



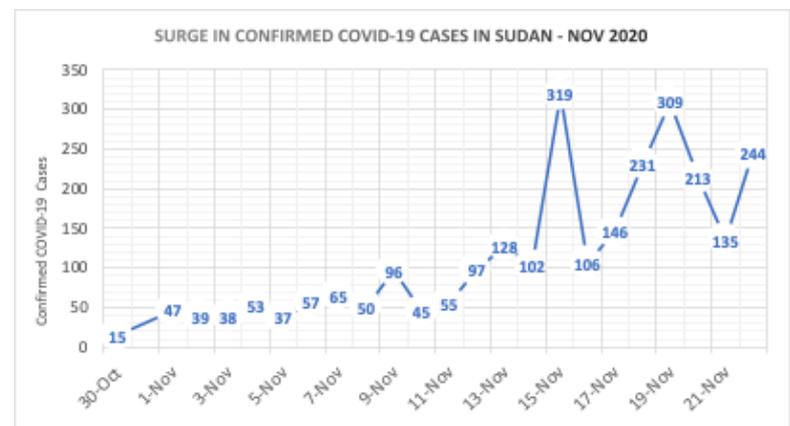
In Sudan the Rooted in Trust (RiT) project aims to mitigate and disrupt misinformation about COVID-19 by collecting and analyzing rumors on the Sudanese social media space. This second bulletin edition is based on an analysis of 235 posts collected in Arabic between 6 and 18 November 2020, on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram.

In this week's bulletin we shed light on a variety of rumors, such as high temperatures "killing" COVID-19, prejudice against Ethiopian refugees, differences between seasonal flu and COVID-19, the use of Zomax as a cure, physical distancing at schools, and reinfection. This regular collection of community insights aims to address questions and common misperceptions about COVID-19 found across Sudan. It aims to help volunteers and field staff provide fact-based answers to their communities' questions and concerns.

COVID-19 SITUATION IN SUDAN

Sudan has witnessed a high increase in COVID-19 cases in the past two weeks. As of 24 November, officially confirmed cases rose to 16,431. Most cases identified have been in the capital Khartoum, and Al-Gezira state.

SURGE IN COVID-19 CASES IN SUDAN



Source: Figures provided by the Sudanese Health Ministry

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH
COVID-19 HOTLINE - SERVING ALL
AREAS OF SUDAN: 9090

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SUDAN HEALTH OBSERVATORY
WWW.SHO.GOV.SD/CONTROLLER

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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WWW.EMRO.WHO.INT/AR

**COVID-19 IS REAL AND THERE ARE NEW CASES DIAGNOSED ALL THE TIME!
 BE SAFE: MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCE, WASH HANDS, WEAR A MASK**

WHAT ARE RUMORS?
RUMORS ARE CURRENTLY CIRCULATING STORIES OR UNVERIFIED REPORTS OF UNCERTAIN OR DOUBTFUL INFORMATION COLLECTED FROM FIRST-HAND SOURCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WHICH COULD TAKE THE SHAPE OF A QUESTION, CRITICISM, OR GENERAL COMMENTS ON A SITUATION OR TOPIC. RUMORS CAN BE TRICKY BECAUSE THEY MIGHT HAVE SOME TRUTH IN THEM!



RUMOUR #1

"I was just investigating with my son who is in second grade and asking him about social distancing at school and he told me: "We are two sharing one desk". Tomorrow I will go to the school to find out more."
Female -Facebook

ANSWER

Going back to school means we should follow best practices set by the World Health Organization and UNICEF to protect and maintain a safe environment for our children. This should start by providing children with information about how to protect themselves by following hygiene practices, such as regular handwashing, practicing physical distancing in classrooms and playgrounds. Schools must also clean and disinfect facilities and increase airflow and ventilation by keeping windows open.

RUMOUR #3

"I shouldn't quarantine if I have COVID-19 but show no symptoms" Male -Facebook

ANSWER

According to the World Health Organization it is still possible for asymptomatic people to transmit the virus to others so it is advised to always wear your mask, keep your distance from others and frequently wash your hands. If you continue to show no symptoms, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, you can interact with others 10 days after you tested positive.

RUMOUR #2

"Igd al-Jalad (musical band) released a coronavirus awareness song a few months back and tonight they had a concert at the national theatre with almost 6,000 people attending. People were singing and dancing and COVID-19 is floating in the air. All that was left was for them to sing "coronavirus does not exist, do not fool us" Male -Twitter

ANSWER

Mass gatherings—like concerts and festivals—can cause a spike in COVID-19 cases, since the virus spreads through droplets in the air when people talk, sneeze, cough, or come in contact with contaminated surfaces. Having tens, hundreds or thousands of people in one place without maintaining protective measures can create the perfect breeding ground for the virus.

