



### Coronavirus Disease (Covid19) updates

#### Global outbreak situation of COVID19, with reported data

#### Globally - as at 25 May 2020

confirmed cases	confirmed deaths	countries, areas
5,206,614	337,736	216

source: <https://www.who.int/>

#### Myanmar - as at 25 May 2020

confirmed cases	confirmed deaths	recovered cases
201	6	122

source: Ministry of Health & Sports

- \* A pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan, China was first reported to the WHO China country office on 31 Dec 2019.
- \* Covid19 was declared **public health emergency of international concern** one month later, 30 Jan 2020. On 11 March 2020, WHO announced Covid19 to be a global **pandemic**.
- \* 73<sup>rd</sup> **World Health Assembly**, the first-ever held virtually, took place 18-19 May 2020, adopting a landmark resolution to bring the world together to fight the Covid19 pandemic.
- \* On 16 May 2020, WHO signed an agreement with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to promote health through physical activity. The agreement has a special focus to prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs), a timely collaboration as the Covid19 pandemic particularly affects people with NCDs.
- \* WHO Regional Director for South East Asia, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, urged countries in the Region to be cautious when relaxing lockdowns, and to do so in a graded manner, guided by local epidemiologies, to a 'new normal' Covid19 world.
- \* **WHO academy app** was launched mid-May -- designed to support health workers during Covid19. Similarly, a **WHO Info app** is designed to inform the general public. <https://bit.ly/2WZB8NN> & <https://bit.ly/3gjq9Gu>
- \* Also in May 2020, WHO issued considerations for **school-related** public health measures to guide how or when to re-open or close schools in the context of Covid19. It is available at <https://bit.ly/36urbuw>
- \* Similarly, WHO developed guidance on **workplace-related** measures, available at: <https://bit.ly/2A40bGf>
- \* Further, WHO finalized **Controlling the spread of Covid19 at ground crossings**. It is available at <https://bit.ly/3ddbjQ1> and complements guidance to look after ill travellers at **points of entry** (international airports, seaports, ground crossings), which is available at: <https://bit.ly/2A2m7Sj>.

### Covid19 clinical features

- \* most common symptoms of Covid19 are **fever, tiredness, dry cough**. According to information released by Ministry of Health & Sports, of 9 May 2020, symptoms like *fatigue, muscle pain or joint pain, shortness of breath, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, nasal congestion, sneezing, running nose, loss of taste & smell* were also observed in Covid19 confirmed patients.
- \* most people (about 80%) recover from illness without needing special treatment
- \* around 5 out of 6 people with Covid19 experience mild symptoms, fever and dry cough
- \* about 95% of people who were sick with Covid19, to date, either have recovered or are recovering
- \* older people are hardest hit by Covid19 -- though younger people are not spared
- \* people with underlying medical problems, such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness
- \* during this difficult time, do look after your physical and mental health. This will not only help in the long-term, it will also help fight Covid19 if infected.

This newsletter *special* updates our previous ones on Covid19: of 24 Jan 2020, 7 Feb 2020, 4 April 2020 and Nov 2019 to April 2020, available at <https://bit.ly/30UVRT6>, <https://bit.ly/2vfHCMM> & <https://bit.ly/2zRDMfm> & <https://bit.ly/2TAHBwo>, respectively.

#### Feeling stressed?



#### You are not alone.

Many people are struggling with stress right now.

Find our guide at <https://bit.ly/WHOSTressManagement>



### Simple prevention measures -- highly recommended:

- \* **wash your hands** regularly, thoroughly - with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand rub
- \* **distance physically** – maintain 2 metres (6 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is talking, coughing or sneezing
- \* **avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth**, avoid spitting in public and avoid crowds & gatherings
- \* **cover mouth and nose** to follow good respiratory hygiene – with your bent elbow, or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Safely dispose the used tissue immediately
- \* **eat a healthy and nutritious diet**, which helps your immune system to function properly.
- \* **do not smoke** - smoking increases your risk of developing severe disease if you become infected with Covid19. If you smoke, **quit**.
- \* WHO recommends 30 minutes of **light physical activity every day** for adults, and one hour a day for children
- \* **look after your mental health**. It is normal to be stressed, confused, scared during a crisis. Talking to people you know and trust can help.
- \* **masks** are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning, with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. If you wear a mask, know how to use it and dispose of it properly - for more information consult <https://bit.ly/2Z19IbS>
- \* **stay home if unwell**. If you have fever, cough and difficulty in breathing, report to nearby health facilities.
- \* if you recently **visited** areas where Covid19 has been spreading, especially during last 14 days, you may wish to:
  - self-isolate by staying at home
  - if you develop symptoms, seek medical advice swiftly, sharing your travel history, or contact with travelers

Covid19 is also an opportunity to come together as **one humanity** – to work, learn, overcome together.

