

## Review Article

# Psychological Problems of COVID-19 Sufferers

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## Abstract

COVID-19 has increased all over the world. It has brought a significant change around the world. Although the COVID-19 infected patients are mainly suffering from infection but there are other areas to concern about. The burden of mental health problems of pre and post-COVID-19 has become a major concern to address. Lockdown, quarantine, social distancing have already raised questions regarding mental health problems. This review demonstrates the psychological impacts of all of these on a healthy individual.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Healthcare management, Psychological problems

## Introduction

The continuous increasing rate of COVID-19 around the world has isolated the people from their normal life. There is still no hope of changing the situation immediately. Various safety initiatives are taken by the government of several countries. These include the lockdown, quarantine of people, maintaining social distances, wearing masks, etc. These are actually found effective to prevent the spread of viruses. But these initiatives have also raised questions regarding the mental health. The psychological impacts of these initiatives on healthy individuals are found very much negative. This is exactly how COVID-19 has caused a public health danger and it has become a global health challenge. Now the mental health problems of people tend to be higher than the death of COVID-19 infected people. We have seen it in the past also. Whenever, an infectious disease becomes epidemic or pandemic, it gives rise various psychological diseases, mental stress, fear, illness, anxiety, boredom [1,2]. We have seen how people's mental health was hampered during the period of Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). This review will provide necessary information on how the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a public health crisis inducing mental health problem [3].

The people who are getting infected by SARS-COV-2 are the biggest sufferers of COVID-19. The COVID-19 infected patient are not only undergoing physical damage in the body but also facing several mental problems in the post COVID-19 period. But this is actually not the end of the suffering scenario. The suffering is divided into pre and post-COVID-19 mental sufferings. This mental trauma is not only limited to the people infected by SARS-COV-2, it includes the healthcare professionals also. The people who are not yet infected

by SARS-COV-2, also undergoing through a mental trauma. Staying in the house day after day during lockdown, making social distancing everywhere, using mask everywhere have distracted them from their normal life. Besides they are always in the fear of getting infected by SARS-COV-2 anytime. This is actually letting them down mentally. Because the fear largely accelerates the level of anxiety and stress that leads to the intensification of the symptoms of those with pre-existing psychiatric disorders [4-6]. The older people aged above 60 are in the highest risk position because of their more physically weak condition than any other age group [7]. They are undergoing through depression, anxiety, stress, emotional exhaustion very frequently. China recently conducted a study on the psychological/mental problems of COVID-19. The report stated that 53.8% of the participants among the general public were severely or moderately psychologically affected having depression, anxiety and stress [8]. The quarantine period is a very difficult period for the people to stay alone although it is effective to prevent the spread of viruses. But loneliness often takes place during this period. So the quarantine period has some bad psychological impacts on individuals which are confirmed by Lancet in a report. According to Lancet, long quarantine often induces post-traumatic stress symptoms, confusion, and anger. Stressors included longer quarantine duration, infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma. This review was done using three electronic databases. Of 3166 papers found, 24 are included in this review [9]. The social distancing or social isolation is one of the hardest things to do for the people although it is effective to prevent the spread of virus. It often triggers loneliness that induces mental health problems due to arise of anxiety, depression, stress, fear, etc. [10]. Depression, anxiety, loneliness often induces the commitment of suicides [11,12]. Anxiety,

insomnia, anger, boredom, loneliness of people are the results of the recent COVID-19 pandemic according to report of several studies [13]. A study, published in The Lancet Psychiatry journal, stated that one in 5 COVID-19 patients suffer from mental illness within 90 days after testing for COVID-19. This mental illness most likely includes anxiety, depression and insomnia. It also reported that having a pre-existing mental illness causes 65% more chance to be infected with COVID-19 than those without [14]. The healthcare professionals are not out of this COVID-19 induced mental problems. They are under tremendous mental pressure as the rate of COVID-19 patients is increasing day by day. They are unable to meet their family and friends for a long time. Several studies reported about the mental problems they are dealing with at the moment. The appearance psychiatric symptoms among the healthcare professionals are now clear according to the reports of some studies. A report in the Journal of Psychiatric Research stated that the healthcare professionals are in extreme working pressure that induces psychological distress. Anxiety, irritability, insomnia, fear and anguish are among them. The systemic review was made based on the PRISMA protocol [15]. Again, several studies confirmed the fact that the healthcare professionals are suffering from high rates of stress, anxiety as well as mental disorders [16,17].

## Conclusion

The world is undergoing through a tough situation due to COVID-19 pandemic. Both physical and mental health of people are getting equally affected due to COVID-19. But the mental health issues are less focused. The COVID-19 pandemic has created this mental health challenge. This review suggests the identification of the factors associated with COVID-19 induced mental health problems and making of specific and necessary guidelines to overcome this challenge.

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