



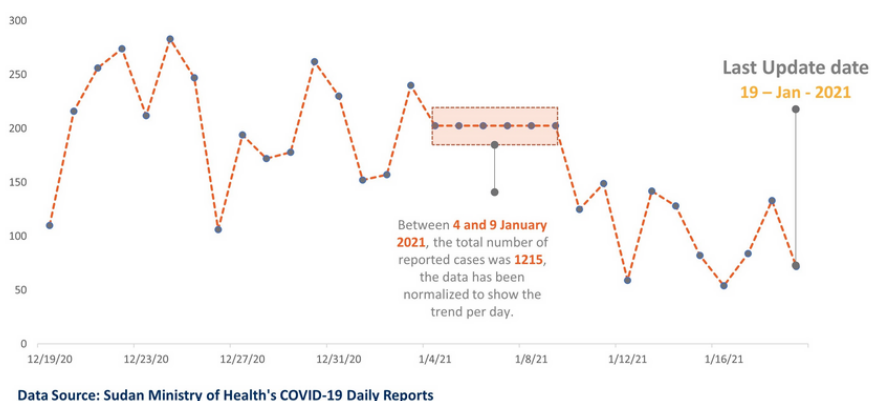
The Sudan the Rooted in Trust (RiT) project aims to address COVID-19 misinformation by collecting and analyzing rumors found on Sudanese social media. This bulletin is based on an analysis of 528 rumors collected in Arabic between 18 December 2020 and 12 January 2021, from Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp.

In this week's bulletin we shed light on a variety of rumors, such as consuming peppers as treatment, a fourth COVID-19 variant found in Sudan, asymptomatic with a positive PCR test, and exported masks can cause a COVID-19 infection.

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 COVID-19 Confirmed Cases (19 Dec 2020 to 19 Jan 2021)



We have been witnessing a surge in COVID-19 cases in Sudan since November 2020. As of 19 January 2021, the official number rose to 28,233 confirmed COVID-19 cases, compared to 23,316 cases on 20 December 2020. Most cases identified have been in the capital Khartoum and Al-Gezira State.

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH

COVID-19 HOTLINE - SERVING ALL

AREAS OF SUDAN: 9090

“

SUDAN HEALTH OBSERVATORY

[WWW.SHO.GOV.SD/CONTROLLER](http://WWW.SHO.GOV.SD/CONTROLLER)

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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

[WWW.EMRO.WHO.INT/AR](http://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 element of truth in them!

RUMOR RISK LEVEL



HIGH



MEDIUM



LOW

## RUMOUR #1

## TREATMENT

“vaxato 10 for mild symptoms and Clexane injection for severe symptoms. Aspirin after recovering” Female -Facebook

There is no globally approved cure for COVID-19, however as of December 2020, after rigorous testing for efficacy and safety, a number of COVID-19 vaccines have been issued for public use. These vaccines can help protect us from a COVID-19 infection.

Neither Vaxato 10, Clexane or Aspirin should be used without medical supervision. If you are developing COVID-19 symptoms seek immediate testing, self-isolate and call your doctor. You should avoid seeking medical advice from non-professionals on social media. Always consult with a healthcare provider for all medical inquiries.

HIGH RISK

## RUMOUR #3

## SYMPTOMS

“Does Corona cause hypothyroidism and gastritis and colitis?” Male -Facebook

According to the National Institutes of Health the majority of people who develop COVID-19 either have mild symptoms or no symptoms, some of these include gastrointestinal symptoms such as diarrhea, loss of appetite, or vomiting even in the absence of other flu-like symptoms. If you experience such symptoms it is best to get tested for COVID-19, stay hydrated by drinking lots of fluids, avoid foods that upset your stomach, and get as much rest as possible.

MEDIUM RISK

## RUMOUR #2

## IMMUNITY

“This is the only group that Corona does not affect” Female -Facebook

“Studies have proven that pregnant women infected with Corona give birth to babies carrying antibodies, meaning as though they were vaccinated, so don't worry, it will pass God willingly”  
Female -Facebook

It is not true that women who were infected and recovered from COVID-19 during pregnancy would deliver babies who have immunity to the virus. Infants have a lower risk of contracting COVID-19, and when infected they are usually asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.

Three CDC studies published in June and September 2020, found that pregnant patients with COVID-19 have higher hospitalization rates, a higher risk of ICU admission, and an increased likelihood of mechanical ventilation, compared to COVID-19 patients who were not pregnant.

One of the studies found that COVID-19 can cause birth complications. This study found pre-term delivery, pregnancy loss and stillbirths occurred at higher rates in pregnant patients with COVID-19. All of these studies highlighted the need for strict infection control measures for people who are pregnant or trying to conceive, including screening and monitoring throughout pregnancy. COVID-19 does not cause birth defects and it has not been suggested that people delay pregnancy because of the pandemic.

