

# COVID-19 and Romantic Relationships

Subjects: Sociology

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Since the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted most people's activities and relationships. Romantic relationships are a crucial source of fulfillment and emotional safety for many individuals. However, due to the risk of illness and the social distancing norms, human interaction, even inside one's couple or family, suffered great changes. Some of these changes have the potential of disrupting people's relational or psychological well-being, but they can also have positive impacts. On the other hand, one of the most negative consequences is the growing number of intimate partner violence (IPV) incidents. Considering all these aspects, therapy would be beneficial for those affected.

Keywords: intimate partner violence ; sexuality ; relational satisfaction ; COVID-19 ; lockdown effects

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The COVID-19 pandemic brought a number of profound alterations to people's lifestyles and relationships. While the number of cases increased during the first months of 2020, most countries imposed severe restrictions on the population. The new social distancing norms led to social isolation and separation, a situation that is likely to negatively impact the functioning of romantic relationships <sup>[1]</sup>. Early reports indicated that the population was exposed to significant stress during the pandemic, mainly due to the risks of becoming infected or losing their job <sup>[2][3]</sup>.

In the context of increased stressful experiences, the quality of romantic relationships could be seriously impacted. While some couples are more vulnerable than others, researchers considered that the pandemic could harm the dyadic process for most couples <sup>[1]</sup>. This paper provides an overview of how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the creation and functioning of romantic relationships. Firstly, it concentrates on how people adapted to the social distancing norms and how they managed to find potential romantic partners under the stay-at-home orders. Secondly, it presents the most important findings related to the functioning of intimate relationships in youth and adult populations. Next, it provides some information about one of the most noteworthy concerns regarding the pandemic, namely, the potential increase in intimate partner violence <sup>[4]</sup>. Finally, it introduces some findings and recommendations related to the therapeutic process during the pandemic.

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## References

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