

How lockdown could affect our long-term health

9 April 2020



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Researchers at the University of East Anglia are launching a new project to track the health of the nation during lockdown, and they are looking for volunteers to take part.

They will monitor and track how [lifestyle](#) behaviours change as a result of the lockdown and how this affects our physical and mental health.

This will be investigated against the backdrop of social and policy changes—including the lifting or tightening of lockdown measures, as the pandemic unfolds.

The research will take the form of an online survey—with questions on a range of lifestyle behaviours including physical activity, diet, sleep, smoking, drinking, and drug use.

The research team plan to publish their findings in a rapid response format to inform current decision making, as well as future pandemic responses.

Lead researcher Dr. Caitlin Notley, from UEA's Norwich Medical School, said: "People around the world have had to change their lifestyles very

quickly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We want to track people's health and lifestyle behaviours over the lockdown period to help answer important questions about the overall impact of social distancing measures on health.

"We'll be looking at the impact of changes—focusing on things like people's [mental health](#) and wellbeing, whether we are getting enough exercise, whether people are smoking or drinking more alcohol."

Dr. Felix Naughton, from UEA's School of Health Sciences and one of the study team leaders, said: "What is different about this study is that we are collecting information daily. This means we can actually learn about how individuals respond differently during the [lockdown](#) and what factors influence each person's lifestyle behaviours and wellbeing.

"We will also be able to provide a summary to each participant of their data tracked over time," he added.

The study will collect information from participants via an [online survey](#)—including age, gender, ethnicity, weight, height, the number of adults and children in a household, whether people have any pre-existing medical conditions and whether they are in an at-risk group for COVID-19. Employment status and average monthly income will also be taken into account.

Participants will be asked to share information daily on their smoking habits, [alcohol consumption](#), mental wellbeing, [physical activity](#) levels, sleep, and nutrition—as well as whether they are suffering COVID-19 relevant symptoms such as a persistent cough or fever.

Some participants may also be asked to take part in telephone interviews.

To sign up to take part in the project, visit
https://survey.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cMgh8c_kcnwcnoMt.

Provided by University of East Anglia
APA citation: How lockdown could affect our long-term health (2020, April 9) retrieved 30 April 2021 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-lockdown-affect-long-term-health.html>

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