# PeerJ

Eating habits, lifestyle behaviors and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine among Peruvian adults

Hellen S. Agurto<sup>1</sup>, Ana L. Alcantara-Diaz<sup>2,3</sup>, Eduardo Espinet-Coll<sup>4</sup> and Carlos J. Toro-Huamanchumo<sup>3,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Lima, Peru

<sup>2</sup> SCIEMVE, Sociedad Científica Veritas, Chiclayo, Peru

<sup>3</sup> Unidad de Investigación Multidisciplinaria, Clínica Avendaño, Lima, Peru

<sup>4</sup> Gastrodex, Hospital Universitario Quiron Dexeus, Barcelona, Spain

<sup>5</sup> Unidad de Investigación para la Generación y Síntesis de Evidencias en Salud, Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola, Lima, Peru

# ABSTRACT

**Background and aims:** The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak has led to an unprecedented public health crisis. In Peru, although the quarantine is no longer mandatory, it was during the first months of 2020. To date, no studies have assessed the impact of the COVID-19 on the eating patterns and lifestyle context in the country. We aimed to describe the eating habits, lifestyle behaviors and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine among Peruvian adults.

**Methods:** We conducted a cross-sectional study. We used an online survey to collect information regarding eating habits, self-perceived stress and sedentary lifestyle among adults over 18 years of age residing in Lima-Peru and who complied with strict home quarantine. We presented our data according to the weight variation of the participants.

**Results:** A total of 686 were finally included in the study. The 82.9% were female, the median BMI was 25.97 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (IQR: 23.37–29.41) and 68.2% reported a significant variation in their weight (38.9% increased and 29.3% lost weight). All bad habits were significantly associated with weight gain, except for prolonged fasting. Additionally, a sitting time longer than usual (p = 0.001), being in front of a screen for more than five hours in the last week (p = 0.002), and most of the stressful scenarios were significantly associated with weight gain.

**Conclusion:** Almost four out of ten participants gained weight during the quarantine. This was associated with unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and stressful scenarios.

**Subjects** Epidemiology, Infectious Diseases, Nutrition, Psychiatry and Psychology, Public Health **Keywords** Life style, Eating behavior, COVID-19, Quarantine, Peru

## **INTRODUCTION**

The ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak has led to an unprecedented public health crisis and a global health emergency (*Arshad Ali et al., 2020*). By the end of October 2020, more than 42 million cases and more than 1.1 million deaths had been reported worldwide (*World Health Organization, 2020a*). America is the continent with

Submitted 12 February 2021 Accepted 20 April 2021 Published 11 May 2021

Corresponding author Carlos J. Toro-Huamanchumo, toro2993@hotmail.com

Academic editor Alberto Davalos

Additional Information and Declarations can be found on page 9

DOI 10.7717/peerj.11431

Copyright 2021 Agurto et al.

Distributed under Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0

#### **OPEN ACCESS**

the highest rate of reported COVID-19 cases, with USA, Brazil and Peru as the most affected countries (*Acosta, 2020*; *Rodriguez-Morales et al., 2020*).

Due to the rapid widespread and severe public health disruption, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended various strategies to reduce the COVID-19 transmission. For example, physical distancing, home quarantine, closure of schools, universities and non-essential businesses, among others (*World Health Organization*, 2020b). Regarding quarantine, although it has had a positive impact on reducing the transmission of COVID-19 (*Sen, Karaca-Mandic & Georgiou, 2020; Pan et al., 2020*), some studies have reported that it could trigger high levels of anxiety, depressive symptoms and post-traumatic stress disorders (*Brooks et al., 2020; Fawaz & Samaha, 2020; Guo et al., 2020*). Naturally, this could also predispose to changes in lifestyles and unhealthy nutritional habits (*Papandreou et al., 2020; Di Renzo et al., 2020; Górnicka et al., 2020; Ruiz-Roso et al., 2020*).

In Peru, the state of emergency became official on March 16 (*Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros, 2010*). Since then, physical distancing measures and home quarantine were promoted, and although the quarantine is no longer mandatory (there are only some restriction hours), it was during the first months. To date, few studies have described some lifestyles during the quarantine in Latin America (*Werneck et al., 2020; Ruíz-Roso et al., 2020c*). However, none of them have been conducted in Peru, which is one of the countries with the highest number of cases and deaths due to COVID-19 worldwide (*World Health Organization, 2021*).

This study aimed to describe the eating habits, lifestyle behaviors and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine among Peruvian adults.

# **METHODS**

## Study design

We conducted a cross-sectional study in July, during the mandatory quarantine in Peru.

## Study population and context

We included individuals aged 18 years and over who were in Lima at the survey time and with a good precision of the self-reported weight and height ( $\geq 8$  points on a 0–10 scale). For the latter, participants were asked on a scale of 0 (no accuracy) to 10 (total accuracy) to report how accurate they felt when answering the questions regarding their anthropometric values. Surveys with incomplete information were not considered for analysis.

