

# THE MENTAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HEALTHCARE WORKERS



COVID-19 has had an enormous psychological impact on everyone, but perhaps one of the most negatively affected groups are healthcare workers. Based on a systemic review of 29 mental health studies of over 22,000 healthcare workers, research across the globe has reported worrying psychological symptoms as a direct result of the pandemic.

## What's Happening Now



ON AVERAGE

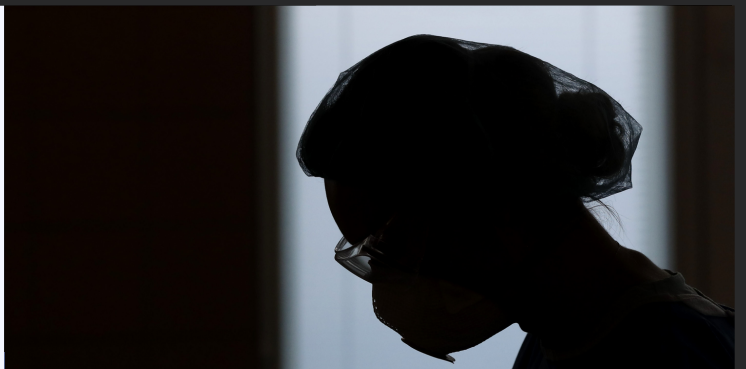
24.3%

HEALTHCARE WORKERS REPORTED SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION



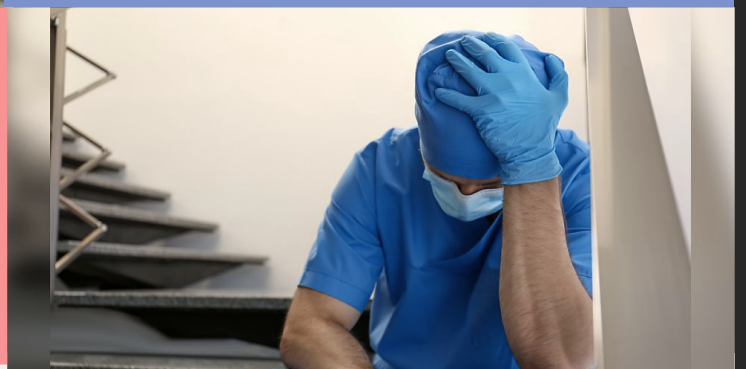
25.8%

REPORTED SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY



45%

HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF STRESS<sup>1</sup>

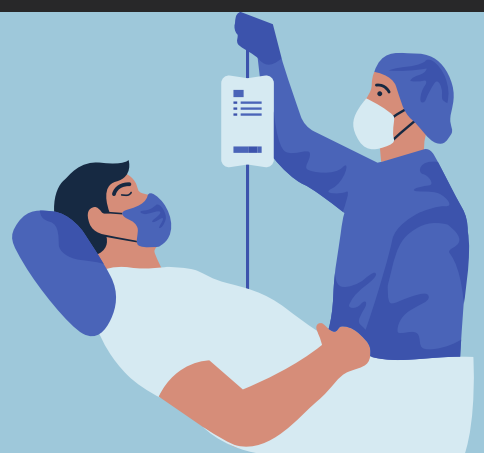


25%

SHOWED SYMPTOMS OF PROBABLE PTSD<sup>2</sup>



Major epidemics put healthcare workers under intense stress. They are continuously exposed to stressful, potentially unsafe environments where they are at constant risk of being infected.



Demanding shifts, a lack of information regarding COVID-19, and increases in infection and death rates all add to the mental burden of healthcare workers.

1. Salari, Nader, et al. "Prevalence of Stress, Anxiety, Depression among the General Population during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *Globalization and Health*, vol. 16, no. 1, 2020. Crossref, doi:10.1186/s12992-020-00589-w.

2. Kristoffersen, Matt. "Burnout, Alcohol, PTSD: Health Workers Are Suffering." *Yale School of Medicine*, 17 Feb. 2021, medicine.yale.edu/news-article/30378/

# WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE PANDEMIC?

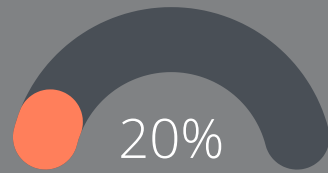
COVID-19 is a rapidly changing issue, and new information is still coming out. Because of this, we can't be absolutely certain what the long-term impacts of the pandemic will be on healthcare workers.

However, we do have data from previous pandemics that can help us predict what can happen. Using data from the previous SARS epidemic, we have references for what long-term psychological effects COVID-19 could have on healthcare workers.

SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) is a respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus. First reported in southern China, the 2003 SARS outbreak resulted in **8,096** confirmed cases and **774** deaths.<sup>3</sup>



## AFTER THE 2003 SARS OUTBREAK



of healthcare workers had PTSD two months after the 2003 SARS outbreak in Singapore<sup>4</sup>



**15.4%**

of healthcare workers from a Taiwanese hospital had mental symptoms 1 year after working during the 2003 SARS epidemic<sup>5</sup>



**55** of 549

employees from a Beijing hospital had high levels of PTSD symptoms directly related to the 2003 SARS epidemic in the **3** year time period following the outbreak (10%)<sup>6</sup>

From these studies, we can see that a significant amount of healthcare workers suffered from mental symptoms up to several years after experiencing a pandemic.

With this information, we can predict that a significant number of healthcare workers will suffer from long-term mental health symptoms as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. "SARS." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 6 Dec 2017, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, [www.cdc.gov/sars/about/fs-sars.html](http://www.cdc.gov/sars/about/fs-sars.html).

4. Chan, A. O. M. "Psychological Impact of the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Outbreak on Health Care Workers in a Medium Size Regional General Hospital in Singapore." *Occupational Medicine*, vol. 54, no. 3, 2004, pp. 190-96. *Crossref*, doi:10.1093/occmed/kqh027.

5. Cabarkapa, Sonja, et al. "The Psychological Impact of COVID-19 and Other Viral Epidemics on Frontline Healthcare Workers and Ways to Address It: A Rapid Systematic Review." *Brain, Behavior, & Immunity - Health*, vol. 8, 2020, p. 100144. *Crossref*, doi:10.1016/j.bbih.2020.100144.

6. Wu, Ping, et al. "The Psychological Impact of the SARS Epidemic on Hospital Employees in China: Exposure, Risk Perception, and Altruistic Acceptance of Risk." *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 54, no. 5, 2009, pp. 302-11. *Crossref*, doi:10.1177/070674370905400504.