



The Rooted in Trust project at Internews seeks to respond to misinformation about COVID-19 that deepens discrimination and affects access to basic services and assistance for vulnerable communities in Nariño. It is directed in particular towards the migrant and LGBTQI + population of Ipiales and Tumaco.

This rumor bulletin collects the rumors that circulate in Nariño about COVID-19. Between October 31 and November 15, 89 rumors were collected. Here you will find answers about the reality of COVID-19: treatments, cures, vaccines, corruption, xenophobia, and the "new normal". The rumors discussed here were selected after an analysis of the risk that their dissemination could imply for the communities. With this information, we can better take care of ourselves as a community during these difficult times.

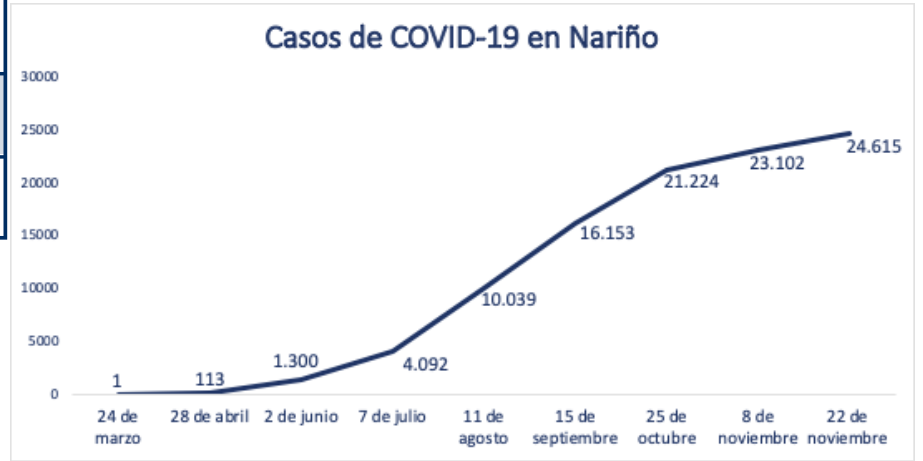
THE COVID-19 SITUATION IN NARIÑO

Nariño	
Date	11/22/2020
New Cases	133
Total Cases	24,615
Recovered	22,339
Deceased	830
Hospitalized	58

Source on left: Departmental Institute of Health in Nariño (IDSN)
 Source on the right: Data taken from IDSN

In the last two weeks, Nariño has registered a total of 1,513 new cases of COVID-19. While the situation is controlled, the cities of Pasto, Tumaco and Ipiales make up 73.58% of the cases in Nariño, with 24,615 people affected.

The department has 156 intensive care units (ICU) assigned to patients with COVID-19. At the national level, there are a total of 11,307 ICU beds.



THE REALITY OF COVID-19

“
Departmental Institute of Health in Nariño
 (2) 7235428
<http://www.idsn.gov.co>

“
Red Cross Colombia, Nariño Section
 (2) 7237448
www.facebook.com/cruzroja.seccionalnarino/

“
Alliance for Colombian Solidarity
<https://www.facebook.com/AxSColombia/>

For more details on where you can access health care, or to inquire about any COVID-19 concerns, please contact the above organizations and institutions.

COVID-19 and the pandemic are not gone! Let's not lower our guard. Let's stay informed about the virus and maintain self-care!

This rumor bulletin features common, high-risk rumors analyzed by the Internews Rooted In Trust Colombia team. These rumors were posted by individuals on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp in the month of November 2020.

VACCINE

RUMOR #1 ACCESS

With the advances in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine, we have identified rumors around the way that the vaccine will be distributed. There is a legitimate fear in the Nariño community that the vaccine will not be affordable in the territory.

➤ COVAX is a global alliance with participation of the World Health Organization (WHO) that aims to coordinate the development of a COVID-19 vaccine that has an equal and accessible distribution. COVAX aims to produce a total of 2 billion doses of the vaccine for the end of 2021, with which the most vulnerable populations in the world would be covered. The Alliance proposes that the distribution of the vaccine should be proportionate to the population of the country, rather than its wealth. Colombia is one of the countries that has requested to be part of the COVAX Alliance.

➤ Additionally, Colombia has agreements with six pharmaceutical companies that are leading the COVID-19 vaccine development.

➤ In Colombia, the vaccine will be distributed free of cost through the social security system. The application will be gradual, started with the vulnerable populations, people above the age of 60, health workers, and people who suffer other diseases that put that at greater risk.