Lima is the capital of Peru and is the department with the largest population in the country. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, by 2018, it had a total population of 9 million 320,000 inhabitants(*Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2018*).

## Variables and instruments

We developed a self-administered web-based four-section survey. The first section collected sociodemographic and self-reported anthropometric data (age, sex, self-reported

height and weight and precision of the self-report, marital status and self-report of weight variation from the beginning of the quarantine until the moment of the survey). Weight variation was further categorized in "lost weight" (if the participant lost at least 2.5 kg), "weight stable" (no changes or a variation less than 2.5 kg) and "gained weight" (if the participant gained at least 2.5 kg). The second section consisted of an eating habits questionnaire previously validated in a Spanish-speaking population (*Reséndiz Barragán et al., 2015*). This questionnaire had 17 items with Likert-type responses ranging from 0 to 6 (0 = never, 1 = less than once a month, 2 = once a month, 3 = two or three times a month, 4 = once or twice per week, 5 = three or four times a week, and 6 = every day). For the present study, we categorized the responses as: never, one to three times a month, one to four times a week, every day.

For the third and fourth sections, we used some questions from the Spanish versions of the "Last 7 days sedentary behavior questionnaire" (SIT-Q) (*Felez-Nobrega et al., 2019*) and the "Perceived Stress Scale" (PSS) (*Baik et al., 2019*; *Remor, 2006*). Both instruments have been used in different studies during the quarantine in the context of COVID-19 (*Zachary et al., 2020*; *Gallè et al., 2020*; *Iasevoli et al., 2020*). It is important to mention that, since the present study's objective was mainly descriptive, we opted to only select some questions from each questionnaire.

# **Procedures**

The survey link was distributed using social media (Facebook and other social networking sites) to reach the highest number of participants from all the districts in Lima, Peru. The informed consent was at the beginning of the online (Google<sup>®</sup> form) survey, including the estimated time needed to complete the survey (15–20 min). If a participant wanted to receive his/her detailed results in a personalized way, he/she was asked to enter his/her e-mail. It is important to mention that all participants voluntarily opted for this option. This also allowed us to check and drop duplicates before the analysis.

# Statistical analysis

We presented the descriptive results for numeric variables as means with their standard deviation (SD) or medians with interquartile range (IQR). Categorical variables were presented as frequencies and percentages. According to the weight variation, each of the eating habits, sedentary behaviors, and stressful scenarios items were compared using the one-way ANOVA or the Kruskal Wallis test as appropriate for continuous variables, and the Chi2 or Fisher exact test for categorical variables. We used STATA v16.0 for our analyses.

## **Ethics**

The Impacta Institutional Review Board, Lima, Peru (RCEI-17) approved the present study (00110-2020-CE). We did not collect personal data, and participation was voluntary and anonymous. The first page of the survey had the consent form. The participants that agreed had to mark the option "I have read the consent form, and I agree with it. I would

like to start the survey". Only the participants who marked this option were able to continue with the following survey questions.

# RESULTS

A total of 1,031 adults completed the survey, and 686 considered that they could report their weight with an accuracy of eight points or more. The 82.9% were female, 66% were single, and the median age was 31 (IQR: 25-41). The median BMI was 25.97 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (IQR: 23.37–29.41) and 68.2% reported a significant variation in their weight (38.9% increased and 29.3% lost weight) from the start of quarantine to the date of the application of the survey.

Tables 1–3 reports absolute and relative frequencies of eating habits, sedentary behavior, stressful scenarios and weight variation during the quarantine. Relative frequencies were calculated by rows variables (Questions). Table 1 shows significant differences in most of the eating habits. All bad habits were significantly associated with weight gain, except for prolonged fasting (that was associated with weight loss, p = 0.028). Almost 50% of the participants who reported gaining weight answered that they had snacks between meals (p = 0.030) or had sugar cravings every day (p = 0.001). Similarly, these participants were the ones who reported having significantly more snacks between meals (p = 0.002). Additionally, a sitting time longer than usual (p = 0.001), being in front of a screen for more than five hours in the last week (p = 0.002), and most of the stressful scenarios were significantly associated with weight gain (Tables 2 and 3). Some of these scenarios included being upset because of something that happened unexpectedly (p = 0.001), felt nervous and stressed (p = 0.001), found that they could not cope with all the things that they had to do (p = 0.024), and felt difficulties were piling up so high that they could not overcome them (p = 0.020).

