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## The impact of Covid-19 on social media

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### Abstract

In the first few months of 2020, information and news reports about the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) were rapidly published and shared on social media and social networking sites. While the field of infodemiology has studied information patterns on the Web and in social media for at least 18 years, the COVID-19 pandemic has been referred to as the first social media infodemic. However, there is limited evidence about whether and how the social media infodemic has spread panic and affected the mental health of social media users.

**Objectives:** The aim of this study is to determine how social media affects mental health in COVID-19

**Keywords:** Covid-19, social media, social networking

### Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Cases of COVID-19 first emerged in late December 2019, when a mysterious illness was reported in Wuhan, China. The cause of the disease was soon confirmed as a novel coronavirus, and the infection has since spread to many countries worldwide and has become a pandemic disease. Several websites have published information about COVID-19 and have given different instructions to their users about ways to prevent the spread of the virus, such as keeping a distance between themselves and others, using masks, and washing their hands. Social media has become a source of disseminating information to the public. Many individuals will experience isolation during hospitalization or when quarantining at home. Social media can be an efficient source of information and an effective means for staying abreast of the vast amount of medical knowledge.

### Background

With more than 3.8 billion people using social media around the world, it is not surprising how the significant amount of information received through these platforms affects how we perceive and cope with the current COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the outbreak, patients, clinicians, and scientists were frequently obtaining health and science-related information from Twitter, Facebook, or other social media channels.

With the advent of these technologies, health-care professionals are nowadays able to communicate among each other and with different stakeholders across the wide-ranging fields of medicine. Similarly, scientists from all fields are able to rapidly interconnect and disseminate their research findings, thus increasing their scientific outreach and supporting easy access to information beyond the hindrances of the past.

Social media is now more than ever part of a big extent of our lives—for example, how we use it to cope with social distancing—and although it can give opportunities for better communication, it can certainly have its shortcomings and dangers.

### Conclusions

The importance of increasing and improving research on a technology that is having a massive impact in the current pandemic cannot be overstated. All are surveys or observational studies aiming to explore behaviors and monitor the impact and spread of misinformation. Social media is in no way a cure for misinformation, but it is widely used and is here to stay. Just sharing facts will not change behaviors, and more needs to be done.

The research methodology to address social media's role in health policy and individual health decisions has yet to be defined, but it is worthy of examination by using a multidisciplinary approach to obtain better research methods and dissemination. Clinicians and researchers are using social media to share recommendations and explain the decisions being made in times of the COVID-19 pandemic, no matter if there is enough, scarce, or even no evidence at all. They are the frontline not only in hospitals and laboratories but also in the cyber world. Fact-checking of online content is certainly rapidly evolving, and its impact can be perceived when it is even creating major political disputes

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