

PAKISTAN CORONAVIRUS CIVICACTS CAMPAIGN

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With the continuous spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan; Accountability Lab is continuously building on its work with district governments and Community Front Liners (network of volunteers) through Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) to debunk rumours, fake news & misinformation related to COVID-19. The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign supported by the Open Society Foundation also conducts fact-checking, synthesizes data, pushes out the verified information through weekly bulletins and social media campaign for mass awareness, and gathers feedback on the COVID19 response in Pakistan. The bulletins are disseminated in five languages including English, Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi & Sindhi to reach far and wide to help citizens build resilience and fight against the pandemic. These bulletins are also shared with a range of stakeholders from the general public, to government departments, development agencies, CSOs and humanitarian networks via online and offline means.

The campaign also highlights important government decisions, information about vaccination drives, community feedback and concerns related to COVID-19. The objective of the campaign is to enhance awareness among the most vulnerable segments of the society including women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, transgenders and persons with disabilities. In the current phase of the campaign, Accountability Lab has also engaged the local female community leaders and building their capacity through training and active civic engagement to counter-myths and disseminate facts around COVID-19 and gender issues.

MYTHBUSTERS



Omicron variant will be the last variant of COVID-19



FACT ✓

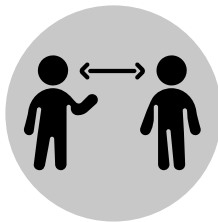
OR

MYTH ✗

With the wave of omicron subsiding in Pakistan it may be wrongly assumed that the Omicron variant will be the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, health specialists argue that the omicron is most likely not the last of the variants due to several reasons. Firstly, it is the nature of viruses to mutate and change their form, viruses mutate when they replicate so the mutation process is continuous. The severity of the mutation and its impact can not be assumed as to will this new form be more contagious, more virulent, or whether or not it will override prior immunity from the virus. Experts suggest that the only way to reduce the frequency of mutations is to control the spread by getting vaccinated. Therefore, it is important to be cautious, be vaccinated, wear masks and sanitize hands and surfaces often to help slow the spread of the virus as the pandemic has not yet ended.

Source: [Deseret](#)

PREVENTIVE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Wear a mask that has two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric and covers your mouth, nose and chin. It should not be loose on the sides.

Practice physical distancing outside your home by keeping a distance of 3 feet between you and others.

Get registered for vaccination as soon as possible and follow all pre and post-vaccination guidelines.

Avoid unnecessary contact with eyes, nose and mouth as that increases chances of virus transfer.



Keep yourself and your environment clean.

If you fall sick, stay at home and contact a healthcare provider.