# DISCUSSION

Before describing the eating behaviors during quarantine, it is important to note that it is expected that the availability of food would be restricted during this period. This already makes it difficult to eat healthy foods (*Díez, Bilal & Franco, 2019; Bilal et al., 2018*). Also, quarantine itself reduces the possibility of physical activity, promoting a sedentary lifestyle (*Fernández-Sanjurjo et al., 2018*), which can also generate a significant neuropsychiatric burden (*Troyer, Kohn & Hong, 2020*). This has been evidenced by our results, as the participants manifested different stressful situations during the quarantine. This, in turn, may be related to the excessive intake of "comfort foods" (such as pizzas, fried chicken, burgers, French fries, among others) (*Moynihan et al., 2015*), which naturally leads to weight gain. These foods, mainly rich in sugar and carbohydrates, can reduce stress as they stimulate serotonin production with a positive effect on mood (*Lima et al., 2020*). However, this food-craving effect of carbohydrates is proportional to the glycemic index of these "comfort foods", associated with an increased risk of developing obesity and cardiovascular disease, which increase the risk of more severe complications from COVID-19 (*Yannakoulia et al., 2008*).

Question	Lost weight $(n = 201)$	Weight stable $(n = 218)$	Gained weight $(n = 267)$	р
"How often do you…"				
Snack between meals?				0.030
Never	24 (42.9)	15 (26.8)	17 (30.4)	
One to three times a month	32 (33.3)	35 (36.5)	29 (30.2)	
One to four times a week	85 (27.6)	106 (34.4)	117 (38.0)	
Everyday	60 (26.6)	62 (27.4)	104 (46.0)	
Have long fasting periods?				0.028
Never	99 (27.1)	106 (29.0)	160 (43.8)	
One to three times a month	43 (29.3)	56 (38.1)	48 (32.7)	
One to four times a week	40 (29.9)	45 (33.6)	49 (36.6)	
Everyday	19 (47.5)	11 (27.5)	10 (25.0)	
Eat until you feel uncomfortable?				0.001
Never	79 (30.7)	98 (38.1)	80 (31.1)	
One to three times a month	90 (31.4)	97 (33.8)	100 (34.8)	
One to four times a week	28 (23.7)	19 (16.1)	71 (60.2)	
Everyday	4 (16.7)	4 (16.7)	16 (66.7)	
Eat without feeling physical hunger?				0.001
Never	56 (30.0)	77 (41.2)	54 (28.9)	
One to three times a month	81 (31.9)	89 (35.0)	84 (33.1)	
One to four times a week	55 (29.7)	41 (22.2)	89 (48.1)	
Everyday	9 (15.0)	11 (18.3)	40 (66.7)	
Feel guilty or sad after eating?				0.001
Never	72 (31.4)	103 (45.0)	54 (23.6)	
One to three times a month	83 (34.3)	78 (32.2)	81 (33.5)	
One to four times a week	32 (26.2)	23 (18.8)	67 (54.9)	
Everyday	14 (15.1)	14 (15.1)	85 (34.3)	
Stressed by the way you eat?		· · ·		0.001
Never	85 (34.3)	111 (44.8)	52 (21.0)	
One to three times a month	54 (27.6)	71 (36.2)	71 (36.2)	
One to four times a week	43 (34.1)	20 (15.9)	63 (50.0)	
Everyday	19 (16.4)	16 (13.8)	81 (69.8)	
Drink sodas, processed juices or shakes?				0.001
Never	47 (32.2)	57 (39.0)	42 (28.8)	
One to three times a month	119 (32.0)	115 (30.9)	138 (37.1)	
One to four times a week	31 (20.7)	39 (26.0)	80 (53.3)	
Everyday	4 (22.2)	7 (38.9)	7 (38.9)	
Drink water?				0.001
Never	3 (15.8)	3 (15.8)	13 (68.4)	
One to three times a month	9 (34.6)	3 (11.5)	14 (53.9)	
One to four times a week	26 (21.9)	33 (27.7)	60 (50.4)	
Everyday	163 (31.2)	179 (34.3)	180 (34.5)	
Have sugar cravings?				0.001
Never	11 (36.7)	11 (36.7)	8 (26.7)	
One to three times a month	75 (36.6)	70 (34.2)	60 (29.3)	
One to four times a week	74 (28.7)	90 (34.9)	94 (36.4)	
Everyday	41 (21.24)	47 (24.4)	105 (54.4)	

(Continued)

