

# COVID-19 Phobia

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# Statistics and Stress

## 40%

At least 9 major medical centers have reported a 40% decrease in **some cardiac treatments** like catheterization.



Emergency calls for **cardiac arrests in NYC** **rose sharply** in the weeks since the city experienced a COVID-19 surge.

Stroke service at NY-Presbyterian is **smaller by 50%**, same is true for appendicitis and stroke



Stress, isolation, lack of regular exercise, higher intake of salty, processed, shelf-stable foods.

Stress can lead to an increase in unhealthy behaviors and a more sedentary lifestyle

- totals and graphs
- Headlines
- descriptions of EDs as war zones



## Psychological symptoms of ordinary Chinese citizens based on SCL-90 during the level I emergency response to COVID-19



SCL-90



1060 participants



70% had moderate and higher levels of psychological symptoms, including obsessive compulsion and phobic anxiety.

Psychiatry Res. 2020 Jun; 288:112992.doi:10.1016/j.psychres.2020.112992.Epub2020 Apr 11

## Psychological distress associated with COVID-19 quarantine: Latent profile analysis, outcome prediction and mediation analysis



Brief Symptom Inventory – 53



4408 Argentine people



Phobic anxiety 41.3%, Anxiety 31.8%, Depression 27.5%, General Distress 27.1%, Obsession Compulsion 25.1%

J Affect Disord. 2020 Dec 1;277:75-84. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2020.07.133. Epub 2020 Aug 7

# Specific Phobia DSM-5 & Generalized Anxiety Disorder

## *Specific Phobia DSM-5*

- A. **Marked fear or anxiety about a specific object or situation** (e.g., flying, heights, animals, receiving an injection, seeing blood). Note: In children the fear of anxiety may be expressed by crying, tantrums, freezing or clinging.
- B. **The phobic object or situation almost always provides immediate fear or anxiety.**
- C. The phobic object or situation is **actively avoided or endured with intense fear or anxiety.**
- D. The fear or anxiety is out of proportion to the actual danger posed by the specific object or situation and to the socio-cultural context.
- E. The fear, anxiety, or avoidance is persistent, typically **lasting for 6 months or more.**

Note- DSM-5 =Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Adapted from American Psychiatric Association, 2013.

## *DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria for Generalized Anxiety Disorder*

1. Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities
2. **The individual finds it difficult to control the worry.**
3. The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms having been present for more days than not for the past 6 months):
  - a. restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge
  - b. Being easily fatigued
  - c. C. difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
  - d. Irritability
  - e. Muscle tension
  - f. Sleep disturbances (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless, unsatisfying sleep)
4. **The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other areas of functioning.**
5. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of substance or another medical condition.
6. **The disturbance is not explained by another mental disorder.**

# COVID-19 Phobia Scale (C19P-S)

The development and initial tests for the psychometric properties of the C19P-S:

- ➔ A self-report instrument
- ➔ Five point Likert-type scale to assess the levels of phobia
- ➔ All items are rated on a 5-point scale from “strongly disagree (1)” to “strongly agree (5).”
- ➔ Scores on scale range between 20 and 100
- ➔ Higher scale indicated a greater phobia in respected subscales and total scale
- ➔ Present study: total scale scores ranged from 20 to 100 (mean+ 65.42, SD= 14.09).

# Factors

## *Psychological factors*

1. The fear of coming down with coronavirus makes me very anxious.
2. I am extremely afraid that someone in my family might become infected by the coronavirus.
3. News about coronavirus-related deaths causes me great anxiety.
4. Uncertainties surrounding coronavirus cause me enormous anxiety.
5. The pace that coronavirus has spread causes me great panic.
6. I argue passionately (or want to argue) with people I consider to be behaving irresponsibly in the face of coronavirus.

## *Psycho-somatic factors*

1. I experience serious stomachaches out of the fear of coronavirus.
2. I experience serious chest pain out of the fear of coronavirus.
3. I experience tremors due to the fear of coronavirus.
4. I experience sleep problems out of the fear of coronavirus.
5. Coronavirus makes me so tense that I find myself unable to do the thing I previously had no problem doing.

# Factors

## *Economic factors*

1. The possibility of food supply shortage due to the coronavirus pandemic causes me anxiety.
2. The possibility of shortages in cleaning supplies due to the coronavirus pandemic causes me anxiety.
3. I stock food with the fear of coronavirus.
4. After the coronavirus pandemic, I do not feel relaxed unless I constantly check on my supplies at home

## *Social factors*

1. After the coronavirus pandemic, I feel extremely anxious when I see people coughing.
2. After the coronavirus pandemic, I actively avoid people I see sneezing.
3. Following the coronavirus pandemic, I have noticed that I spend extensive periods of time cleaning my hands.
4. The fear of coming down with coronavirus seriously impedes my social relationships.
5. I am unable to curb my anxiety of catching coronavirus from others.

# What You Can Do