The fear of the vaccine is understandable. According to a survey by the Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), 24.3% of the inhabitants of the capital of Nariño say they are not willing to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The best way to combat fear is to inform ourselves correctly about the development of the vaccine. To be updated on the development of the vaccine in Nariño, Colombia and the world, you can visit the pages of the following entities: [Departmental Institute of Health \(IDSN\)](#), the [Ministry of Health](#), and the [WHO](#). Additionally, you can call the IDSN telephone lines (phone: 2 7235428), the mayor of Tumaco (phone: 7271201), and the mayor of Ipiales (phone: 7734044).

Source: Ministry of Health, Minsalud explains the process to acquire the COVID-19 vaccine, November 2020

LOW RISK

ANSWER



RUMOR #2 FLU VACCINE

The increase in the number of people that have suffered COVID-19 has caused confusion about the impact of the virus on other diseases. It is rumored on social media that if one has had COVID-19 they should not receive other vaccines, such as the flu vaccine.

➤ The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the population should continue accessing routine vaccinations, like the flu vaccine. This can help diminish the general impact of respiratory diseases and alleviate the burden on the health system.

➤ The WHO informs that to date, there is no evidence that vaccines for other diseases can cure COVID-19.

However, if you have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, you should avoid vaccinating yourself against the flu to avoid infecting health workers. When you recuperate, you can go get your flu shot.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, FAQs about the flu: 2020-2021 season, November 2020

MEDIUM RISK

ANSWER

HEALTH SYSTEM

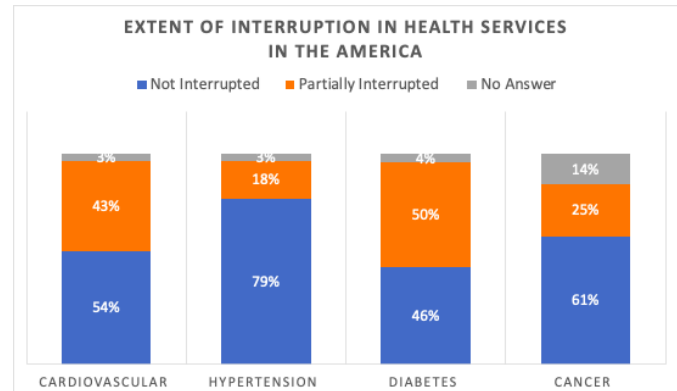
RUMOR #3 OTHER DISEASES

Various rumors on Facebook have sarcastically suggested that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the negative effects of other diseases have decreased.

➤ During the COVID-19 pandemic, 18 countries in the Americas partially or completely interrupted their medical services for noncommunicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and hypertension, increasing the vulnerability of some people to a possible contagion of the virus.

Therefore, if you suffer from any of these diseases, it is important that you continue your medical routines.

ANSWER



Source: Pan-American Health Organization, Rapid Evaluation Report, June 2020

RIESGO MEDIO

XENOPHOBIA

RUMOR #4 MIGRATION CONTROL

A rumor from November that has been widely read claims that Venezuelan immigrants are not being controlled or processed, which is making the COVID-19 situation and violence worse in Ipiales.

ANSWER

- The migrants in Colombia are in a very complicated situation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, many migrants that depended on informal income sources were forced to go back to their countries. However, the difficult situation that neighboring countries face has caused many migrants to return to Colombia. In the course of their migration, these people face the risks of suffering trafficking, smuggling and exploitation of them for labor or sexually.
- There is no evidence that the Venezuelan migration in Nariño is causing the spread of the virus. The number of migrants reported to have COVID-19 in Nariño was only at 28 on October 21.
- A study found that the migration of Venezuelans has not caused an increase in the violence that has been attributed to them. 96% of the crimes in Colombia are committed by Colombians. Nevertheless, a study also determined that giving employment opportunities to migrants reduces the incidence of crime.

Sources: Migration Policy Institute-Venezuelan Immigrants, crime, and false perceptions: an Analysis of the data in Colombia, Peru and Chile. September 2020

HIGH RISK

RUMOR #5 TESTING FOR VENEZUELAN

According to the rumor published on Facebook, Venezuelan immigrants will be volunteers for testing the COVID-19 vaccine.

ANSWER

- Since September 21st, investigative centers in Colombia began recruiting patients for the clinical trials of the Ad.26 vaccine against COVID-19 from Janssen pharmaceuticals. These centers are authorized by INVIMA and are the only ones that can select volunteers.
- The volunteers are decided based on the requirements to participate in the clinical trials and the volunteers cannot receive any incentive or payment. Additionally, Article 6 of resolution 2378 in 2008, protects the security of all participants in clinical trials.
- On the 12th of October, there was a temporary pause placed on clinical trials of the vaccine because one patient in another country developed an inexplicable sickness, but they returned to trials at the end of the same month.