# **Peer**J

Table 1 (continued)				
Question	Lost weight $(n = 201)$	Weight stable $(n = 218)$	Gained weight $(n = 267)$	Þ
Have salt cravings?				0.001*
Never	20 (31.8)	26 (41.3)	17 (27.0)	
One to three times a month	86 (34.4)	88 (35.2)	76 (30.4)	
One to four times a week	65 (24.9)	75 (28.7)	121 (46.4)	
Everyday	30 (26.8)	29 (25.9)	53 (47.3)	
Have cravings for fatty foods?				0.001*
Never	21 (25.92)	39 (48.2)	21 (25.9)	
One to three times a month	123 (33.8)	125 (34.3)	116 (31.9)	
One to four times a week	47 (24.1)	44 (22.6)	104 (53.3)	
Everyday	10 (21.7)	10 (21.7)	26 (56.5)	
Drink natural juices?				0.007*
Never	30 (43.5)	16 (23.2)	23 (33.3)	
One to three times a month	72 (28.8)	82 (32.8)	96 (38.4)	
One to four times a week	71 (29.3)	66 (27.3)	105 (43.4)	
Everyday	28 (22.4)	54 (43.2)	43 (34.4)	
Leave the plate "empty" when you finish eating?				0.538*
Never	10 (38.5)	10 (38.5)	6 (23.1)	
One to three times a month	9 (25.0)	10 (27.8)	17 (47.2)	
One to four times a week	41 (29.1)	40 (28.4)	60 (42.6)	
Everyday	141 (29.2)	158 (32.7)	184 (38.1)	
Have breakfast in the week?				0.016*
One to two days	24 (39.3)	18 (29.5)	19 (31.2)	
Three to five days	32 (25.4)	30 (23.8)	64 (50.8)	
Six to seven days	145 (29.1)	170 (34.1)	184 (36.9)	
Have lunch in the week?				0.756*
One to two days	5 (25.0)	6 (30.0)	9 (45.0)	
Three to five days	10 (23.8)	12 (28.6)	20 (47.6)	
Six to seven days	186 (29.8)	200 (32.1)	238 (38.1)	
Have dinner in the week?				0.016*
One to two days	29 (40.9)	19 (26.8)	23 (32.4)	
Three to five days	37 (21.8)	52 (30.6)	81 (47.7)	
Six to seven days	135 (30.3)	147 (33.0)	163 (36.6)	
"How many"				
Main meals do you have per day?	3 (2-3)	3 (2-3)	3 (2-3)	0.198 <sup>†</sup>
Snacks between meals do you have per day?	1.30 (0.88)	1.25 (0.79)	1.51 (0.82)	0.002**
D. you				
Skip meals to take care of your figure?				0.001*
No	53 (21.0)	88 (34.8)	112 (44.3)	
Yes	148 (34.2)	130 (30.02)	155 (35.8)	

Notes:

\* Chi2 test. <sup>†</sup> Kruskal Wallis. <sup>††</sup> ANOVA.

COVID-19 has had a negative psychological impact worldwide, not only due to the risk of infection but also due to the different measures implemented to contain the outbreak spread (Guo et al., 2020; Lal et al., 2020). During the COVID-19 outbreak, several

Table 2 Sedentary behavior and weight variation during quarantine.					
Question: "In the last week, how long"	Lost weight $(n = 201)$	Weight stable $(n = 218)$	Gained weight $(n = 267)$	p	
Have you been sitting or lying down?				0.001	
Less than normal	36 (43.9)	25 (30.5)	21 (25.6)		
About the same	45 (35.7)	50 (39.7)	31 (24.6)		
More than usual	120 (25.1)	143 (29.9)	215 (45.0)		
Did you sit for breakfast, lunch, or dinner?				0.940*	
<30 min	129 (29.5)	142 (32.5)	166 (38.0)		
30-60 min	51 (30.0)	51 (30.0)	68 (40.0)		
>1 h	21 (26.6)	25 (31.7)	33 (41.8)		
Did you sit or lie down in front of a screen?				0.002*	
<60 min	51 (33.1)	54 (35.1)	49 (31.8)		
1–3 h	60 (35.1)	55 (32.2)	56 (32.8)		
3–5 h	30 (29.4)	38 (37.3)	34 (33.3)		
>5 h	60 (23.2)	71 (27.4)	128 (49.4)		
Did you sit while reading a book?				0.469*	
<60 min	171 (29.7)	183 (31.8)	221 (38.4)		
1–3 h	26 (28.9)	25 (27.8)	39 (43.3)		
3-5 h	4 (19.1)	10 (47.6)	7 (33.3)		
Did you sit while playing cards or solving puzzles?				$0.244^{\dagger}$	
<60 min	177 (29.1)	187 (30.8)	244 (40.1)		
1–3 h	18 (28.6)	27 (42.9)	18 (28.6)		
3-5 h	6 (40.0)	4 (26.7)	5 (33.3)		
Did you sit while listening to music?				0.333*	
<60 min	134 (28.4)	157 (33.3)	181 (38.4)		
1-3 h	47 (34.8)	39 (28.9)	49 (36.3)		
3–5 h	20 (25.3)	22 (27.9)	37 (46.8)		

Notes:

\* Chi2 test.

Fisher exact test.

studies have reported an increase in the prevalence of eating disorders (*Cooper et al., 2020*; *Baenas et al., 2020*; *Phillipou et al., 2020*). Similarly, lower psychological health has been associated with higher body shape and weight concerns (*Haddad et al., 2020*). In this sense, this quarantine can be defined as an unprecedented stressful event that has negatively affected individuals' eating patterns (*Bin Zarah, Enriquez-Marulanda & Andrade, 2020*). In our study, many participants frequently reported unhealthy eating habits, such as eating until feeling uncomfortable, eating without feeling physical hunger, and feeling guilty or sad after eating. Our results agree with current evidence that suggests a strong relationship between unhealthy eating behaviors and stress, anxiety and other mental disorders (*Yau & Potenza, 2013*).