Since the frequency of interaction between an infected person and an uninfected individual can increase the risk of infection, it is advised to minimize public gatherings, when possible, and request that all attendees observe the precautions set by the Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) such as wearing masks, sanitizing their hands, and keeping at least a two-meter distance from others.

As an event planner it is your role to post signs promoting everyday protective measures, making sure that you have accessible restrooms for attendees to wash their hands frequently, proper ventilation and maintaining a healthy environment by cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

RUMOUR #4

“Since God created us, every year we have colds and infections because of the changes in seasons from summer to winter. What brings COVID-19 again?” Female - Facebook

COVID-19 is a new virus that did not exist before. Colds, flu, and COVID-19 have similar symptoms, but are caused by different viruses. For example, COVID-19 is unlikely to make you sneeze, whereas sneezing is characteristic of both seasonal flu and colds. However, having trouble breathing is usually a sign of a more severe case of COVID-19. Here are the main differences and similarities between the flu, colds and COVID-19 based on information by WHO:

Symptoms		COVID-19	FLU	COLD
	Fever- 37.8C or above	Common	Common	Rare
	Cough	Common (dry)	Common	Mild
	Loss of taste/ smell	Common	Rare	Sometimes
	Fatigue	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
	Headaches	Sometimes	Common	Rare
	Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
	Runny/ stuffy nose	Rare	Sometimes	Common
	Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
	Sneezing	No	No	Common
	Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No
	Diarrhea	Sometimes in children	Sometimes in children	No

ANSWER

RUMOUR #5

“Take Zomax, drink lemon juice and eat oranges, boil ginger and inhale the steam, and burn acacia incense at home” Female -Facebook

ANSWER

Since COVID-19 is a new virus, at present there are no known pharmaceutical or traditional cures, except for Remdesivir which has been approved in the US and Japan only, and is not widely used. Drinking orange juice can provide our bodies with important nutrients such as Vitamin C and can be very beneficial for having better immunity. Although Acacia has shown some benefits, inhaling the incense may be hazardous to our bodies. There is no evidence that ginger water is an effective prevention or treatment measure for COVID-19. Preventative measures such as handwashing, physical distancing and the use of masks remain the best ways to avoid catching the virus.

RUMOUR #6

“Which lockdown are you speaking about, they found a treatment for COVID-19.” Male - Facebook

ANSWER

So far, there is no globally approved treatment or vaccine for COVID-19. Japan and the United States have approved Remdesivir for use against COVID-19, based on a study that showed it modestly reduced the time to recover from the virus in some hospitalized patients with severe illness. But it has only been administered to a limited number of people, and only in emergency cases. The World Health organization does not recommend using Remdesivir on COVID-19 patients, citing it does not improve survival.

The best way to protect ourselves as we continue with our daily lives, is to wear a face mask or covering when in public, maintain a distance of two meters from others, avoid touching our eyes, mouth and nose, and wash our hands regularly with soap and water for at least 40 seconds.

RUMOUR #7

"You cannot contract COVID-19 twice, and God knows best. Oh God, protect us all" Female -Facebook

ANSWER

Based on existing evidence reinfection appears to be rare, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, cases of reinfection have been reported. Reinfection means a person has previously recovered from the virus, and later becomes infected again.

We should keep in mind that spreading misinformation in our communities can have negative effects as it will lead to people becoming dismissive of health procedures that we should all follow to keep ourselves and our communities safe. Always remember to stay up-to-date with the new developments relating to COVID-19 by seeking information from credible sources, such as the World Health Organization, Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Sudanese Ministry of Health.

RUMOUR #8

“The new cases are being brought in by more than 6,000 refugees coming to Kassala” Male -Twitter

The World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 a pandemic, and people infected with the virus can be found all over the world, including among Sudanese living in Saudi Arabia, United States and other countries.

We should keep in mind that spreading such rumors inciting prejudice can have negative effects on our communities, where it can spark aggressive behaviors towards vulnerable people such as refugees and other conflict-affected populations. To keep our communities safe, we should follow precautions set by the Sudanese Health Ministry such as wearing a face mask, or covering, following hygiene and hand washing habits, and practicing physical distancing.

