

## Sexuality and Fertility in the Time of COVID-19

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### ABSTRACT

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory disease caused by novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 or 2019-nCoV. Recently, on March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared by the WHO as a virus pandemic disease. Many measures were conducted to tackle COVID-19 outbreak. The important one is social isolation that have been adopted all over the world which are the first one done as widely as that in modern history. Such measures have wide reaching consequences as reducing significantly the opportunity for casual sexual meetings, and increasing sexual intercourse for couples with stable sexual relationships, especially married ones. This leads us to the conclusion that within 9 months there will be an increase in births. This means that the global fertility will increase, especially in the developing countries whom have the highest rate of fertility.

**Keywords:** sexuality, fertility, COVID-19, pregnancy, pneumonia

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### INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory disease caused by novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 or 2019-nCoV. Recently, on March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared by the WHO as a virus pandemic disease [1-3].

As with other respiratory pathogens, including flu and rhinovirus, the transmission is believed to occur through respiratory droplets from coughing and sneezing or by being carried to oral or nasal mucosa by hands from the virus-infested surfaces [4,5].

It appears that all COVID-19 patients asymptomatic, mild or severe have a massive throat/mucus titre of virus, shedding it in the surroundings. Aerosol transmission may also be possible in closed and confined spaces. The incubation period is from 3 to 7 days; 14 days being considered as the longest possible time from infection to appearance of symptoms. The research supports that in addition to the respiratory droplets and direct contact, fecal-oral transmission might also be the route of transmission of 2019-nCoV. It is to be noted that the information is derived from the early research and reports. Further studies are warranted to understand the mechanisms of transmission, the incubation period,

duration of infectivity and the clinical course of COVID-19 [6,7].

Many measures were conducted to tackle COVID-19 outbreak. The important one is social isolation that have been adopted all over the world which are the first one done as widely as that in modern history. Such measures have wide reaching consequences, many of which are not yet known. Social isolation may significantly reduce the opportunity for casual sexual meetings [8].

Also, because of that, we will see, in the next months, a significant reduction in the incidence of sexually transmissible infections [8].

Furthermore, as for couples with stable sexual relationships, especially married couples, we will see an increase in sexual intercourse in quantity (more frequently), and quality which is due to the fact that couples will have more time to spend together and were less stressed than in normal time which is filled with spots routine activities like work, time of transportation from work to home, as well as the various leisure activities done mainly outside home.

This leads us to the conclusion that within 9 months there will be an increase in births. This means that the global fertility

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will increase, especially in the developing countries whom have the highest rate of fertility [9].

In addition, there will be a significant increase in the number of pregnant women in few next months, which means that is it capital to anticipate to put in place the means and infrastructure necessary to take care of them, especially in time of COVID-19 pandemic which needs more precaution to avoid contamination of women and subsequently complications on fetuses despite the controversies on the vertical transmission of the virus [10].

This study has a limit, it does not provide statistical analyzes of samples, but it is a reflection and an interpretation of epidemiological, behavioral, and demographic changes which may have many consequences (economic, social, epidemiological) that can necessitate more future studies to explore and analyze in different aspects.

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