Regular physical activity can be beneficial not only for weight loss but also for strengthening the immune system (*Zheng et al., 2015*). In fact, low–moderate exercise has proven to be beneficial for the innate immune response against respiratory infections

Question: "In the last month, how often have you"	Lost weight ( <i>n</i> = 201)	Weight stable ( <i>n</i> = 218)	Gained weight ( <i>n</i> = 267)	Þ
Been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly				0.001
Never or almost never	57 (32.8)	64 (36.8)	53 (30.5)	
Sometimes	90 (28.0)	113 (35.1)	119 (37.0)	
Fairly often or very often	54 (28.4)	41 (21.6)	95 (50.0)	
You felt that you were unable to control the important things in you life?	ır			0.051
Never or almost never	83 (31.9)	89 (34.2)	88 (33.9)	
Sometimes	78 (29.1)	88 (32.8)	102 (38.1)	
Fairly often or very often	40 (25.3)	41 (26.0)	77 (48.7)	
Felt nervous and "stressed"?				0.001
Never or almost never	39 (37.5)	32 (30.8)	33 (31.7)	
Sometimes	74 (28.2)	102 (38.9)	86 (32.8)	
Fairly often or very often	88 (27.5)	84 (26.3)	148 (46.3)	
Felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems	?			0.263
Never or almost never	14 (26.4)	19 (35.9)	20 (37.7)	
Sometimes	51 (25.1)	61 (30.1)	91 (44.8)	
Fairly often or very often	136 (31.6)	138 (32.1)	156 (36.3)	
Felt that things were going your way?				0.001
Never or almost never	13(33.3)	9 (23.1)	17 (43.6)	
Sometimes	49 (20.6)	75 (31.5)	114 (47.9)	
Fairly often or very often	139 (34.0)	134 (32.8)	136 (33.3)	
Found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do	)?			0.024
Never or almost never	87 (34.1)	81 (31.8)	87 (34.1)	
Sometimes	85 (27.8)	104 (34.0)	117 (38.2)	
Fairly often or very often	29 (23.2)	33 (26.4)	63 (50.4)	
Been able to control irritations in your life?				0.034
Never or almost never	3 (14.3)	9 (42.9)	9 (42.9)	
Sometimes	44 (26.7)	42 (25.5)	79 (47.9)	
Fairly often or very often	154 (30.8)	167 (33.4)	179 (35.8)	
Felt that you were on top of things?				0.056
Never or almost never	13 (21.5)	24 (36.9)	27 (41.5)	
Sometimes	60 (24.8)	75 (31.0)	107 (44.2)	
Fairly often or very often	127 (33.5)	119 (31.4)	133 (35.1)	
Felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	2			0.020
Never or almost never	108 (32.2)	115 (34.3)	112 (33.4)	
Sometimes	69 (27.4)	79 (31.4)	104 (41.3)	
Fairly often or very often	24 (24.2)	24 (24.2)	51 (51.5)	

Notes: \* Chi2 test.

(*Matricardi, Dal Negro & Nisini, 2020*) and could improve some clinical conditions related with severe COVID-19 (*Dwyer et al., 2020*). However, this has been limited in some cases due to the closure of gyms and public open spaces. We found a high frequency of sedentary lifestyles and too much time in front of screens during the quarantine. Similar results have been reported in other studies worldwide (*Meyer et al., 2020*; *Zheng et al., 2020*; *Ruiz-Roso et al., 2020a*). We also found that this sedentary behavior was related to weight gain among the study participants.

Our study had some limitations. First, the weight variation was self-reported. However, we do not consider this as a continuous variable but rather as an ordinal scale variable. Additionally, participants were asked -on a scale of 1 to 10- to report how accurate they felt they could be answering this question. Only the reliable answers (defined as a score  $\geq$ 8) were chosen. Second, the study was conducted using an online survey. Thus, the population included was the one that responded on social networks or via e-mail. This could limit the extrapolation of our results to the adult population that has access to social media platforms.

Some strengths should also be highlighted. The current study provides valuable information on eating habits and lifestyle behaviors in the context of an unprecedented event worldwide. Moreover, it is the first published study that have addressed this topic in Peru, which is one of the countries with the highest number of cases and deaths due to COVID-19 worldwide. Our results may be useful for implementing public policies to promote healthy lifestyles during the pandemic. In addition, our study provides insight for future research to implement and evaluate different coping strategies to avoid comorbidities associated with weight gain, especially for future circumstances that will again require self-quarantine.

