Mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: An integrative review on the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of anxiety and depression symptoms

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of symptoms of anxiety and depression reported in scientific production available in 2020, describing and analyzing the main triggering factors of mental health problems/diseases in the period of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The method used was an integrative literature review, with searches in Lilacs, SciELO, Medline, and PubMed databases. The following descriptors were used for the selection of publications: Social Distancing, Anxiety, and Depression, used in combination in the search strategy. To refine the search, filters were used: full text; Language Portuguese, English, and Spanish; Main subject; Type of document, with an article as the only type of literature accepted; Year of Publication 2020. This research identified 37 studies later categorized into five main themes: Physical Inactivity, Reduction of social contact and faceto-face interactions, Financial concerns and economic vulnerability, Loneliness, and Alcohol Consumption. The major impacts of social distancing on mental health were the drastic change in routine, favoring sedentary behavior, and limitation in interpersonal contact indicated in many studies as a generator of a high prevalence of harmful psychological effects, especially depression, anxiety, irritability, and irritability episodes of insomnia. The perception of loneliness as a consequence of the period of social distancing was also identified by most studies as associated with anxious and depressive outcomes and with an increased risk of suicidal ideation, as well as the increased use of alcohol, widely used as an escape from reality in the current context of economic resection, unemployment, indebtedness, and death of family and friends by COVID-19.

Keywords: Social Distancing; Mental health; Depression; Anxiety.

1. Introduction

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the global COVID-19 pandemic after announcing great concern over the alarming levels of virus spread and the severity of symptoms caused by the respiratory syndrome caused by SARS-CoV-2. (1) Over time, the pandemic spread like waves around the world, spreading from China to Europe, mainly in Spain and Italy, soon after the United States of

America (USA), Brazil, and other countries in Latin America. (2)

After the chaotic situation faced in Italy, most countries started to adopt social distancing measures and take more drastic decisions, such as total isolation and closure of borders. These resolutions were used to contain the spread of the virus and a preventive measure against the progressive increase in the number of cases of COVID-19, which represents severe risks of collapse of health systems with overcrowded ICU beds. In recent epidemics in which social distancing and quarantine, the most extreme isolation method, was adopted, there was a significant increase in symptoms of anxiety and depression in the population. (3) (4) Thus, it is expected that, in the context of the current pandemic and the imposed social isolation, symptoms of anxiety and depression will also be triggered, because although this behavioral change at a global level with the closing of trade and the distancing are steps perhaps essential to slow the spread of the disease, there will be consequences for mental health. (5) (6)

Isolation, lack of physical contact with family and friends, confinement at home, fundamental changes in lifestyle, routine, and the feeling of separation from the rest of the world were inferred as being related to increased levels of anxiety and depression during periods where measures of social distancing were used, is also identified as related to financial, emotional and psychological problems. (7)(5) Fear of contagion, frustration, confusion around isolation measures, and contact with news in unreliable media sources are also responsible for potential implications for mental health (6)

A study carried out in July 2020 found that 53% of adults residing in the USA reported having suffered negative impacts on mental health, with an increase in sleeping problems and alcohol consumption. (8) While in Italy, the first European country to suffer from a large number of cases of COVID-19, an online survey identified that 37% had post-traumatic stress, 17% had depressive symptoms, 20% had severe anxiety, 7% insomnia, and 21% stress. (9) Associated with the impacts directly caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are limitations and restrictions on social contact, which, while part of an effort to contain the spread of the virus, can also limit access to possibilities and social support structures. (10)

Regarding the proportions taken by the COVID-19 pandemic in the social and economic spheres, requiring the creation of adaptive strategies and various instruments against the need for social distancing, such as schools and offices operating through videoconferences, the leading role in the continuous use of face masks, the constant use of alcohol gel for hand asepsis and new hygiene habits in general, aiming to avoid contagion, strategies that brought with them a series of new implications. It is imperative to know the impacts of these significant changes on mental health.

Thus, this research is justified by the need to verify what was produced about the impacts on mental health and the strategies to face it during the period of social distancing due to the pandemic situation. Therefore, the objective of this study was to investigate the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of symptoms of anxiety and depression reported in scientific production available in 2020, as well as to describe and analyze the main triggering factors of mental health problems/disorders in the period of social distancing

during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Method

This study is an integrative review according to the methodology proposed by Whittemore and Knalf (11). Proposing to analyze the theme in question from scientific productions previously published and available in the databases used in the research.

Firstly, it was carried out by demarcating the guiding question, "What are the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of anxiety and depression symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic."

A literature search was then carried out in the following databases: US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health (Pubmed), Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (Lilacs), Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (Medline), and Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO). As a tool for selecting publications, the following descriptors were used: Social Distancing, Anxiety, and Depression, used in a combined way in the search strategy, as shown in Chart 1. In addition, to refine the search, the following filters were used: Full text; Language Portuguese, English, and Spanish; Main subject; Type of document, with an article as the only type of literature accepted; Year of Publication 2020.

The inclusion criteria for the research were publications in journals classified by Qualis of Capes from A1 to B2, qualitative and quantitative studies published in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the languages: Portuguese, English, and Spanish. Exclusion criteria were: monographs, theses, or dissertations.