MEDIUM RISK

## RUMOUR #4

## TRANSMISSION

"Beware of the masks coming from abroad, they contains imported Corona in order to get you to buy the vaccine" Female -Twitter

ANSWER

COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that affects the respiratory system, it has a high level of transmission because it can travel through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Even though masks can feel uncomfortable to wear for prolonged periods of time, especially in Sudan because of the hot weather, it is our only defense mechanism against the virus when combined with social distancing and washing our hands with soap and water for 40 seconds. Masks go through a rigorous sterilization process before packaging to make sure that it they are safe for use. In order to be more safe, avoid buying masks from open or unclean boxes and do not use masks that are damaged.

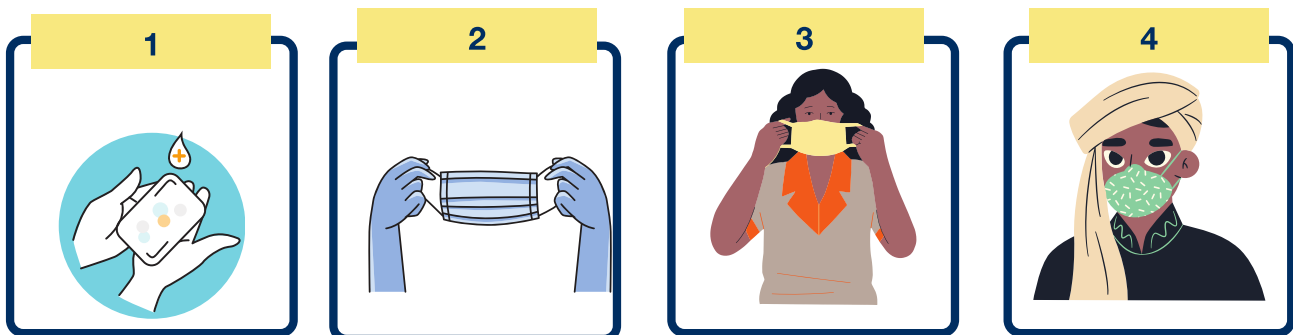
### Tips for cleaning cloth masks:

- Wash in soap or detergent, preferably using hot water at least once a day
- If hot water is not available, wash in room temperature water then boil the mask in hot water for 1 minute.

For more information about masks please visit: [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int)

MEDIUM RISK

## Wear a mask when in public or feeling sick



## RUMOUR #5

## TESTING

"My nephew was supposed to travel and he did the test. The result came out positive (Corona) but this guy doesn't have any symptoms He's fine and not complaining of anything. I'm asking, is it possible for the test to be inaccurate? Or does he really have corona?" Female -Facebook

ANSWER

COVID-19 symptoms differ from one person to another, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, you can test positive for COVID-19 without developing or showing any symptoms. Even if you are asymptomatic you should follow the recommended preventative measures set by the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health: regular hand-washing, wearing a face mask when ill or in public, self-isolating when feeling unwell or testing positive for COVID-19, and maintaining a physical distance of at least two meters from others. By following these steps we protect our loved ones and communities.

MEDIUM RISK

## RUMOUR #6

## CAUSE/ORIGIN

“Sudan discovered a fourth variant of the Corona family” Female -Facebook

Neither the UK variant or South Africa variant has been recorded in Sudan. There is widespread concern that some new COVID-19 variants appear to be more infectious than previous strains of the virus. Multiple variants of the virus have been documented globally during this pandemic, but scientists say that newly identified variants in both the UK and South Africa appear to spread faster and are 40 to 70 percent more transmissible.

However, CDC notes that there is no evidence that they cause more severe illness or increased risk of death. Yet, the transmission of a more infectious variant could spur exponential growth in the number of COVID-19 cases. Such rapid growth in cases could, in turn, lead to more fatalities: with an increase in hospitalizations, health-care systems could become overwhelmed and consequently unable to care for large numbers of people with COVID-19 infections.

As the virus changes continuously, the greater the number of infected people the more chances the virus has to infecting more. For these reasons preventive measures like wearing face masks, hand washing and physical distancing are important.

**MEDIUM RISK**

## RUMOUR #7

## PREVENTATIVE

“Hey guys, are you convinced with these cloth masks thing, or just medical ones?”  
Male -Twitter

While researchers continue to learn more about the virus that causes COVID-19, it is extremely important to maintain the recommended preventative measures. Wearing a face mask is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of the virus.

According to the World Health Organization, medical masks should be worn by healthcare workers, anyone testing for COVID-19 or has tested positive for the virus, and those caring for someone who has COVID-19 or is suspected to have the virus. Medical masks are also recommended for at-risk groups, including those over 60 years of age, and people with pre-existing medical conditions, like diabetes, hypertension and cancer. While fabric masks should be worn by all people under the age of 60 that do not suffer from chronic and severe health conditions.

Wearing a face mask when in public, along with maintaining a physical distance of at least 2 meters and washing our hands with soap and water will better protect us and our communities from a COVID-19 infection.