In conclusion, almost 4 out of 10 participants reported an increase of 2.5–5 kg in their weight. This was related to some unhealthy eating behaviors and a sedentary lifestyle. The awareness of these factors could be an opportunity to promote nutrition and physical activity programs across the country, especially since most of them are potentially modifiable. Additionally, we recommend implementing community-based strategies to promote coping skills and support resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Marilyn Espantoso and Erick Piskulich for their support in data collection.

# **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND DECLARATIONS**

### Funding

The authors received no funding for this work.

### **Competing Interests**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

# **Author Contributions**

- Hellen S. Agurto conceived and designed the experiments, performed the experiments, authored or reviewed drafts of the paper, and approved the final draft.
- Ana L. Alcantara-Diaz performed the experiments, prepared figures and/or tables, authored or reviewed drafts of the paper, and approved the final draft.
- Eduardo Espinet-Coll performed the experiments, authored or reviewed drafts of the paper, and approved the final draft.
- Carlos J. Toro-Huamanchumo performed the experiments, analyzed the data, prepared figures and/or tables, authored or reviewed drafts of the paper, and approved the final draft.

## **Human Ethics**

The following information was supplied relating to ethical approvals (i.e., approving body and any reference numbers):

Impacta Institutional Review Board (Lima, Peru) approved this research (00110-2020-CE).

## Ethics

The following information was supplied relating to ethical approvals (i.e., approving body and any reference numbers):

The Impacta Institutional Review Board, Lima, Peru (RCEI-17) approved the present study (approval 00110-2020-CE).

## **Data Availability**

The following information was supplied regarding data availability:

The data and codebook are available in the Supplemental File.

## **Supplemental Information**

Supplemental information for this article can be found online at http://dx.doi.org/10.7717/ peerj.11431#supplemental-information.

# REFERENCES

- Acosta LD. 2020. Capacidad de respuesta frente a la pandemia de COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe. *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública* 44:e109.
- Arshad Ali S, Baloch M, Ahmed N, Arshad Ali A, Iqbal A. 2020. The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)—an emerging global health threat. *Journal of Infection and Public Health* 13(4):644–646.
- Baenas I, Caravaca-Sanz E, Granero R, Sánchez I, Riesco N, Testa G, Vintró-Alcaraz C, Treasure J, Jiménez-Murcia S, Fernández-Aranda F. 2020. COVID-19 and eating disorders during confinement: analysis of factors associated with resilience and aggravation of symptoms. *European Eating Disorders Review* 28(6):855–863 DOI 10.1002/erv.2771.
- **Baik SH, Fox RS, Mills SD, Roesch SC, Sadler GR, Klonoff EA, Malcarne VL. 2019.** Reliability and validity of the perceived stress scale-10 in Hispanic Americans with English or Spanish language preference. *Journal of Health Psychology* **24**(5):628–639.

- Bilal U, Jones-Smith J, Diez J, Lawrence RS, Celentano DD, Franco M. 2018. Neighborhood social and economic change and retail food environment change in Madrid (Spain): the heart healthy hoods study. *Health & Place* 51:107–117 DOI 10.1016/j.healthplace.2018.03.004.
- **Bin Zarah A, Enriquez-Marulanda J, Andrade JM. 2020.** Relationship between dietary habits, food attitudes and food security status among adults living within the united states three months post-mandated quarantine: a cross-sectional study. *Nutrients* **12(11)**:3468 DOI 10.3390/nu12113468.
- Brooks SK, Webster RK, Smith LE, Woodland L, Wessely S, Greenberg N, Rubin GJ. 2020. The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. *Lancet* **395(10227)**:912–920.
- **Cooper M, Reilly EE, Siegel JA, Coniglio K, Sadeh-Sharvit S, Pisetsky EM, Anderson LM. 2020.** Eating disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine: an overview of risks and recommendations for treatment and early intervention. Epub ahead of print 9 July 2020. *Eating Disorders* DOI 10.1080/10640266.2020.1790271.
- Di Renzo L, Gualtieri P, Pivari F, Soldati L, Attinà A, Cinelli G, Leggeri C, Caparello G, Barrea L, Scerbo F, Esposito E, De Lorenzo A. 2020. Eating habits and lifestyle changes during COVID-19 lockdown: an Italian survey. *Journal of Translational Medicine* 18:229.
- Dwyer MJ, Pasini M, De Dominicis S, Righi E. 2020. Physical activity: benefits and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports 30(7):1291–1294 DOI 10.1111/sms.13710.
- Díez J, Bilal U, Franco M. 2019. Unique features of the Mediterranean food environment: implications for the prevention of chronic diseases Rh—mediterranean food environments. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 72(1):71–75 DOI 10.1038/s41430-018-0311-y.
- Fawaz M, Samaha A. 2020. COVID-19 quarantine: post-traumatic stress symptomatology among Lebanese citizens. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 66(7):666–674.
- **Felez-Nobrega M, Bort-Roig J, Dowd KP, Wijndaele K, Puig-Ribera A. 2019.** Validation study of the Spanish version of the Last-7-d sedentary time questionnaire (SIT-Q-7d-Sp) in young adults. *PLOS ONE* **14(5)**:e0217362.
- Fernández-Sanjurjo M, De Gonzalo-Calvo D, Fernández-García B, Díez-Robles S, Martínez-Canal Á, Olmedillas H, Dávalos A, Iglesias-Gutiérrez E. 2018. Circulating microRNA as emerging biomarkers of exercise. *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews* 46(3):160–171.
- Gallè F, Sabella EA, Ferracuti S, De Giglio O, Caggiano G, Protano C, Valeriani F, Parisi EA, Valerio G, Liguori G, Montagna MT, Spica VR, Da Molin G, Orsi GB, Napoli C. 2020. Sedentary behaviors and physical activity of Italian undergraduate students during lockdown at the time of CoViD–19 pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17(17):6171.
- Guo Y, Cheng C, Zeng Y, Li Y, Zhu M, Yang W, Xu H, Li X, Leng J, Monroe-Wise A, Wu S.
  2020. Mental health disorders and associated risk factors in quarantined adults during the COVID-19 outbreak in China: cross-sectional study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 22(8):e20328.
- **Górnicka M, Drywień ME, Zielinska MA, Hamułka J. 2020.** Dietary and lifestyle changes during COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns among polish adults: a cross-sectional online survey PLifeCOVID-19 study. *Nutrients* **12(8)**:2324.
- Haddad C, Zakhour M, Bou kheir M, Haddad R, Al Hachach M, Sacre H, Salameh P. 2020. Association between eating behavior and quarantine/confinement stressors during the coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak. *Journal of Eating Disorders* 8(1):40 DOI 10.1186/s40337-020-00317-0.