After accessing the databases, the articles that were described in the instruments for data collection were selected. The instrument followed the guidance of Honorato et al (2)(12). Thus, searches were performed using combinations of descriptors and filters in Lilacs, Medline, SciELO, and PubMed databases. After this process, the selective reading of the articles identified in the searches from the title and abstract continued, then the articles that dealt with the research theme were collected for full and critical reading. With the help of the review protocol forms recommended by the research, it was possible to gather information regarding authorship, place, year of publication, indexing base, the journal in which it was published, and respective Qualis, study sample, objective, methodology, words key, and main results. Thus, it was possible to identify and exclude duplicated publications or those present in more than one database and articles not relevant to the objectives of the study. At the end of these procedures and analyses, thirty-seven articles were selected to compose this review. The publications were then analyzed to interpret their meanings concerning the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of anxiety and depression symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Results

Following what was determined in the methodological elements, a search was carried out in the PubMed, International Educative Research Foundation and Publisher © 2021 pg. 115

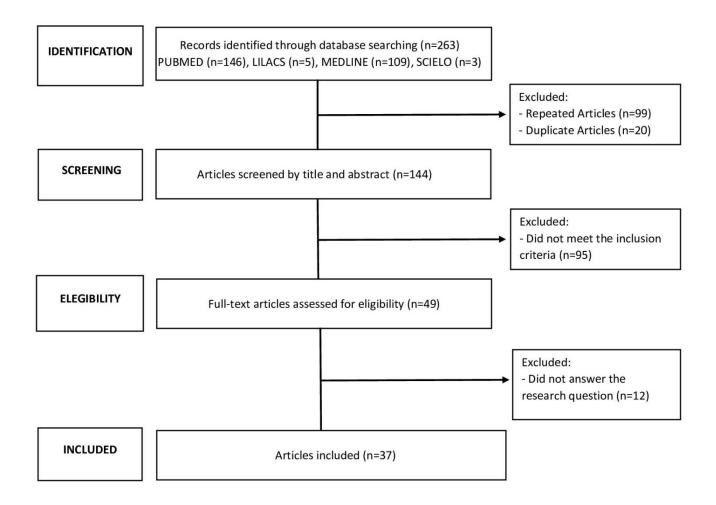
Lilacs, SciELO, and Medline databases using the combination of descriptors in a search expression. Table 1 presents the results obtained in the databases.

Table 1. Results

Base de Dados	Expressão de busca	Documentos identificados	Documentos Selecionados
LILACS		5	1
PUBMED	"Social distancing, Anxiety and	146	25
MEDLINE	Depression"	109	10
SCIELO		3	1
To	Total		

The research consisted of analyzing thirty-seven articles selected for meeting the established inclusion criteria and previously cited. One article was obtained from the Lilacs database, twenty-five from PubMed, one from SciELO, and ten from Medline. Figure 1 presents a self-explanatory flowchart that exposes the process of selecting articles in the databases.

Figure 1. Flowchart of selected articles



The description of the articles selected by article title, authors, year of publication, and journal in which the article was published is represented by table 2, below.

Table 2. Description of articles by title, author, name, and journal.

Nº	Title	Authors	Year	Journal
1	Physical activity in periods of social distancing due to COVID-19: a cross-sectional survey	Edson Zangiacomi Martinez; Fabrícia Mabelle Silva; Thais Zanin Morigi; Miriane; Lucindo Zucoloto; Thaise Lucena Silva; Anderson Gregorio Joaquim; Gabriela Dall'Agnol; Guilherme Galdino; Maisa Oliveira Zangiacomi Martinez; Wanderson Roberto da Silva	2020	Ciência e Saúde Coletiva
2	Alarming levels of psychiatric symptoms and the role of loneliness during the COVID-19 epidemic: A case study of Hong Kong		2020	Psychiatry Research
3	Alcohol use and mental health during COVID-19 lockdown: A cross-sectional study in a sample of UK adults	Louis Jacob, Lee Smith, Nicola C. Armstrong, Anita Yakkundi, Yvonne Barnett, Laurie Butler, Daragh T. McDermott, Ai Koyanagi, Jae Il Shin, Jacob Meyer, Joseph Firth, Olivia Remes, Guillermo F. L'opez-S'anchez, Mark A. Tully	2020	Drug and Alcohol Dependence
4	economic consequence of the	Francisco Lupiáñez-Villanueva, Frans Folkvord, Giuseppe A.	2020	PLOS ONE
5	Associations of Social Isolation with Anxiety and Depression During the Early COVID-19 Pandemic: A	Parthenia Giannakopoulou,	2020	Frontiers in Psychiatry

	Survey of Older Adults in London, UK	McKeand, Geraint Price, Josip Car, Azeem Majeed, Helen Ward, Lefkos Middleton		
6	Changes in Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior in Response to COVID-19 and Their Associations with Mental Health in 3052 US Adults	Lee Smith, Mark Tully and	2020	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health
7	Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States: Interview Survey Study	Alec Smith; Xiaomei Wang;	2020	JMIR. Journal of Medical Internet Research
8	COVID-19 and mental health in Brazil: Psychiatric symptoms in the general population	Dubou Serafim, Rafael	2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
9	Correlates of symptoms of anxiety and depression and mental wellbeing associated with COVID-19: a cross- sectional study of UK-based respondents		2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
10	COVID-19 related depression and anxiety among quarantined respondents	Fang Tang, Jing Liang, Hai Zhang, Mohammedhamid Mohammedosman, Kelifa, Qiqiang He & Peigang Wang	2020	Psychology & Health
11	Deterioration of mental health despite successful control of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Korea	Hyeon-Seung Lee, Derek Dean, Tatiana Baxter, Taylor Griffith, Sohee Park	2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
12	Lockdown, quarantine measures, and social distancing: Associations with depression, anxiety and distress at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic among adults from Germany	Autenrietha, Eva Asselmannb,	2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
13	Longitudinal evaluation of the	Álvaro Planchuelo-Gómeza,	2020	Journal of Affective

