

Situations like the coronavirus pandemic can quickly become a catalyst for social conflict due to misinformation, rumours, and fake news, as observed in Pakistan during recent national catastrophes caused by dengue fever, floods, and earthquakes. The situation is no different with COVID-19 as stories emerge on how fake news is being used to manipulate response efforts, spread rumours and misinformation leading to behaviours that are undermining community cohesion, and causing citizens to be unaware of the role they can play in the pandemic response.

With that in mind, Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP) with financial support from the European Union and technical support from The Asia Foundation (TAF) Pakistan, has officially launched the Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC). This campaign aims to debunk rumours, conduct regular fact-checking, synthesize data, and convene virtual forums to produce informative bulletins each week. These bulletins will include important government decisions, visual materials, community feedback, debunked rumours with verified information, valid concerns, and other questions from the ground around health and other issues. The goal is to support enhanced awareness among the most vulnerable groups in Pakistan with a focus particularly on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. These bulletins will be translated into Urdu and Sindhi and published on a weekly basis, with audio transcriptions in Pashto. They will be shared with stakeholders, local government leaders, media, CSOs, humanitarian organizations and others. They will also have a dedicated web-page, be shared widely on social media, and be aired on local community radio stations.

Current Situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan

Total Confirmed Cases
326,216

Total Active Cases
9,855

Total Deaths
6,715

Total Recoveries
305,835

Provinces	Confirmed Cases	Active Cases	Deaths	Recoveries
Azad Jammu&Kashmir	4046	908	89	3049
Balochistan	15887	216	149	15522
Gilgit Balistan	4229	165	92	3972
Islamabad	19594	1626	215	17753
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	39361	622	1276	37463
Punjab	103831	4055	2354	97422
Sindh	145238	4272	2620	138346

Source: <http://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan>



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FACT

MYTH



COMMON MYTHS AROUND COVID-19 THAT HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL HAVE COME INTO FOCUS IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS OF THE PANDEMIC.

MYTH

**DIGITAL THERMOMETERS
CAN BE 100 PERCENT
EFFECTIVE IN DETECTING
COVID-19 PATIENTS**

According to experts, temperature checks alone aren't effective in stopping COVID-19 spread. Non-contact forehead infrared thermometers used for temperature screening have poor accuracy, according to Chief medical officer Dr. James Leo (Healthline). According to Leo, a significant number of people with COVID-19 do not develop a fever, therefore temperature screening may be unable to identify such people. In addition, the frequent use of fever-lowering medications such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen could hide a potential COVID-related fever. Due to these reasons, experts believe that absence of fever alone is not a reliable screening tool for COVID-19 (Healthline). Accordingly, it is recommended that all workplaces, educational institutes, and public places etc. follow other safety protocols such as wearing face masks, frequently washing hands, and strictly practicing physical distancing in addition to temperature checks.

MYTH

**SPRAYING ALCOHOL OR
CHLORINE ON YOUR BODY
CAN KILL CORONAVIRUS**

Spraying alcohol or chlorine all over your body will not kill viruses that have already entered your body. Note that alcohol and chlorine can be useful in disinfecting surfaces, but they need to be used under appropriate recommendations, and cannot be ingested. Spraying such substances can be harmful to your eyes and lips, in addition to damaging your clothes. Close contact with chlorine can lead to chlorine poisoning - where chlorine reacts with water outside of the body and on mucosal surfaces inside your body to cause formation of hydrochloric acid and hypochlorous acid. Both of these substances can be extremely poisonous to humans (Healthline).

MYTH

**UV BULBS CAN BE USED TO
DISINFECT COVID-19 ON
YOUR BODY**

A certain type of ultraviolet light called UVC has been found to be effective in inactivating coronavirus as a natural disinfectant. Special lamps that emit UVC light are typically used for this purpose to disinfect things like surfaces, equipment, operating rooms, and personal protective equipment (PPE). However, direct exposure of skin and eyes to UVC radiation from some UVC lamps can cause painful eye injury and burn-like skin reactions (FDA). UVC light lamps may also contain mercury or produce ozone, which can be very harmful to humans (Healthline). FDA warns never to look directly at a UVC lamp source, even briefly. WHO has also issued a stern warning against people using UV light to sterilise their hands or any other part of their skin.

Source: WHO, Scientific American, NPR.



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PAKISTAN



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Why should we worry about COVID-19 reinfections?

