Objectives

The survey collected information about perceived risk, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs & behaviors related to COVID-19.

Topics

- Personal protective practices
  - Face-coverings
  - Handwashing
- Community mitigation strategies
  - Social distancing
  - Staying at home
  - Closings
- Vaccination
- Stigma

Open-ended Question

- What is your single most urgent question about the Coronavirus?
- What is the biggest challenge you are facing when trying to follow the strategies in your community to try to slow down transmission of the Coronavirus?
- What is your main motivation to follow the strategies in your state or community to try to slow down transmission of the Coronavirus?
Interdisciplinary Research Team at RTI

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Today’s Presentation

• What does the general public know and believe about face masks, cloth face coverings, social distancing, and stay-at-home policies and practices?

• Who is and is not using these strategies?

• What are some of the challenges or barriers to adhering to required or suggested behaviors?

• How can we support social distancing moving forward?
Methodology

- Probability-based web-based panel designed to be representative of U.S. households
- N=2,279
- Fielded April 10-13 & 17-20, 2020
- Weighted to represent the U.S. population
Respondent Demographics (n=2,279)

- Male: 48%
- Female: 52%

- Less than high school: 11%
- High School: 28%
- Some college: 28%
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 33%

- Income:
  - <$50,000: 32%
  - $50,000-$99,999: 31%
  - $100,000-$149,999: 17%
  - ≥ $150,000: 21%

- Age:
  - 18-24: 10%
  - 25-34: 18%
  - 35-49: 24%
  - 50-64: 26%
  - 65+: 22%

- Ethnicity:
  - Hispanic: 16%
  - Not Hispanic: 84%

- Employment:
  - Employed: 65%
  - Not Employed: 35%

- Region:
  - Northeast: 18%
  - Midwest: 21%
  - South: 38%
  - West: 24%

- Health:
  - Excellent/Very Good: 50%
  - Good: 35%
  - Fair/Poor: 15%
Timeline

- National Emergency Declared (3/11/2020)
- CDC issues recommendations for social distancing (3/1/2020)
- CDC issues recommendations for cloth face coverings (4/1/2020)
- RTI's Data Collection Wave 1 (2/26/2020 - 3/11/2020)
- Declared State of Emergency
- Stay At Home Mandates
- Face Covering Requirement
General public strongly endorse social distancing policies

Percent who strongly agree/agree:

- 82%: “More people will die from the Coronavirus if schools, businesses and public places open too soon.”
- 87%: “… support the Coronavirus strategies put in place in my state.”
- 90%: “Everybody in the U.S. needs to follow strategies such as social distancing, closing schools and businesses and staying at home to be effective.”
- 23%: “I would rather risk getting the Coronavirus than lose my job.”
Social Distancing
In prior disease outbreaks, strategies such as social distancing and staying at home saved lives.

Most respondents know that social distancing has been successful in the past.
Respondents believe they know how to and can practice social distancing

Percent who strongly agree/agree:

- **86%** feel confident they can shelter-in-place / stay-at-home for however long authorities recommend.
- **75%** have all the information they need to protect themselves and their family from becoming infected with the Coronavirus.
- **64%** know how to manage the illness at home if someone in their household becomes infected.
Household resistance to social distancing is low

Percent who strongly agree/agree:

22%  “It’s hard to get people in my household to stay home.”

14%  “It’s hard to get people in my household to practice social distancing.”

10%  “People in my household do not think the rules about social distancing apply to them.”
### Self-reported Behavior Report Card

Which of the following actions, if any, are you currently taking to protect yourself from the Coronavirus?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social distancing</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>Keep others out of home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in place</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>Face covering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not visiting family friends in their homes</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>Medical/surgical mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid travel on subways, buses, taxis, and Ubers/Lyfts</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td><strong>INTENTIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postponed/canceled non-essential medical appointments, procedures or surgeries</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Intend to wear face covering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTENTIONS**

- Intend to wear face covering: 77%
“Keeping from going depressed.”

“I feel like I have become more isolated.”

“I am lucky. I can stay home and don’t have to worry about an income. It is cabin fever that increases day by monotonous day.”
“I can’t get my son to stay home. He’s a 19-year-old and he doesn’t want to listen to me. He says he gets bored at home, that he doesn’t like being locked down.”

“The people around me aren't following the strategies enough for me to feel safe.”

“People don't understand the seriousness [of the situation] and keep going out as if nothing were wrong.”

“Some people don't respect social distancing.”

“Keeping everyone home.”

“Not receiving visitors...sometimes the family does not obey.”
“The people around me aren't following the strategies enough for me to feel safe.”

“That some people don't respect social distancing.”

“People don't understand the seriousness [of the situation] and keep going out as if nothing were wrong.”

“I can't get my son to stay home. He's a 19-year-old and he doesn't want to listen to me. He says he gets bored at home, that he doesn't like being locked down.”

“Keeping everyone home.”