	psychological impact of the COVID-19 crisis in Spain	Paula Odriozola-Gonzálezb, María Jesús Irurtiab, Rodrigo de Luis-Garcíaa		Disorders
14	Mental health in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic: cross-sectional analyses from a community cohort study	Ru Jia, Kieran Ayling,Trudie Chalder, Adam Massey, Elizabeth Broadbent, Carol Coupland, Kavita Vedhara	2020	BMJ Open
15	Mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Effects of stay-at-home policies, social distancing behavior, and social resources	<u>.</u>	2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
16	Psychological Outcomes Associated with Stay-at- Home Orders and the Perceived Impact of COVID- 19 on Daily Life	Matthew T. Tull, Keith A. Edmonds, Kayla M. Scamaldo, Julia R. Richmond, Jason P. Rose, Kim L. Gratz	2020	Journal of Psychiatric Research
17	Safe but Lonely? Loneliness, Anxiety, and Depression Symptoms and COVID-19	Lukasz Okruszek, Aleksandra Aniszewska-Stanczuk, Aleksandra Piejka, Marcelina Wisniewska and Karolina Zurek	2020	Frontiers in Psychology
18	Distanciamento social, sentimento de tristeza e estilos de vida da população brasileira durante a pandemia de COVID-19	Deborah Carvalho Malta, Crizian Saar Gomes, Célia Landmann Szwarcwald, Marilisa Berti de Azevedo Barros, Alanna Gomes da Silva, Elton Junio Sady Prates, Ísis Eloah Machado, Paulo Roberto Borges de Souza Júnior, Dália Elena Romero, Margareth Guimaraes Lima, Giseli Nogueira Damacena, Luiz Otávio Azevedo, Maria de Fátima Pina, André Oliveira Werneck, Danilo Rodrigues Pereira da Silva	2020	Saúde em Debate
19	Impact of COVID-19 on Economic Well-Being and Quality of Life of the Vietnamese During the	Bach Xuan Tran, Hien Thi Nguyen, Huong Thi Le, Carl A. Latkin, Hai Quang Pham, Linh Gia Vu, Xuan Thi Thanh Le,	2020	Frontiers in Psychology

	National Social Distancing	Thao Thanh Nguyen, Quan Thi Pham, Nhung Thi Kim Ta, Quynh Thi Nguyen, Cyrus S. H. Ho and Roger C. M. Ho		
20	Physical activity, mental health and well-being of adults during initial COVID-19 containment strategies: A multi-country cross-sectional analysis	James Faulknera, Wendy J.	2020	Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport
21	Psychological Impact of Corona Lockdown in Germany: Changes in Need Satisfaction, Well-Being, Anxiety, and Depression	Malte Schwinger, Maike Trautner, Henrike Kärchner and Nantje Otterpohl	2020	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health
22	Socio-economic inequalities in social network, loneliness and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic	Rusi Jaspal and Glynis M Breakwell	2020	International Journal of Social Psychiatry
23	Predictors of mental health during the Covid- 19 pandemic in the US: Role of economic concerns, health worries and social distancing	Kohler, Alberto Ciancio, Wändi	2020	PLOS ONE
24	The burden of loneliness: Implications of the social determinants of health during COVID-19	Robyn J. McQuaid, Sylvia M.L. Cox, Ayotola Ogunlana, Natalia Jaworska	2020	Psychiatry Research
25	Loneliness and Social Distancing During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Risk Factors and Associations with	Asle Hoffart, Sverre Urnes Johnson and Omid V. Ebrahimi	2020	Frontiers in Psychiatry

	Psychopathology			
26	Social Distancing Compliance under COVID-19 Pandemic and Mental Health Impacts: A Population-Based Study	Sheng Zhi Zhao, Janet Yuen Ha Wong, Yongda Wu, Edmond Pui Hang Choi, Man Ping Wang and Tai Hing Lam	2020	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health
27	The COVID-19 Pandemic and Psychosocial Outcomes across Age through the Stress and Coping Framework	Jillian Minahan, Francesca Falzarano, Neshat Yazdani, Karen L. Siedlecki	2020	The Gerontologist
28	The role of perceived social support on depression and sleep during the COVID-19 pandemic	Ian Grey, Teresa Arora, Justin Thomas, Ahmad Saneh, Pia Tohme, Rudy Abi-Habib	2020	Psychiatry Research
29	Mental health in the era of COVID-19: prevalence of psychiatric disorders in a cohort of patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes during the social distancing	Janine Alessi, Giovana Berger de Oliveira, Debora Wilke Franco, Bibiana Brino do Amaral, Alice Scalzilli Becker, Carolina Padilla Knijnik, Gabriel Luiz Kobe, Taíse Rosa de Carvalho, Guilherme Heiden Telo, Beatriz D. Schaan and Gabriela Heiden Telo	2020	Diabetology & Metabolic Syndrome
30	Loneliness, physical activity and mental health during Covid-19: a longitudinal analysis of depression and anxiety in adults over 50 between 2015 and 2020	William Henley, Siobhan O'Dwyer, Anne Corbett, Miguel	2020	International Psychogeriatrics
31	Social Isolation and Loneliness Among San Francisco Bay Area Older Adults During the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Orders	Ashwin A. Kotwal, Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Rebecca L. Newmark, Irena Cenzer, Alexander K. Smith, Kenneth E. Covinsky, Danielle P. Escueta, Jina M. Lee, and Carla M. Perissinotto	2020	Journal of The American Geriatrics Society
32	Life in lockdown: a telephone survey to investigate the impact of COVID-19	Lesley Brown, Rahena Mossabir, Nicola Harrison, Caroline Brundle, Jane Smith, Andrew	2020	Age and Ageing

