

# Nonpharmaceutical interventions slow COVID-19 growth

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(HealthDay)—Nonpharmaceutical interventions have been beneficial for

slowing COVID-19 growth on a global level and within Europe, according to two studies published online June 8 in *Nature*.

Solomon Hsiang, Ph.D., from the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California Berkeley, and colleagues compiled data on 1,717 local, regional, and national nonpharmaceutical interventions deployed in the pandemic across localities in China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, France, and the United States. Reduced-form econometric methods were applied to measure the effect of policies. In the absence of policy actions, COVID-19 exhibited exponential growth rates of about 38 percent per day. The researchers found that anticontagion policies significantly slowed COVID-19 growth. The impact of some policies differed on different populations, but consistent evidence showed that the [policy](#) packages achieved large, beneficial, and measurable health outcomes. Interventions were estimated to prevent or delay 62 million confirmed cases across these six countries, corresponding to averting about 530 million total infections.

Seth Flaxman, Ph.D., from Imperial College London, and colleagues examined the impact of nonpharmaceutical interventions across 11 European countries from the start of COVID-19 until May 4, 2020. The researchers estimated that for all countries considered, current interventions have driven the reproductive number below 1 and achieved epidemic control. Across all 11 countries, an estimated 12 to 15 million individuals have been infected with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 up to May 4, 2020, representing 3.2 to 4.0 percent of the population.

"We cannot say for certain that the current measures will continue to control the epidemic in Europe; however, if [current trends](#) continue, there is reason for optimism," Flaxman and colleagues write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text - Hsiang \(subscription or](#)

[payment may be required\)](#)

[Abstract/Full Text - Flaxman \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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