Avoid unnecessary outdoor socialising and spending time in crowded spaces

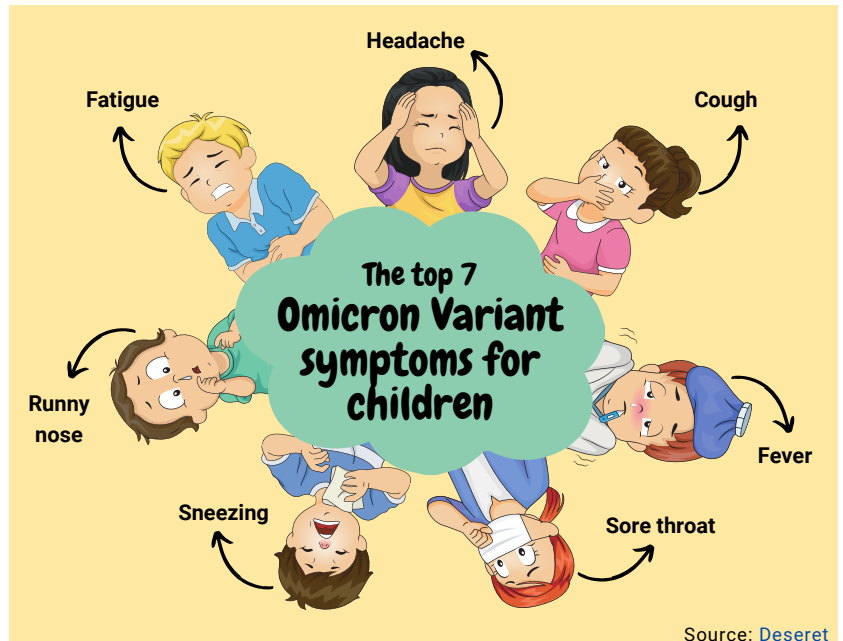
UPDATES

FRESH RESEARCH SAYS OMICRON LASTS MUCH LONGER ON SURFACES THAN OTHER VARIANTS – BUT DISINFECTING STILL WORKS

Since the beginning of the pandemic, health professionals have had to face the challenge of figuring out how the virus is transmitted, and how quickly it spreads. Rigorous research has provided us with many of the answers to these questions. As the World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that the COVID-19 virus is spread mainly through close personal contact, via aerosols, and especially through crowded, poorly ventilated spaces. Over the passage of time, it has been noticed that more attention is being paid to measures of social distancing and wearing masks

which represent that our understanding of the spread of the virus has improved, however, the threat of the spread through infected surfaces still remains. New research conducted in Japan compared the different variants of the COVID-19 virus in terms of how long they can survive on different types of surfaces. The Research revealed that SARS-COV-2 variants are able to survive on skin and plastic more than twice as long as the original Wuhan strain. Of particular interest, the Omicron variant was found to survive on plastic for 193.5 hours and on the skin for 21.1 hours. This study also claimed to be the first to have included the latest Omicron virus for research in such side-by-side comparisons. The study has yielded interesting results but has limitations that mean understanding the significance of these findings to the real world is difficult.

Source: [theconversation](#)



Source: [Deseret](#)

“PAKISTAN SETTING HIGHEST VACCINATION RECORDS DUE TO DOOR-TO-DOOR VACCINATION CAMPAIGN” - ASAD UMAR

Applauding the door-to-door COVID-19 immunization drive, Federal Planning and Development Minister Asad Umar said;



Asad Umar @Asad_Umar · Feb 11

Another record set with 2.24 million vaccinations in a day. Last 4 days in a row we have vaccinated more than 2 million each day. Every 3 out of 4 pakistani's eligible for vaccination have recieved at least 1 dose. 58% are fully vaccinated. Well done Pakistan



“Target is to reach all citizens to allow us to finally end all Covid-related restrictions.”

According to the NCOC, 2,244,371 doses of coronavirus vaccine were administered across the country over the last 24 hours.

Earlier this month, to prevent the spread of the highly contagious omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus, the government took the initiative to take the vaccination campaign door-to-door to vaccinate the maximum number of individuals in a lesser time. The NCOC had announced a two-week door-to-door vaccination campaign titled ‘Every Pakistani Safe from Coronavirus’ to rid the nation of COVID-19.

The February 1-14 vaccine campaign would cover all people above the age of 12 years.

Source: [Tribune](#)

INSIGHTS

Dr. Iftikhar Uddin is an assistant professor, at the Department of Community Medicine, Bacha Khan Medical College, and a Focal person for the COVID19 media communications, Health Department KP. He is also leading the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Task Force for KP Health Ministry.

We conducted an interview with him to learn about how a common man can discern rumors around COVID 19.

Dr. Iftikhar provided an in-depth assessment of the KP government's Covid19 response, he commented; "First of all, I would like to share that there has always been segregation between health care administrators and health care academicians. My being included in the provincial command and operation center is proof of how we are moving forward to bridge this gap. One of the strengths of the COVID 19 response program is the vigilant leadership which actively worked to coordinate early response within the province. On 12th March I was included in the response efforts as Risk Communication and Community Engagement Task Force Lead. As initial steps, the health department ensured the capacity of hospitals and adequate testing facilities, presence of personal protective equipment, and smooth supply chains. My first task as community engagement and risk communication lead was to engage religious leaders to impress upon them the severity of the situation and encourage them to influence their communities to follow the SOPs. We also disseminated their video messages to share with the community at large. So, coordination among the health department, information department, and Auqaf department was one of our initial strengths. We started to streamline operations early on. The extent of the pandemic and its far-reaching impact was disproportionate with the skeletal structure of our health department which can be identified as a weakness.