	lockdown measures on the	Clegg		
	lives of older people (≥75			
	years)			
33	Prevalence and Predictors of	Ioulia Solomou and Fofi	2020	International
	Anxiety and Depression	Constantinidou		Journal of
	Symptoms during the			Environmental
	COVID-19 Pandemic and			Research and
	Compliance with			Public Health
	Precautionary Measures: Age			
	and Sex Matter			
34	Social Distancing among	Huidi Xiao, Wen Shu, Menglong	2020	International
	Medical Students during the	Li, Ziang Li, Fangbiao Tao,		Journal of
	2019 Coronavirus Disease	Xiaoyan Wu, Yizhen Yu, Heng		Environmental
	Pandemic in China: Disease	Meng, Sten H. Vermund and		Research and
	Awareness, Anxiety Disorder,	Yifei Hu		Public Health
	Depression, and Behavioral			
	Activities			
35	Psychological Symptoms	Naiara Ozamiz-Etxebarria,	2020	Frontiers in
	During the Two Stages of	Nahia Idoiaga Mondragon, María		Psychology
	Lockdown in Response to the	Dosil Santamaría and Maitane		
	COVID-19 Outbreak: An	Picaza Gorrotxategi		
	Investigation in a Sample of			
	Citizens in Northern Spain			
36	#Everything Will Be Fine.	Laura Giusti, Anna Salza, Silvia	2020	Frontiers in
	Duration of Home	Mammarella, Denise Bianco,		Psychiatry
	Confinement and "All-or-	Donatella Ussorio, Massimo		
	Nothing" Cognitive Thinking	Casacchia and Rita Roncone		
	Style as Predictors of			
	Traumatic Distress in Young			
	University Students on a			
	Digital Platform During the			
	COVID-19 Italian Lockdown			
37	Sharp increase in depression	N. Feter, E.L. Caputo, I.R.	2020	Public Health
	and anxiety among Brazilian	Doring, J.S. Leite, J. Cassuriaga,		
	adults during the COVID-19	F.F. Reichert, M.C. da Silva, J.S.		
	pandemic: findings from the	Coombes, A.J. Rombaldi		
	PAMPA cohort		1	

Among the selected articles, all were publications from the year 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic period, as determined in the eligibility criteria for the articles that make up this integrative literature review.

Of the journals in which the selected articles, the most recurrent were the Journal of Psychiatric Research and the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, with six and five publications, respectively, representing 16.2% and 13.5% of the sample. The journals Psychiatry Research, Frontiers in Psychiatry, and Frontiers in Psychology, with three publications each, represent about 8% of the sample. PLOS ONE magazine was responsible for two publications, representing 5.5% of the sample. Other journals (Science and Public Health, Drug and Alcohol Dependence, JMIR. Journal of Medical Internet Research, Psychology & Health, Journal of Affective Disorders, BMJ Open, Health in Debate, Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport, The Gerontologist, International Journal of Social Psychiatry, Diabetology & Metabolic Syndrome, International Psychogeriatrics, Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Age and Aging, Public Health) are represented in the survey by only one publication each.

The classification of journals by Capes QUALIS 2013-2016 (Brazilian Agency) is shown in table 3.

Table 3. Classification of periodicals by Qualis.

Revista	Area	Qualis
Ciência e Saúde Coletiva	Interdisciplinary	B1
Psychiatry Research	Interdisciplinary	A2
Drug and Alcohol Dependence	Medicine	A2
PLOS ONE	Interdisciplinary	A1
Frontiers in Psychiatry	Medicine	A2
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Interdisciplinary	A2
JMIR. Journal of Medical Internet Research	Medicine	A1
Journal of Psychiatric Research	Medicine	A1
Psychology & Health	Psychology	A1
Journal of Affective Disorders	Psychology	A1
BMJ Open	Interdisciplinary	A2
Frontiers in Psychology	Psychology	A1
Saúde em Debate	Interdisciplinary	B1
Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport	Interdisciplinary	A1
The Gerontologist	Medicine	A1
International Journal of Social Psychiatry	Medicine	B2
Diabetology & Metabolic Syndrome	Interdisciplinary	A2
International Psychogeriatrics	Medicine	B1
Journal of The American Geriatrics Society	Medicine	A2
Age and Ageing	Interdisciplinary	A1
Public Health	Interdisciplinary	B1

Regarding the methodological approach used in the selected articles, among a total of thirty-seven studies, 94.5% consisted of quantitative research, and 5.5% were quantitative research. Thus, the

predominance of quantitative studies in the treatment of the subject in question is evident, that is, the broad adoption of social distancing measures as a strategy to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased occurrence of symptoms of anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4 describes the articles selected by the research according to title, objectives, and results.