A study published in the journal Lancet Infectious Diseases found that patients reinfected with the coronavirus might experience more severe symptoms than the first infection. This study came after Hong Kong's first case of reinfection in a 33 year old man, as reported in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases. This new study tested a 25 year old male patient in the US, who had been infected with two distinct variants of SARS-CoV-2 in the span of 48 hours, testing negative between the two infections. The scientists found that the patient contracted a more severe case of the virus the second time around, which resulted in hospitalization with oxygen support. This study indicated to the scientific community that previous exposure to the coronavirus does not guarantee immunity to it, as was previously understood.

We are still learning about the biology of the virus as well as our immune system's response to it. However, due to the findings of this recent study, we now know a few things:

1

Reinfection can happen very quickly.

2

There is no guarantee that COVID-19 antibodies can protect people from reinfection.

3

Reinfection from COVID-19 can potentially prove more serious than its first occurrence.

How to prevent reinfection moving forward:

In light of emerging cases of infection as well as reinfections around the world, scientists urge that individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 should continue to strictly adhere to the health protocols laid out by WHO such as the following:

- **First**, try to stay home as much as possible - if you must go out, practice physical distancing (**maintaining 6 feet of distance from others**), wear a face mask, and avoid large gatherings.
- **Second**, wash your hands frequently using soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth if your hands aren't clean.
- **Third**, regularly disinfect high-touch surfaces in your home, such as doorknobs, appliance handles, and countertops. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the United States has a list of products that are effective at killing SARS-CoV-2.
- **Lastly**, avoid being around people who are sick and stay at home if you're ill. Each one of us has a role to play in this fight against COVID-19, and can each take relevant precautions to ensure our own and others' safety.



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How to improve education for all during and after COVID-19?

Educational institutes in Pakistan started opening in phases starting from **September 15**, with universities, colleges and classes resuming on-campus classes. Primary schools reopened on **September 30**, under the final phase of the reopening of educational institutes in the country. This happened after a gap of six months since the surge of COVID-19 in Pakistan. However, since September 15, more than two dozen educational institutes have been closed across Pakistan due to noncompliance with health SOPs. Many others have been closed due to the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in the institutions, including the closure of five more schools/colleges in Islamabad as of October 10.

This situation is not unique to Pakistan - the COVID-19 crisis has affected as much as **94 percent of children across the world** by denying them access to schools (UNESCO). While many schools moved towards online-learning, low and middle-income countries could not conduct online classes due to limited internet access and electronic devices at home. As many education systems now turn to reopening, children are left to face a very different educational experience. Due to the chaotic rise and fall of COVID-19 cases, schools will continue to shut down and reopen. During these times, we can use the insights gained from research conducted by close to 220 professors affiliated with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and its partners.

The following **three insights** provide guidance on how we can support children's education during such times:

- 1** You should support caregivers at home to help children learn while schools are closed.
- 2** As schools reopen, educators should use low-stakes assessments to identify learning gaps.
- 3** You should tailor children's instruction to help them master foundational skills once learning gaps are identified.

Mild Symptoms include:



Severe Symptoms include:



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Where can I get tested?

Karachi

Aga Khan University Hospital

Stadium Road, Karachi

Dow Medical Hospital

Ojha Campus

Suparco Road, Karachi

Indus Hospital

Opposite Darussalam Society, Korangi Crossing, Karachi

Multan

Nishtar Hospital

Nishtar Road,

Justice Hamid Colony, Multan

Rawalpindi

Armed Forces Institute of Pathology

Range Road

CMH Complex, Rawalpindi

Hyderabad

Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS)

Liberty Market Roundabout, Near

Liaquat University Hospital

Hyderabad, Sindh.

Islamabad

National Institute of Health

Park Road

Chak Shahzad, Islamabad

Khairpur

Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences

Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh

Abbottabad

Public Health Lab Ayub Teaching Hospital

Mansehra Road. Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Shaheena Jameel Hospital

Abbottabad . N-35

Quetta

Fatima Jinnah Hospital

Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta

Peshawar

Khyber Medical University

Phase 5, Hayatabad, Peshawar, KP

Hayatabad Medical Complex

Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad,

Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Lahore

Punjab AIDS Lab

PACP Complex 6 - Birdwood Road, Lahore

Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital

7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore

For more cities visit the [COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)

Coronavirus CivActs Campaign is brought to you by
Accountability Lab Pakistan

To receive our
regular updates
through WhatsApp

1. Add our number **+27 60 080 6146** as a contact.
2. Send the word "**Pakistan**" as a message on WhatsApp.



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