- Iasevoli F, Fornaro M, D'Urso G, Galletta D, Casella C, Paternoster M, Buccelli C, De Bartolomeis A, COVID-19 in Psychiatry Study Group. 2020. Psychological distress in patients with serious mental illness during the COVID-19 outbreak and one-month mass quarantine in Italy. Epub ahead of print 19 May 2020. Psychological Medicine DOI 10.1017/S0033291720001841.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática. 2018. Nota de Prensa N° 007—18 Enero 2018: Lima alberga 9 millones 320 mil habitantes al 2018 [Internet]. Lima, Peru: INEI. Available at https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/noticias/nota-de-prensa-n-007-2018-inei-2.pdf.
- Lal A, Sanaullah A, Saleem MKM, Ahmed N, Maqsood A, Ahmed N. 2020. Psychological distress among adults in home confinement in the midst of COVID-19 outbreak. *European Journal of Dentistry* 14(S01):S27–S33.
- Lima CKT, De Carvalho PMM, De Lima IAAS, De Nunes JVAO, Saraiva JS, De Souza RI, Da Silva CGL, Neto MLR. 2020. The emotional impact of coronavirus 2019-nCoV (new coronavirus disease). *Psychiatry Research* 287:112915.
- Matricardi PM, Dal Negro RW, Nisini R. 2020. The first, holistic immunological model of COVID-19: implications for prevention, diagnosis, and public health measures. *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology* **31(5)**:454–470 DOI 10.1111/pai.13271.
- Meyer J, McDowell C, Lansing J, Brower C, Smith L, Tully M, Herring M. 2020. Changes in physical activity and sedentary behavior in response to COVID-19 and their associations with mental health in 3052 US adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17(18):6469.
- Moynihan AB, Van Tilburg WAP, Igou ER, Wisman A, Donnelly AE, Mulcaire JB. 2015. Eaten up by boredom: consuming food to escape awareness of the bored self. *Frontiers in Psychology* **6**:369.
- Pan A, Liu L, Wang C, Guo H, Hao X, Wang Q, Huang J, He N, Yu H, Lin X, Wei S, Wu T.
  2020. Association of public health interventions with the epidemiology of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China. *JAMA* 323(19):1–9.
- Papandreou C, Arija V, Aretouli E, Tsilidis KK, Bulló M. 2020. Comparing eating behaviours, and symptoms of depression and anxiety between Spain and Greece during the COVID-19 outbreak: cross-sectional analysis of two different confinement strategies. *European Eating Disorders Review* 28(6):836–846 DOI 10.1002/erv.2772.
- Phillipou A, Meyer D, Neill E, Tan EJ, Toh WL, Van Rheenen TE, Rossell SL. 2020. Eating and exercise behaviors in eating disorders and the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia: Initial results from the COLLATE project. *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 53(7):1158–1165 DOI 10.1002/eat.23317.
- **Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros. 2010.** Decreto Supremo N° 044-2020-PCM. Peru: PCM. *Available at https://www.gob.pe/institucion/pcm/normas-legales/460472-044-2020-pcm.*
- **Remor E. 2006.** Psychometric properties of a European Spanish version of the perceived stress scale (PSS). *Spanish Journal of Psychology* **9(1)**:86–93.
- Reséndiz Barragán AM, Hernández Altamirano SV, Sierra Murguía MA, Torres Tamayo M. 2015. Hábitos de alimentación de pacientes con obesidad severa. *Nutricion Hospitalaria* 31(2):672–681.
- Rodriguez-Morales AJ, Gallego V, Escalera-Antezana JP, Méndez CA, Zambrano LI,
   Franco-Paredes C, Suárez JA, Rodriguez-Enciso HD, Balbin-Ramon GJ, Savio-Larriera E,
   Risquez A, Cimerman S. 2020. COVID-19 in Latin America: the implications of the first confirmed case in Brazil. *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease* 35:101613.