Table 4. Description of articles by title, objective, and result.

N° Title Objective Resu	
1 Physical activity To assess the changes in the Participants who felt	
in periods of habits of the Brazilian quarantine on their phy	
social distancing population engaged in have higher prevalent	
due to COVID- physical activities in depression symptoms	
	=
sectional survey due the measures of social social distance had a h	e
distancing and describe the practices. Furthermore,	_
levels of anxiety and are associated with high	levels of poor mental
depression of this health.	
population, during the	
period of social distancing.	
2 Alarming levels To examine the wellbeing The results indicate a	
of psychiatric of the general public, respect to mental health	n, with highly elevated
symptoms and the prolonged social distancing rates of significant p	osychiatric symptoms
role of loneliness during the COVID-19 including depression, and	nxiety, stress, and signs
during the pandemic, and the role of psychosis risk. Su	ubjective feelings of
COVID-19 loneliness and the social loneliness, but not s	social network size,
epidemic: A case network. significantly explaine	ed these increased
study of Hong psychiatric symptoms al	bove and beyond other
Kong demographic factors.	
3 Alcohol use and To identify correlates of A high proportion of y	oung people reported
mental health increased alcohol increased alcohol con	nsumption. However,
during COVID-19 consumption following given our knowledge o	f the impacts of other
lockdown: A COVID-19 social international crises on	alcohol consumption,
cross-sectional distancing restrictions, policy makers need to	start planning targeted
study in a sample using cross-sectional data support to address the	impact of COVID-19
of UK adults in a sample of UK adults. lockdown on alcoho	ol consumption and
strategies to prevent	t increased alcohol
consumption in future	
second and subsequent	
emerge.	

Assessing concerns for the economic consequence of the COVID-19 response and mental health problems associated with economic vulnerability and negative economic shock in Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom

To measure the support for two statements related to the importance of the economic consequences of mitigation strategies and to measure the consequences of the lockdown in terms of mental health, as predicted by economic vulnerability and negative economic shocks. As has been argued, mental health could be the next threat to our societies, based on the conditions of the mitigation strategies and the hard-hitting economic depression that will likely follow. Mapping this evolution in terms of the population at risk, providing creative policy solutions that do not compromise the results achieved in terms of flattening the curve of contagion, and maintaining the resilience of our health system should be included among the future research priorities. It is also important for countries that are behind in controlling the spread of the virus, or vis-a-vis future outbreaks, to design more balanced mitigation strategies so as to prevent some of the side effects of lockdown and quarantine manifesting themselves.

5 Associations of
Social Isolation
with Anxiety and
Depression
During the Early
COVID-19
Pandemic: A
Survey of Older
Adults in London,
UK

To report the effects of social isolation on selfreported changes in levels of depression and anxiety among older people residing within London via online survey. an Investigate effect of sociodemographic factors, health variables and indicators of loneliness and reduced connectivity as risk factors for change in levels of depression and anxiety.

Findings from this study highlight potentially important clinical and health public implications. We have identified, within an older, UK population, risk factors for the development of anxiety and depression as a result of COVID- 19 related social isolation. We highlight the need to track, identify and implement early interventions among individuals at increased risk of developing loneliness as a result of social isolation.

6 Changes in
Physical Activity
and Sedentary
Behavior in
Response to
COVID-19 and
Their

To evaluate three hypotheses: (1) that self-reported changes in physical activity, sitting time, and screen time after the pandemic would occur relative to the degree of

The current findings strongly support the mental health benefits of implementing measures that promote physical activity while limiting screen time during periods of societal modification due to a pandemic. Potentially effective methods to do so may be through enhanced telehealth or public broadcasting

	Associations with	COVID-related public	time devoted to promotion/implementation of
	Mental Health in	health restrictions that were	home-based physical activity. Future research
	3052 US Adults	followed, (2) that self-	should replicate these findings in other large
		reported current mental	samples, investigate potential cross-national
		health would be associated	differences, longitudinally assess dynamic
		with the degree of changes	relationships between these factors, and
		in physical activity, sitting	integrate device- based measures.
		time, and screen time (a)	
		and COVID-related public	
		health restrictions (b), and,	
		(3) that the association	
		between changes in	
		physical activity and	
		current mental health	
		would be moderated by the	
		degree of COVID-related	
		public health restrictions	
		that were followed.	
7	Effects of	To identify major stressors	Due to the long-lasting pandemic situation and
	COVID-19 on	associated with the	onerous measures such as lockdown and stay-
	College Students'	COVID-19 pandemic and	at-home orders, the COVID-19 pandemic
	Mental Health in	to understand their effects	brings negative impacts on higher education.
	the United States:	on college students' mental	The findings of our study highlight the urgent
	Interview Survey	health.	need to develop interventions and preventive
	Study		strategies to address the mental health of
			college students.
8	COVID-19 and	To investigate the	It was found a considerable prevalence of
	mental health in	prevalence and	mental health problems, in particular,
	Brazil: Psychiatric	determinants of psychiatric	symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress in
	symptoms in the	symptoms among the	a sample of the Brazilian general population
	general	Brazilian general	during the COVID-19 pandemic.
	population	population during the peak	
		of the pandemic.	
9	Correlates of	To assess the impact of	Among UK adults self-isolating/social
	symptoms of	COVID-19 self-	distancing females, younger age groups, those
	anxiety and	isolation/social distancing	with a lower annual income, current smokers
	depression and	on mental health, and	and those with physical multimorbidity were
	mental wellbeing	potential correlates, among	associated with higher levels of poor mental
	associated with	a sample of the UK	health. Interventions to improve mental health
	COVID-19: a	population.	during the COVID-19 pandemic should focus