In the requirements for participating in the clinical trial for the vaccines, there is no mention of criteria related to Venezuelans. Nobody, including immigrants, will have any obligation or responsibility to participate in clinical trials, this should be a totally voluntary decision.

Sources: INVIMA, Invima authorizes the recruitment of volunteers, September 2020

HIGH RISK

The security of our society as a whole depends on the effective protection of the most vulnerable. Xenophobia and discrimination undermine our response to the COVID-19 pandemic

António Vitorino, IOM Director General

No importa de dónde somos,
TODAS LAS PERSONAS MERECEMOS RESPETO

NO DISCRIMINES!

OPS Organización Panamericana de la Salud Organización Mundial de la Salud ORGANIZACIÓN DE AMÉRICAS

Conócelo. Prepárate. Actúa.
www.paho.org/coronavirus

RUMOR #6 EXTORTION

CORRUPTION

During the last few weeks, a rumor has taken hold in Nariño about the Venezuelan organizations demanding 10% of the humanitarian aid that migrants receive in Ipiales. This comment has been spread by word of mouth between migrants that reside or have just arrived in Ipiales.



- This rumor generates mistrust in the migrants and the associations created to provide guidance to other people who arrive in Colombia through the south of the country and it breaks the possibility of constructing a stable social cohesion between migrants. To date, the
- Attorney General of the country – Narino Section has not received any claims of extortion against Venezuelans on behalf of the migrant associations in Ipiales.
- Last week, various leaders of Venezuelan associations in Ipiales have denounced the threats that they distributed rumors throughout the migrant population.

ANSWER

In Ipiales, there are 4 associations of Venezuelan migrants that one can turn to: Fundación Bienestar Migrante (Solidarios Contigo); Organización Asubifu; Organización Venezuela Migrantes por el Mundo; and Organización Casa del Migrante

Sources: Attorney General of the country, direct interviews with migrant organizations

HIGH RISK

CONTAGION AND TREATMENT

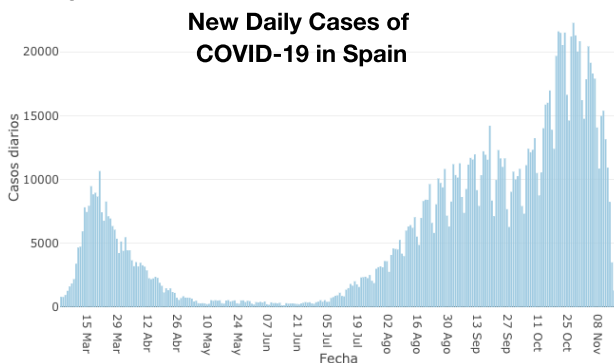
RUMOR #4 SECOND WAVE

It is rumored on social media that the second wave of COVID-19 that Europe is suffering currently has not and will not arrive in Colombia.

- In Colombia, the first case of coronavirus was confirmed on March 6th while Spain's first case was confirmed on the 31st of January. We are more than a month late in the epidemiological evolution of Spain and we could still have a second wave of infections.
- In this moment, various European countries are facing a second outbreak of COVID-19.

Following the guidelines of self-care, such as washing hands and physical distancing, are the best way of avoiding infection of COVID-19.

ANSWER



Source: Ministry of Sanitation - The evolution of coronavirus in Spain, November 2020

MEDIUM RISK

RUMOR #5 ANAMU

At the beginning of November, a rumor circulated in Tumaco from an article on Facebook that proposes that anamu serves to fight COVID-19. The article from "Las 2 Orillas" shows a video where a Cuban citizen preparing anamu tea to prevent COVID-19.

- Anamu, also known as 'zorrito', is a wild plant used by indigenous communities from Mexico to the Colombian Amazon because of its medicinal properties. In Cuba, they approved a pill with anamu following a scientific study that demonstrated its benefits to the immune system. Strengthening the immune system does not make you immune to COVID-19.
- To date, there is no scientific study that proves that anamu can cure COVID-19. In fact, the WHO explains that there still does not exist a cure or vaccine for this disease.
- One scientific study about genetic mutations warns that the excessive consumption of the anamu plant can have negative effects on health.

ANSWER

The best way to continue taking care of ourselves against COVID-19 is by complying with self-care measures such as hand washing and the use of face masks.

Source: WHO, Q&A about sickness from the coronavirus

LOW RISK