ANSWER

RUMOUR #9

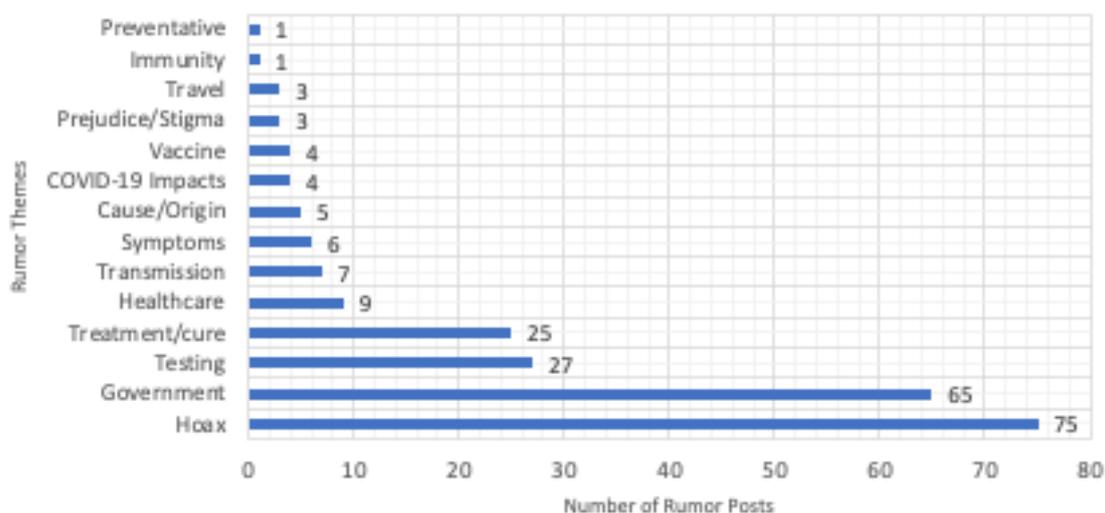
“Today's sun kills living (human) cells let alone coronavirus” Male -Twitter

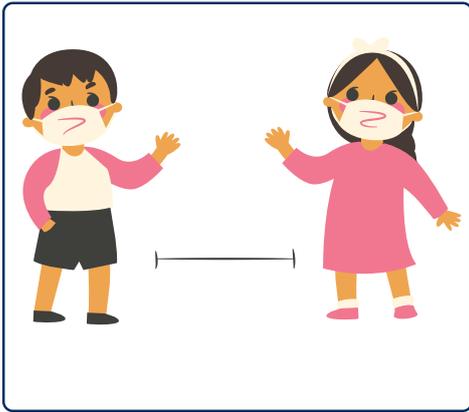
There is no evidence that hot weather kills COVID-19. The virus can spread in any climate, hot or cold, so it is best to follow the COVID-19 precautionary measures recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Sudanese Health Ministry. Countries where the weather is very hot, like the Arabian Gulf countries, where temperatures are also very high, have recorded almost a million COVID-19 cases according to the GCC Statistical Center.

ANSWER

Washing your hands with soap and water for 40 seconds has been proven to be very effective in killing the virus, as well as wearing a mask, keeping our distance in public places and self-isolating when we feel sick to keep ourselves and our community safe.

Rumor Posts by Theme





Keep a distance of one meter



Wear your mask in public spaces or if you feel sick



Wash your hands with soap and water for 40 seconds

The best way to avoid catching and spreading Covid-19 is to follow the preventive measures!

HOW TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE COVID-19?

Have you been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed positive with COVID-19?

Yes

NO

Do you have any symptoms such as fever, cough, or a sore throat?

Yes

NO

Request a PCR test. Did the test show a positive result?

Follow a 14-day strict quarantine and be vigilant of symptoms

Please note if you experience any symptoms, and seek testing if you do. Otherwise, follow the preventative measures set by the Ministry of Health

Yes

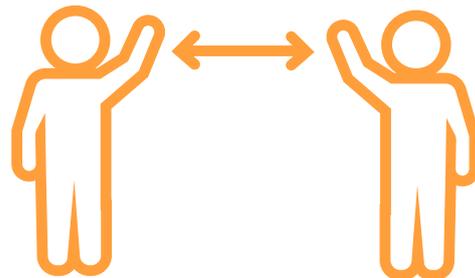
NO

Follow a 14-day strict quarantine or the recommended treatment by a licensed doctor based on the severity of the symptoms

Follow a 14-day strict quarantine and be vigilant of symptoms



Please follow the preventative measures set by the Ministry of Health



Say hello from a distance!