	cross-sectional study of UK- based respondents		on these groups. Moreover, future research is now required to understand why the COVID-19 pandemic may be disproportionally influencing the mental health status of these populations.
10	covidence covidence covidence covidence covidence control covidence covidenc	To study people quarantined in affected areas, unaffected areas, and people not in quarantine for symptoms of anxiety and depression related to the COVID-19 outbreak and the relative risk factors involving participant characteristics and sociodemographic characteristics.	Health and social services need to be vigilant in recognizing possible signs and symptoms of mental health problems during and after, which will require a substantial increase in psychological counselling and social support services. Moreover, enhancing the capability of community screening and encouraging people to cooperate with community screening are important, as appropriate community screening may reduce the risk of depression and anxiety during an epidemic.
11	Deterioration of mental health despite successful control of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Korea	To survey mental health and social wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic among the general population in South Korea where effective public health strategies and high compliance by the residents were able to successfully stop the spread of the virus.	It is important to reduce loneliness, improve the quality of social relationships and provide targeted support for women. As COVID-19 continues to disrupt the lives of billions of people, comprehensive public health efforts must be implemented to meet the difficult challenges of prolonged psychological distress.
12	Lockdown, quarantine measures, and social distancing: Associations with depression, anxiety and distress at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic among adults from	Identify potential predictors for immediate mental health consequences to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health-related measures in Germany.	This data underscores the need for appropriate risk communication to prevent insecurity, fear, and confusion and thus prevent negative mental health consequences. Moreover, it might be helpful to develop and implement interventions or prevention programs including positive reappraisal or reframing and recommendations to maintain social contacts (e.g., via social media, video calls) in the face of physical distancing and contact restrictions to mitigate the negative effect of public health measures on mental health.

	Germany		
13	Longitudinal evaluation of the psychological impact of the COVID-19 crisis in Spain	To assess the temporal evolution of the psychological impact of the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown from two surveys, separated by one month, performed in Spain.	In a longitudinal study, we found a temporal increase of anxiety, depression and especially stress scores some weeks after the COVID-19 Outbreak in Spain. Regarding the impact of the event, a large percentage of respondents showed at least mild impact of event scores that have not significantly changed from the first to the second survey. Among others, factors such as age, consumption of information about the COVID-19 crisis and physical activity seem to have an important impact on the evolution of psychological symptoms in the population.
14	Mental health in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic: cross-sectional analyses from a community cohort study	To report the mental health sequelae of the COVID-19 pandemic in a UK cohort and examine modifiable and non-modifiable explanatory factors associated with mental health outcomes.	We provide early evidence that women, young people and individuals in recognized COVID-19 risk groups may be at particular risk. However, the strongest associations were with psychological characteristics such as worry about contracting COVID-19 and perceived loneliness. These findings, we suggest, indicate that robust public health measures, such as effective contact tracing, which reduce the public's concerns regarding risk of infection, could do much to ameliorate mental health difficulties.
15	Mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Effects of stay-at-home policies, social distancing behavior, and social resources	To examine whether stay- at-home orders and individuals' personal distancing behavior were associated with symptoms of depression, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), intrusive thoughts, insomnia, and acute stress.	Social distancing interventions should not be avoided, as they appear critical to controlling the virus; it is for biomedical sciences, public health, and related fields to determine interventions that promise to protect lives. Already-effective interventions for mental health and psychological distress may benefit from more explicit targeting of the role of social disruption in psychological responses during the pandemic, and from increased access to telehealth modalities that allow clinicians to reach those most vulnerable to the mental health impact of the pandemic.
16	Psychological	To examine associations of	In the absence of effective infection prevention

	Outcomes Associated with Stay-at-Home Orders and the Perceived Impact of COVID-19 on Daily Life	stay-at-home orders and the perceived impact of COVID-19 on daily life to relevant psychological outcomes (i.e., depression, health anxiety, financial worry, perceived social support, and loneliness).	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
17	Safe but Lonely? Loneliness, Anxiety, and Depression Symptoms and COVID-19	Explore whether and how worse psychological outcomes are linked to more precaution in the adult young population.	connection and social support. Even though the nature of forced social distancing limits the possibility to mitigate objective social isolation, the evidence that objective and perceived social isolation are, to some extent, independent of each other has been presented, which creates the opportunity to target loneliness via psychosocial interventions, even under lockdown-like measures. Moreover, it has been shown that interventions that target maladaptive social cognition are more successful in reducing loneliness than interventions that enhance social support or increase opportunities for	
18	Distanciamento social, sentimento de tristeza e estilos de vida da população brasileira durante a pandemia de COVID-19	Analisar a adesão ao distanciamento social, as repercussões no estado de ânimo e mudanças nos estilos de vida da população adulta brasileira durante a pandemia da COVID-19.	social contact. Evidenciou-se frequência elevada de sentimentos de isolamento, ansiedade e tristeza, no período do estudo, bem como aumento do uso de bebida alcoólica e cigarros, redução da prática de atividade física e aumento do consumo de alimentos não saudáveis, como congelados e salgadinhos. Esses achados são preocupantes e podem resultar em danos à saúde, como alterações no peso corporal, aumento de DCNT e implicações psicológicas.	
19	Impact of COVID-19 on Economic Well- Being and Quality	To provide empirical evidence about the influence of this national social distancing on quality	It is critically necessary to have a comprehensive assessment of the effect of COVID-19 among different subjects in the next periods, which can inform the	

