarantining, hygiene practices and use of disinfectants due to lack of suitable medical interventions¹³. **SARS, MERS, Ebola** are similar pandemics happening with smaller death toll since 2002¹⁴.

HIV/AIDS: This pandemic started from the year 1981 and is still going on, claiming about 35 million lives to date¹⁵. The pandemic was first found in Congo. The autoimmune disease has remained widely incurable, while advancements in its management have been substantial therefore making HIV positives living better productive lives¹⁶.

Coronavirus Pandemic: The currently spreading pandemic has affected almost the whole world, increasing the death toll each day. To date above 45,000 people have died due to the flu-like disease¹⁷ which started in China in late 2019. It has affected socio-economic systems on a global scale as no concrete treatment for this disease has yet been made (**Written by Shah Bukht Fatima, an alumna of the Department of Development Studies, PIDE**).

¹¹ “*Smallpox vaccines*”, WHO, 2016 <https://www.who.int/csr/disease/smallpox/vaccines/en/>

¹² Nicholas LePan, “*Visualizing the History of Pandemics*”, March 14th, 2020.

¹³ 1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus), NCIRD, March 20th, 2019 <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html>

¹⁴ Nicholas LePan, “*Visualizing the History of Pandemics*”, March 14th, 2020.

¹⁵ Nicholas LePan, “*Visualizing the History of Pandemics*”, March 14th, 2020.

¹⁶ “*Outbreak: 10 of the Worst Pandemics in History*”, March 2020.

¹⁷ Nicholas LePan, “*Visualizing the History of Pandemics*”, March 14th, 2020.

COVID-19: Timeline of a Pandemic (Jan 18, 2020 – Jan. 24, 2020)

- Jan. 18-19**—Chinese authorities report a spike in 2019-nCoV cases, including first confirmed cases in Shenzhen (1 case) and Beijing (2 cases), bringing the total to 204 confirmed cases. They also report a third death linked to the new coronavirus.
- Jan. 20**—South Korea confirms its first case of 2019-nCoV. The patient did not report visiting markets in Wuhan.
- Jan. 21**—WHO confirms human-to-human transmission of the virus. The total number of cases is now 222, including infections among health-care workers. Chinese authorities have also reported a fourth death. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has convened an emergency committee on Jan. 22 to decide whether this constitutes a public health emergency of international concern.
- Jan. 22**—The emergency committee defers its decision on whether to advise WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to declare 2019-nCoV outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. The meeting takes place amid a significant rise in confirmed cases of individuals infected with 2019-nCoV, at 580, according to China's National Health Commission. The death toll has now risen to 17, with all cases reported from Hubei province.
- Jan. 23**—WHO's director-general decides to not declare the 2019-nCoV outbreak a public health emergency of international concern yet, as per recommendations by the emergency committee.
- The city of Wuhan shuts down public transportation, closing the airport and railway stations as of Thursday morning, in efforts to curb the spread of the 2019-nCoV. The suspension is in effect "until further notice." Later in the day, another city is on lockdown: Ezhou. Beijing cancels plans for Chinese new year festivities and closes the Forbidden City. Another city, Huanggang, announces it will go into lockdown Friday. Singapore also confirms its first imported case, while Vietnam confirms two cases.
- Jan. 24**—Japan and U.S. each confirm second 2019-nCoV cases, while Nepal confirms the first case of 2019-nCoV in the country. Total confirmed cases in China rise to 830, with 177 in severe condition and 25 deaths.
- Later in the day, China's National Health Commission reports 444 new confirmed cases and 16 new deaths in China, bringing total confirmed cases in the country to 1,287. This includes 237 cases in severe condition and a total of 41 deaths.