Expert's Interview

KP Government's Covid19 Response



Ensured the capacity of hospitals and adequate testing facilities



Presence of personal protective equipment



Engage religious leaders to impress upon them the severity of the situation and encourage them to influence their communities to follow the SOPs



Developing a "Risk Communication and Community Engagement Strategy"



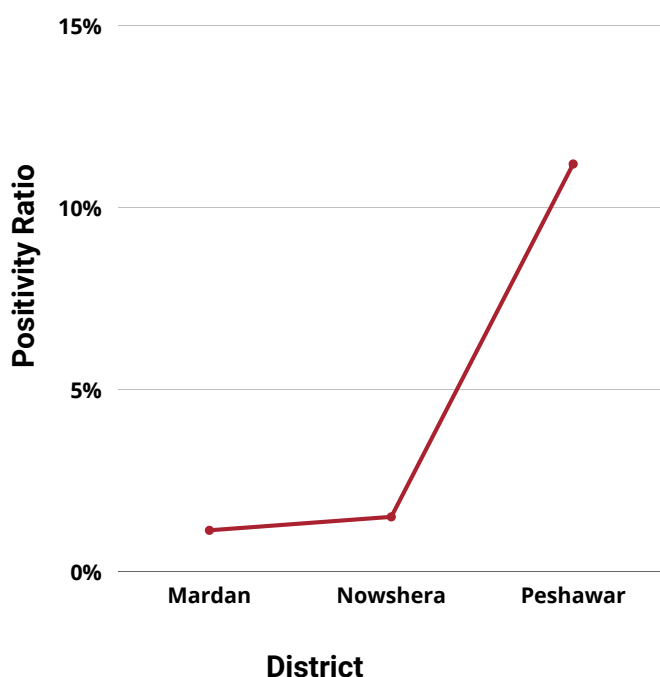
Establishing a health education cell in the health secretariat

INSIGHTS

Another weakness identified was the absence of our own information channels, though at the provincial level we were able to disseminate information there was a disconnect among the districts. For this, we are developing a "Risk Communication and Community Engagement Strategy". We are also establishing a health education cell in the health secretariat, and then we will move to create risk communications channels in district offices and district health units. These channels will be used to share communication not only about COVID 19 but also about dengue, polio, malnutrition, and other health emergencies. These channels will ensure that DHUs are well connected within their communities so information dissemination could be swift.

Communities are usually influenced by local religious leaders, teachers, or other active members of the community. We aim to have a sustained engagement with all community stakeholders so at times of crisis they are highly active in protection and prevention drives. As community engagement lead, I can only talk about this aspect of the COVID 19 response program. Other areas like hospital management and caseload, supply chain management, and personal protective equipment were dealt with by specific teams. Our overall strength was to start early and when in May we saw our first peak load in hospitals we were well prepared."

On the topic of the potentially vulnerable group(s) in this new, Omicron-led, Covid19 wave, he replied; "The vulnerable groups identified are individuals above the age of 60 yrs of age and pregnant females. The only change from previous waves is that fully vaccinated individuals who have received two shots of vaccine and a booster shot are not included in the vulnerable group even if their age may be above 60yrs. We have started mobile vaccine drives in schools and door to door with lady health workers."



Furthermore quoting recent statistics of female recipients of vaccination and booster shots in KP Dr. Iftikhar talked about the impact upon vaccine uptake and reduction of disease. He shared; "Data for today regarding relevant district vaccination positivity ratios is; for Mardan 10350 tests were conducted from which 20 were confirmed making it 1.13 %, For Nowshera 433 test took place, where 8 cases were positive 1.5, in case of Peshawar condition, is a bit serious 1928 test from which 216 were positively making it 11.2 % positivity ratio. This upcoming surge of Omicron is not reflected in hospital burden due to less severity of the symptoms and due to increased vaccination."

Where can I get tested?

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Islamabad | National Institute of Health Park Road, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad |
| Karachi | Agha Khan University Hospital, Stadium Road, Karachi, Sindh |
| Hyderabad | Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS), Liberty Market Roundabout, Liaquat University Hospital, Hyderabad |
| Khairpur | Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences, Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh |
| Peshawar | Hayatabad Medical Complex Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. |
| Mardan | Chughtai Lab Mardan point, near Allied Bank, Shamsi Road, Mardan, KP |
| Haripur | Excel Labs, TMA Plaza Shop No. 6, Near Girls Degree College Circular Road Haripur, KP |
| Lahore | Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital, 7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore, Punjab |
| Multan | Nishtar Hospital Nishtar Road, Justice Hamid Colony, Multan |
| Rawalpindi | Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Range Road, CMH Complex, Rawalpindi, Punjab |
| Quetta | Fatima Jinnah Hospital Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta |
| Muzaffarabad | Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), Ambore, Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir |
| Gilgit | District Headquarters Hospital, Hospital Road, Gilgit, GB |

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