	of Life of the Vietnamese During the National Social Distancing	of life and household income of Vietnamese citizens avid COVID-19, with the ultimate goal to inform the policymakers to take appropriate and timely actions for controlling the disease while ensuring both health and socioeconomic wellbeing of the general population.	government to impose suitable policies for easing economic pain of the most affected populations. Public health interventions, especially mental health programs, should be implemented to address the psychological impacts of this pandemic on the quality of life of citizens.
20	Physical activity, mental health and well-being of adults during initial COVID-19 containment strategies: A multi-country cross-sectional analysis	To assess physical activity (PA), mental health and well-being of adults in the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland, New Zealand and Australia during the initial stages of National governments Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) containment responses.	During early COVID-19 restrictions, a negative change in exercise behavior compared to pre- COVID-19 restrictions was associated with poorer mental health and wellbeing. Whilst females reported more positive changes in exercise behavior, young people (18-29 y) reported more negative changes. PA was comparable between the UK, NZ, IRE and AUS, however, people in NZ reported better mental health and well-being.
21	Psychological Impact of Corona Lockdown in Germany: Changes in Need Satisfaction, Well- Being, Anxiety, and Depression	To examine the psychological consequences of the three-month coronavirus lockdown in Germany between March and June 2020	Examining the precise mechanisms leading to need satisfaction or frustration and subsequent changes in well-being therefore seems necessary to shape more adaptive conditions during potential future lockdowns. These may have contributed to well-being and life satisfaction besides changes in psychological needs.
22	Socio-economic inequalities in social network, loneliness and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic	This study focuses on socio-economic inequalities in social network, loneliness and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Regular exercise must continue to be encouraged in the general population, which may be challenging in view of renewed social distancing measures. Opportunities for, and guidance about, exercising regularly in a safe and socially distanced manner must be facilitated. Amid COVID-19 and the restrictions to curb its spread, we must ensure that people continue to feel connected to others (virtually and in a socially distanced manner)

		to decrease loneliness, the most important		
			determinant of poor mental health in our study.	
23	Predictors of	Investigate how mental	As a result, there appears to be an increasing	
	mental health	health is associated with	need for prevention and mental health services	
	during the Covid-	uncertainties and	as a consequence of the pandemic, requiring a	
	19 pandemic in	perceptions related to the	parallel strengthening of such efforts during	
	the US: Role of	immediate impact of the	the pandemic. In addition, our findings	
	economic	coronavirus on own health,	highlight the major importance of economic	
	concerns, health	concerns about the	considerations for US adults' mental health	
	worries and social	economic consequences	early in the pandemic over and above the	
	distancing	related to the pandemic and	evident health concerns and challenges	
	S	the practicing of social	associated with social distancing. Our results	
		distancing.	suggest a considerable role for economic	
			countermeasures and social policy for	
			mitigating the economic impacts of the Covid-	
			19 pandemic on US adults' livelihoods and,	
			thereby, helping to protect their mental health	
			and well-being through this unfolding	
			pandemic.	
24	The burden of	To examine if mental	Critically, loneliness might, in part, be	
	loneliness:	health issues, namely	responsible as it was strongly linked to	
	Implications of	depression and anxiety	depression scores. Further, these data	
	the social	symptoms, and loneliness	demonstrate just how strong the loneliness-	
	determinants of	were experienced	depression link is, revealing a dose-related	
	health during	differently according to	increase in loneliness for each increase in	
	COVID-19	various demographic	depressive severity category. More novel, this	
		groups during the COVID-	was also shown for anxiety symptoms and	
		19 pandemic.	loneliness. These data shed light on the	
			inequalities associated with the pandemic on	
			mental well-being in a Canadian adult cohort	
			revealing that low socio-economic households	
			can experience higher depression, anxiety and	
			loneliness scores during the pandemic.	
25	Loneliness and	This study investigates	The results suggests that single individuals and	
	Social Distancing	potential risk and resilience	those with a psychiatric diagnosis are	
	During the	factors for loneliness in the	especially vulnerable, that loneliness is closely	
	COVID-19	Norwegian population	associated with rumination and worry, that	
	Pandemic: Risk	during the strict social	doing new positive things at home may	
	Factors and	distancing non-	mitigate loneliness and that loneliness is	
	Associations with	pharmacological	associated with depression and anxiety.	