“Not receiving visitors… sometimes the family does not obey.”
Cloth Face Coverings
Respondents shared high levels of knowledge about face coverings

Wearing a cloth face covering may prevent you from spreading Coronavirus
*True Statement*
- 77% Correct
- 12% Incorrect
- 11% Don't Know

Do not have to worry about practicing social distancing
*False statement*
- 94% Correct
- 4% Incorrect
- 2% Don't Know

Wearing a surgical mask will help prevent from spreading to others
*True Statement*
- 75% Correct
- 8% Incorrect
- 16% Don't Know
How effective do you think each of the following will be in protecting from the Coronavirus?

Percent who strongly agree/agree:

- Face coverings: 67% for Protect community, 62% for Protect self & family, 65% for Reduce deaths
- Closings: 86% for Protect community, 85% for Protect self & family, 84% for Reduce deaths
- Stay at home: 87% for Protect community, 87% for Protect self & family, 82% for Reduce deaths
- 6 feet apart: 84% for Protect community, 83% for Protect self & family, 83% for Reduce deaths
Two-thirds of respondents believe wearing a cloth face coverings helps protect themselves from getting Coronavirus from others.
Everyone, including people who do not have symptoms, should wear a cloth face covering if they leave their home to prevent possible transmission of the Coronavirus.
Plan to wear a cloth face covering in public settings

Currently wearing face covering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>51%</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Currently wearing medical/surgical mask

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>46%</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Discount~40 percentage point increase from Wave 1

Strongly Agree/Agree 77%
I worry that if I wear a cloth face covering out in public, other people will think I am infected with the Coronavirus.

85% Strongly Disagree & Disagree
Most respondents report knowing how to make a cloth face covering.
People are walking around with face masks, but where are they getting them?
I sometimes have difficulty breathing due to MS, the mask covering my nose and mouth constricts my breathing. I don’t like wearing the mask in public.
We’re Not Going “Back to Normal”

So what will the new normal look like?

By MARY HARRIS
Social distancing will be with us through the summer to really ensure that we protect one another as we move through these phases.”

- Dr. Deborah Birks
When asking people to create new habitual behaviors, like social distancing, they need to:

1. Know **how** to do it
2. Know **why** to do it
3. See others doing it
4. Believe it will be **effective**
Knowledge gaps exist

25% do not have all the information they need to protect themselves and their family from becoming infected.
Develop information to reduce knowledge gaps among subgroups

- Segment audiences.
  - Using our data, we can identify groups in need of information and groups with lower confidence in their ability to practice social distancing behaviors.

- Use clear communication principles to ensure comprehension.
  - In collaboration with Communicate Health, RTI developed the Clear Communication Index for CDC [https://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/index.html).
Personal behavior affects transmission
Challenges to Social Distancing

39%
Agree/Strongly Agree

What I do on a day-to-day basis will not affect how many people in my community get the Coronavirus.
Stop Using The Term ‘Social Distancing’ -- Start Talking About ‘Physical Distancing, Social Connection’

Harris Allen, Brent Ling, Wayne Burton

APRIL 27, 2020
What motivates individuals to follow community mitigation strategies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivators</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>“I can’t afford to get ill with my pre-existing health issues.” “Fear of getting it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/Family</td>
<td>“My kids and family are my motivation.” “We don't want our family to get sick especially since some are older and might not make it if they get it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>“To prevent the virus from spreading further in communities and prevent more deaths.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>“My main motivation to follow the strategies in my state is that we are hopefully allowing for a moderate amount of people to get sick at a more regulated rate, so that hopefully hospitals are not inundated with people who have the disease and are in desperate need of help. By staying home I am helping others.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Make it personal.
- Capitalize on self-altruism: We act generously because it makes us feel good.
- Develop and test motivational messages and strategies.
Use environmental cues and positive reinforcement

- Model behaviors
- Provide visual/auditory cues and reminders in locations behaviors need to be practiced
- Reinforce positive behaviors when they are being practiced
  - Challenge businesses to develop rewards for customers
  - Crowdsource ideas
- Test/evaluate strategies
In the scramble to implement, let’s not forget there is a HUGE opportunity to learn.

- What is working? What is not?
- Natural experiments given different timeframes for not just re-opening, but for creating a new normal.

RTI is developing an evaluation framework for communicating about and implementing social distancing strategies and can assist

- Businesses
- Organizations
- States, counties & other jurisdictions
- Federal agencies
- Foundations
Discussion and Next Steps

Thoughts?  
Questions?  
Application of findings?  
Is there anything you are interested in seeing that we didn't cover?
Contact Us

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To combat the unprecedented challenges presented by COVID-19, RTI offers broad and deep experience to address a variety of public health threats—including Ebola, Zika, tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV.

RTI offers a deep bench of cross-functional experts including:

- Epidemiologists
- Physicians
- Data scientists
- Survey methodologists
- Public health workers
- Evaluation specialists
- Educators and trainers
- Innovation experts

Learn more about RTI’s rapid response to COVID-19

rti.org/emerging-issue/covid-19-research

Jerry Rench, COVID-19 Response Lead
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Your Weekly Briefing
COVID-19
U.S. Survey Results
WEBINAR 2 | May 13, 12 PM
Knowledge