Experts' View

Pakistan is also part of the global effort to defeat the coronavirus and is under a partial lockdown. Though it is a long fight and our resources are insufficient, the outbreak does provide a window of opportunity to put our house in order by adopting at least three pathways: one, by enhancing public health capabilities and infrastructure, especially in the primary healthcare; two, by reorienting the role of leadership and coordination for preparedness and response; and three, by propelling research and development in the arena of infectious diseases. Together, these solutions would build a comprehensive and coherent framework to make the country safer against the threat of not only infectious, but all kinds of diseases. **(Durdana Najam, The Express Tribune)**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis like no other. It feels like a war, and in many ways it is. People are dying. Medical professionals are on the front lines. Those in essential services, food distribution, delivery, and public utilities work overtime to support the effort. And then there are the hidden soldiers: those who fight the epidemic confined in their homes, unable to fully contribute to production. In a war, massive spending on armaments stimulates economic activity and special provisions ensure essential services. In this crisis, things are more complicated, but a common feature is an increased role for the public sector. **(IMF)**

Experts' Opinion

This requirement of maintaining a distance of at least a metre from one another even within homes can be fulfilled only by a minority that has homes large enough to make segregation possible. How can the social distance precaution be observed in a single-room tenement occupied by five to 10 or more members of a family? We find that the precautions to escape the contagion can be taken only by individuals and families that maintain a certain level of cleanliness and personal hygiene; they use tissue papers to wipe their nose whenever they sneeze. But the situation on the ground is that a very large number of people do not have proper toilets in their dwellings and they drink water contaminated by toxic waste. The direction to wash one's hands with soap, and preferably with hot water, presumes that even the poorest households enjoy the facility of running hot and cold water, or can keep a vessel on the stove for boiling water all

the time. There are men who wash their hands and faces only while performing ablutions at mosques at prayer times. Their women don't have this facility and are often short of water for drinking, cooking and washing themselves or utensils. That poverty, poor housing and lifestyles reduce a people's capacity to fight a new viral epidemic cannot be denied. **(I. A. Rehman, DAWN)**

In our own country, the government argues that the lockdown which is necessary to contain the disease will hurt the poor. But does it recognize fully that our failure to develop a healthcare system which is funded by a minuscule percentage of our GDP cannot survive if millions turn up at hospitals and other centers? Do they recognize that it is the same daily wage laborers they wished to protect who will suffer worst, because they do not have access to spacious housing, good hygiene or decent nutrition. We have learned that we can possibly survive without placing thousands of petty criminals in overcrowded jails. Many already die of starvation daily in our country, directly or indirectly. More will do so across the capitalist world in the cruel age of corona. **(Kamila Hayat, THE NEWS)**

World Health Organization

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: Myth busters

No. There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the new coronavirus.

There is some limited evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline can help people recover more quickly from the common cold. However, regularly rinsing the nose has not been shown to prevent respiratory infections.

Can regularly rinsing your nose with saline help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?



COVID-19 READS

1. How will coronavirus change the world?
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200331-covid-19-how-will-the-coronavirus-change-the-world>
2. Egypt battles COVID-19 amid flood of misinformation, conspiracy theories
<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/03/egyptian-superstitions-jokes-on-coronavirus.html>
3. What can hospitals still do to prep for COVID-19?
<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/03/what-can-hospitals-still-do-prep-covid-19>
4. Coronavirus world map: which countries have the most cases and deaths?
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/01/coronavirus-world-map-countries-most-cases-and-deaths>
5. The Science Behind A 14-Day Quarantine After Possible COVID-19 Exposure
<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/01/824903684/the-science-behind-a-14-day-quarantine-after-possible-covid-19-exposure>
6. What are the rules of social distancing?
<https://www.vox.com/2020/3/15/21179296/coronavirus-covid-19-social-distancing-bored-pandemic-quarantine-ethics>
7. Self-isolate or quarantine? Coronavirus terminology explained
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/coronavirus-terminology-explained-covid-19-glossary-200323064432820.html>
8. Coronavirus symptoms: what are they and should I call the doctor?
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/01/coronavirus-symptoms-what-are-they-should-i-call-doctor-covid-19>
9. Coronavirus: Symptoms, unusual signs and what happens in your body
<https://gulfnnews.com/world/coronavirus-symptoms-unusual-signs-and-what-happens-in-your-body-1.1585797875058>
10. Is there a cure for the new coronavirus?
<https://www.livescience.com/can-coronavirus-be-cured.html>
11. Coronavirus symptoms: what are they and should I call the doctor?
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/02/coronavirus-symptoms-what-are-they-and-should-i-call-the-doctor>
12. Coronavirus: Potential drug treatment starts UK trials
<https://www.bbc.com/news/amp/health-52111674>

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