**6 ways to prevent Covid-19** a great video link, in **60 seconds**, at <https://bit.ly/2lxWhql>.

**7 simple steps to prevent the spread of the coronavirus** further video link, in **30 seconds**, at <https://bit.ly/2xVZmhB>.

Useful information can be accessed from the links:  
**Ministry of Health & Sports** at <https://bit.ly/3buBlqY>  
and **WHO Myanmar** at <https://bit.ly/2ACgvyb>

👉 **try and practice good health messages which you learnt**

### Cleaning & disinfection of environmental surfaces in the context of Covid19

- \* In non-health care settings, sodium hypochlorite (**bleach**) may be used at a recommended concentration of **0.1% (1,000 ppm) as disinfectant**. Alternatively, **alcohol** with **70%-90% concentration** can be used for surface disinfection.
- \* **Apply cloth or wipe for disinfection, which has itself been soaked in disinfectant**.
- \* Spraying or fumigation of outdoor spaces (streets, marketplaces) is *not* recommended to kill novel coronavirus, or other pathogens, because disinfectant is inactivated by dirt and debris. It is not feasible to manually clean and remove all organic matter from such spaces.
- \* Moreover, spraying porous surfaces (sidewalks, unpaved walkways), would be even less effective: such places are **not** considered to be reservoirs of infection for Covid19.
- \* Spraying disinfectants, even outdoors, can be harmful for human health.
- \* In indoor spaces, routine application of disinfectants to environmental surfaces by spraying or fogging (**fumigation or misting**) is **not** recommended for Covid19.
- \* Spraying individuals with disinfectants (such as in a tunnel, cabinet, or chamber) is **not** recommended under any circumstances. This could be physically and psychologically harmful. It would also not reduce an infected person's ability to spread the virus through droplets or contact. Moreover, spraying individuals with chlorine, or other toxic chemicals, can result in eye and skin irritation, bronchospasm, due to inhalation, and gastrointestinal effects, such as nausea and vomiting.
- \* additional information is available at <https://bit.ly/3bOA1EK>

### Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children and adolescents with Covid19

- \* Recently, reports from Europe and North America described clusters of children and adolescents requiring admission to intensive care with a multisystem inflammatory condition. Some features are similar to *Kawasaki disease* or *toxic shock syndrome*.
- \* Case reports and small series described a presentation of acute illness accompanied by hyperinflammatory syndrome, leading to multiorgan failure and shock.
- \* Initial hypotheses that this syndrome could be related to Covid19 are based on initial laboratory testing
- \* the full spectrum of disease is still far from clear
- \* therefore, there is an urgent need to collect standardized data describing clinical presentations, severity, outcomes, epidemiology.

## Expose tobacco industry tactics

Tobacco products kill more than 8 million people every year, world wide. Tobacco industries market new products – e-cigarettes, vaping device, heated tobacco products – to keep people smoking. Further, they keep changing tactics to prey on youth to capture new markets:

- adding flavours to increase attractiveness of products
- use of social media influencers
- marketing, sponsorships, product promotion, digital & social media advertising



*Tobacco industries' marketing tends to mislead people about new products in such a way to portray these as alternatives to quitting.*  
*World no tobacco day 2020 aims to expose tobacco tactics – to protect the young generation.*

COVID19 cases in Myanmar as at 25 May 2020, 7am		
confirmed cases	recovered	fatalities
201	122	6
source: Ministry of Health and Sports		

**Covid19, tobacco and vaping:**  
*Smokers with lung disease or reduced lung function are more vulnerable to develop severe disease if infected with novel coronavirus.*



### smoking

when you smoke cigarettes - bringing your hands to mouth can infect your body with viruses, including novel coronavirus.