- Ruiz-Roso MB, De Carvalho Padilha P, Mantilla-Escalante DC, Ulloa N, Brun P,
  Acevedo-Correa D, Peres WAF, Martorell M, Aires MT, De Oliveira Cardoso L,
  Carrasco-Marín F, Paternina-Sierra K, Rodriguez-Meza JE, Montero PM, Bernabè G,
  Pauletto A, Taci X, Visioli F, Dávalos A. 2020a. Covid-19 confinement and changes of
  adolescent's dietary trends in Italy, Spain, Chile, Colombia and Brazil. Nutrients 12(6):1807.
- Ruiz-Roso MB, Knott-Torcal C, Matilla-Escalante DC, Garcimartín A, Sampedro-Nuñez MA, Dávalos A, Marazuela M. 2020b. COVID-19 lockdown and changes of the dietary pattern and physical activity habits in a cohort of patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus. *Nutrients* 12(8):2327.
- Ruíz-Roso MB, De Carvalho Padilha P, Matilla-Escalante DC, Brun P, Ulloa N, Acevedo-Correa D, Peres WAF, Martorell M, Carrilho TRB, De Oliveira Cardoso L, Carrasco-Marín F, Paternina-Sierra K, De Las Hazas MCL, Rodriguez-Meza JE, Villalba-Montero LF, Bernabè G, Pauletto A, Taci X, Cárcamo-Regla R, Martínez JA, Dávalos A. 2020c. Changes of physical activity and ultra-processed food consumption in adolescents from different countries during covid-19 pandemic: an observational study. Nutrients 12(8):2289.
- Sen S, Karaca-Mandic P, Georgiou A. 2020. Association of stay-at-home orders with COVID-19 hospitalizations in 4 states. *JAMA* 323(24):2522–2524.
- Troyer EA, Kohn JN, Hong S. 2020. Are we facing a crashing wave of neuropsychiatric sequelae of COVID-19? Neuropsychiatric symptoms and potential immunologic mechanisms. *Brain Behavior and Immunity* 87:34–39 DOI 10.1016/j.bbi.2020.04.027.
- Werneck AO, Silva DR, Malta DC, Souza PRB Jr, Azevedo LO, Barros MBA, Szwarcwald CL. 2020. Changes in the clustering of unhealthy movement behaviors during the COVID-19 quarantine and the association with mental health indicators among Brazilian adults. *Translational Behavioral Medicine* 11(2):323–331 DOI 10.1093/tbm/ibaa095.
- World Health Organization. 2020a. COVID-19 weekly epidemiological update [Internet]. Geneva: WHO. Available at https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update—27-october-2020.
- **World Health Organization. 2020b.** Public health considerations while resuming international travel [Internet]. Geneva: WHO. *Available at https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/public-health-considerations-while-resuming-international-travel.*
- World Health Organization. 2021. WHO Health Emergency Dashboard [Internet]. Geneva: WHO. *Available at https://covid19.who.int*.
- Yannakoulia M, Panagiotakos DB, Pitsavos C, Tsetsekou E, Fappa E, Papageorgiou C, Stefanadis C. 2008. Eating habits in relations to anxiety symptoms among apparently healthy adults: a pattern analysis from the ATTICA study. *Appetite* **51**(3):519–525.
- Yau YHC, Potenza MN. 2013. Stress and eating behaviors. Minerva Endocrinologica 38(3):255-267.
- Zachary Z, Brianna F, Brianna L, Garrett P, Jade W, Alyssa D, Mikayla K. 2020. Self-quarantine and weight gain related risk factors during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Obesity Research & Clinical Practice* 14(3):210–216.
- Zheng Q, Cui G, Chen J, Gao H, Wei Y, Uede T, Chen Z, Diao H. 2015. Regular exercise enhances the immune response against microbial antigens through up-regulation of toll-like receptor signaling pathways. *Cellular Physiology and Biochemistry* 37(2):735–746 DOI 10.1159/000430391.
- Zheng C, Huang WY, Sheridan S, Sit CH-P, Chen X-K, Wong SH-S. 2020. COVID-19 pandemic brings a sedentary lifestyle in young adults: a cross-sectional and longitudinal study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17(17):6035.