**MEDIUM RISK**

ANSWER

ANSWER

## RUMOUR #8

### TREATMENT/CURE

“Eat lots of pepper and the sense of smell and taste will return” Female -Facebook

Although hot pepper has a lot of vitamins that are good for our bodies and makes our food rich in flavors, according to the World Health Organization, it has not been proven that hot pepper cures COVID-19 or its symptoms. There is no cure for COVID-19.

Social media is a great place to stay in touch with your family and friends, but we should keep in mind that we can come across a lot of misinformation that is not beneficial and may harm us. Remember to always ask a professional health provider on the best practices for a swift recovery from a COVID-19 infection.

**LOW RISK**

## RUMOUR #9

### TRANSMISSION

“Do mosquitoes transmit the corona?” Female -Facebook

According to the World Health Organization, there is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can be carried or transmitted by mosquitoes. Coronavirus is a respiratory virus which spreads primarily through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose.

To protect yourself and others around you, wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or disinfect with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and avoid close contact with anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

**LOW RISK**

## RUMOUR #10

### SYMPTOMS

“You can only socialize with your family after a year of recovery” Female -Facebook

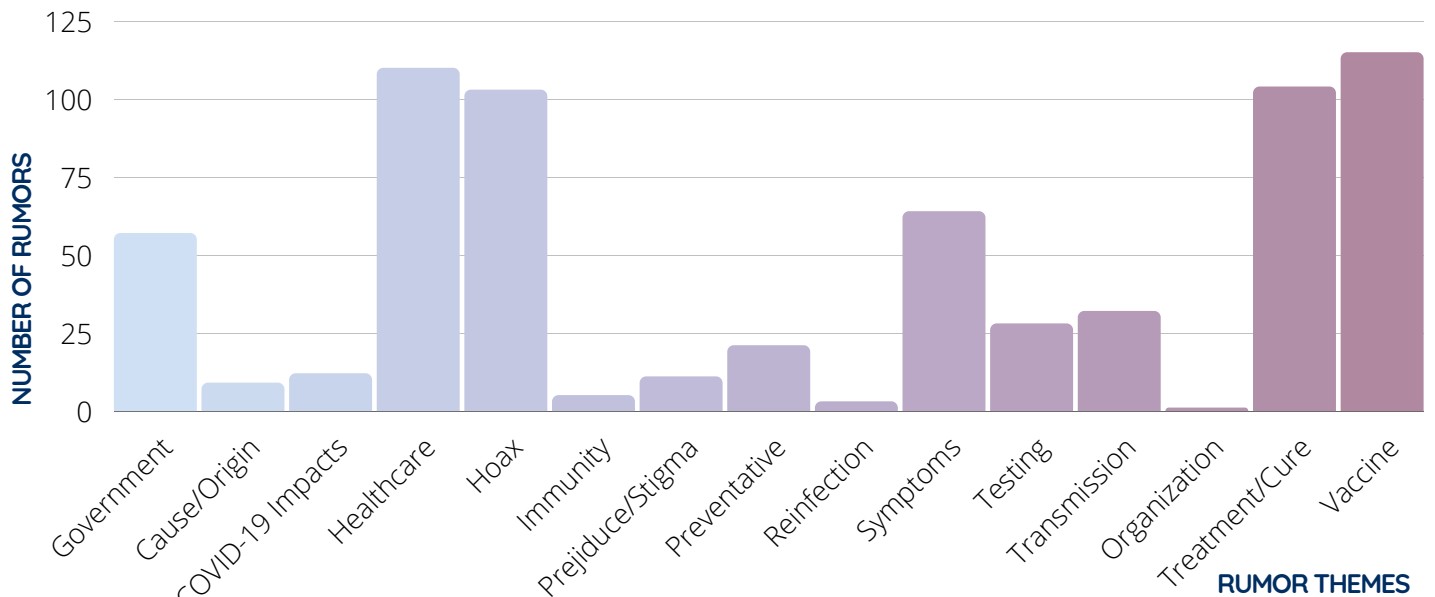
COVID-19 can spread fast through the droplets of an infected person when they cough or sneeze. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, if you are asymptomatic you must quarantine for 10 days, however those that show symptoms for the virus may require a 14-day quarantine, and for severe cases the quarantine period may go up to four weeks or until symptoms disappear. If you or any of your family members develop COVID-19 symptoms, it is advised to get tested and self-isolate, even though it might feel lonely, but this is the best way to protect yourself and family members from catching the virus.

Make sure that the sick family member is drinking a lot of fluids to stay hydrated, resting at home, washing their hands with soap and water for 40 seconds. For most people symptoms lasts a few days and improve after a week.

**LOW RISK**



## TOP RUMOR THEMES



*Analysis of 528 rumors collected in Arabic between 18 December 2020 and 12 January 2021*

## 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

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