Smoking increases your risk of severe Covid19.



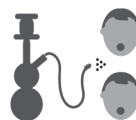
### vaping

vaping is delivering harmful chemicals to your body. It makes lungs more vulnerable to infection **and** weakens the immune system.



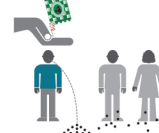
### sheesha

sharing waterpipes, or sheesha, or hukka, can transmit viruses between people, including novel coronavirus, as well as harmful chemicals



### betel nut chewing

chewing betel quid (*kun yar*) increases saliva production, **enhancing** the urge to spit repeatedly – spitting in public **increases** risk and spread of Covid19.



## Tobacco consumption in Myanmar

- adult tobacco users, currently at 55%
- one in two adult male smoke, 43.8%
- one in five boys, between 13 and 15 years, currently consume tobacco

source: STEPS Survey Report, Myanmar, 2014; GYTS Survey Report, Myanmar 2016

## Smokeless tobacco consumption

- every two in three adult men, as high as 62.2%, consumes smokeless tobacco
- smokeless tobacco consumption is high also among women, 24.1%

source: STEPS Survey Report, Myanmar, 2014

## Male tobacco use is high among youth and adults in Myanmar

### Exposure to second-hand smoke:

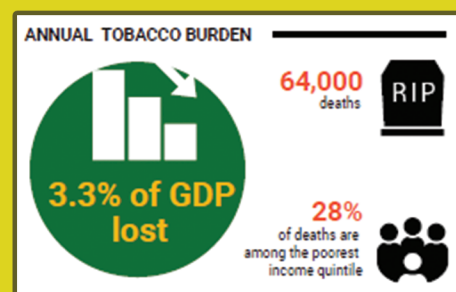
- 37% of boys, 29.5% of girls are exposed to tobacco smoke at home
- 32.8% of boys, 24.8% of girls are exposed to tobacco smoke inside public places
- 32.1% of adult men, 46% of adult women are exposed to tobacco smoke at home
- 31.8% of adult men, 23.6% of adult women are exposed to tobacco smoke at workplaces

source: STEPS Survey Report, Myanmar, 2014; GYTS Survey Report, Myanmar 2016



## Burden of tobacco in Myanmar

- tobacco use harms almost every organ of the body
- tobacco is a major risk factor for cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung disease, diabetes
- tobacco use claims an estimated 64,000 deaths in Myanmar every year
- tobacco use not only causes premature death – it leads to estimated loss of 3.3% in the country's gross domestic product
- smoking alone costs Myanmar 304 billion kyats for medical treatment of smoking related illnesses (in 2016)



source: *The case for investment in Tobacco control in Myanmar, 2019*

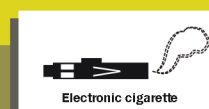
## Affordability of cigarettes in Myanmar

- cigarettes became more affordable in recent years – with prices rising *less* than inflation, hence making them even relatively cheaper
- youth appear to have access to cigarettes from common points of sale – though their sale to minors is prohibited by law



## New tobacco products threaten our youth

- nicotine in e-cigarettes is a highly addictive drug, damaging developing brains
- children and adolescents using e-cigarettes greatly enhance their risk of smoking later in life
- smoking *sheesha* is just as harmful as other forms of tobacco use
- there is growing evidence for the harm caused by e-cigarettes and vaping
- use of nicotine, e-cigarettes and tobacco products *increase* the risk of cancer, cardiovascular, pulmonary diseases



Tobacco use is already high in Myanmar, especially among youth: 26.3% boys and 3.7% girls currently consume tobacco. It is crucial to encourage youth *not* to experiment with these products – whose prices need to be raised to put them out of reach of the young and vulnerable.

### discourage the use of new tobacco and nicotine products

- do not recommend tobacco products – *old* or *new*
- prevent taking up e-cigarettes, vaping, heated tobacco products
- protect non-smokers from exposure to nicotine and tobacco products
- raise user's awareness on health risks
- ban new tobacco and nicotine products

## Proven interventions for tobacco control



raise tobacco taxation



ban advertising, promotion, sponsorship by tobacco industry



implement standardized packaging for tobacco products



scale up media advocacy



implement a ban on indoor smoking



foster responsible business practice