	Psychopathology	interventions (NPIs) implemented against the pandemic and the associations between loneliness and psychopathology symptoms.	
26	Social Distancing Compliance under COVID-19 Pandemic and Mental Health Impacts: A Population-Based Study	To assess the compliance with social distancing and stay-at-home measures, and to examine the associations of these measures with mental health symptoms (i.e., stress level, anxiety, and depressive symptoms).	Compliance with social distancing and stay-at-home is higher among female, older and educated respondents. Compliance with and perceived effectiveness of social distancing were associated with lower levels of stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms. More days stayed-at-home, however, may increase the risk of depressive symptoms, especially in older adults. Public health interventions are needed to protect the "new normal" in a future with or without COVID-19.
27	The COVID-19 Pandemic and Psychosocial Outcomes across Age through the Stress and Coping Framework	to examine the influences of COVID-19 pandemic-related stress on depression, anxiety, and loneliness, assess the mediating role of coping style and social support, and to investigate whether these relationships vary across age.	Our findings suggest that interventions aimed at decreasing the use of maladaptive (i.e., avoidant) coping behaviors, increasing positive (i.e., approach) coping behaviors, and maintaining social support despite physical distancing barriers may help support psychosocial well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite increased physical vulnerability to COVID-19, older adults in our sample showed better psychosocial outcomes.
28	The role of perceived social support on depression and sleep during the COVID-19 pandemic	To examine the role of perceived social support pertaining to a range of psychological health outcomes amongst individuals undergoing social isolation and social distancing during COVID-19.	Perceived social support was observed to have significant inverse associations with anxiety, depression, loneliness, irritability and quality of sleep with higher levels of support related to lower scores on measures of these specific outcomes. Of particular interest is the relationship between social support and depression as the latter is perhaps the most commonly assessed index of mental health status during the current pandemic

29	Mental health in the era of COVID-19: prevalence of psychiatric disorders in a cohort of patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes during the social distancing	To assess the prevalence of mental health disorders in patients with diabetes during the social distancing period due to COVID-19 pandemic.	We found a high prevalence of evidence of psychological distress among patients with diabetes during the COVID-19 pandemic and this highlights the need for mental health access and support for patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes.
30	Loneliness, physical activity and mental health during Covid-19: a longitudinal analysis of depression and anxiety in adults over 50 between 2015 and 2020	To identify whether loneliness and physical activity were associated with worse mental health during a period of mandatory social distancing in the UK.	Loneliness and decreased physical activity were both associated with worse mental health and that this was distinct from the general relationship between these two risk factors and poor mental health. Our study provides robust evidence in support of targeted interventions – which may include resilience training, physical activity, or strategies to reduce loneliness – to improve the mental health of people in mid to late life in the subsequent waves of the pandemic.
31	Social Isolation and Loneliness Among San Francisco Bay Area Older Adults During the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Orders	To investigate experiences of social isolation and loneliness during shelter-in-place orders, and unmet health needs related to changes in social interactions.	The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on social isolation and loneliness among older adults has been mixed. Many have positively coped and adapted, whereas others have experienced worsened feelings of loneliness and an inability to adopt new technologies to facilitate social interaction. Our results raise the potential of age-friendly technology to improve access to social interactions among older adults but caution against overreliance on technological solutions, especially in the short term among the most vulnerable in our communities.
32	Life in lockdown: a telephone survey to investigate the impact of	To investigate the immediate impact of social distancing measures on the lives of older people (≥75 years) living in Bradford	The majority of participants reported some positive aspects to their current situation, suggesting many older people may be well-equipped mentally to deal with lockdown. However, some experienced a negative impact

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	COVID-19 lockdown measures on the lives of older people (≥75 years)	during the COVID-19 pandemic.	on mental health, identifying an area for intervention if social distancing measures continue. Furthermore, many were exercising less than before the pandemic, and some spoke of the lasting impact on their sense of safety in public places. This may not be easily resolved if the threat of COVID-19 continues and as 'normal' life returns it cannot be assumed that older people will resume their previous activities.
33	Prevalence and Predictors of Anxiety and Depression Symptoms during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Compliance with Precautionary Measures: Age and Sex Matter	To understand and characterize the psychosocial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the general population and to identify risks and protective factors that predict changes in mental health status. In addition, the study investigated compliance with precautionary measures (PM) to halt the spread of the virus.	Women, people of younger age, student status, unemployment status, prior psychiatric history, and those reporting greater negative impact on their QOL were at higher risk for increased anxiety and depression symptoms. Moreover, high engagement with PM might act as a protective factor for depression, but specific PM related to personal hygiene might lead to increased anxiety symptoms.
34	Social Distancing among Medical Students during the 2019 Coronavirus Disease Pandemic in China: Disease Awareness, Anxiety Disorder, Depression, and Behavioral Activities	To understand the psychological effects of distancing measures and possible effects on medical student wellness.	Mental health pressures in medical students are likely compounded among practicing clinicians; these professionals need psychosocial assistance at the time of pandemic mental stress. We recommend incorporating pandemic preparedness education within health education, including mental health elements, especially within the healthcare labor force.
35	Psychological Symptoms During the Two Stages of Lockdown in	To examine the psychological state of the general population in a sample recruited in	In a sample recruited in Northern Spain, the present study explored the psychological status of people assessed at different stages of lockdown during the COVID-19 outbreak. Our

36	Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak: An Investigation in a Sample of Citizens in Northern Spain #Everything Will	Northern Spain. To analyze the emotional	findings reveal some of the variables that could contribute toward a worsening state of mental health in this new and unprecedented situation of tension and uncertainty. Therefore, it is important to monitor the state of mental health of the population in order to prevent and treat possible mental illnesses in the future. The identification of the "all-or-nothing"
	Be Fine. Duration of Home Confinement and "All-or-Nothing" Cognitive Thinking Style as Predictors of Traumatic Distress in Young University Students on a Digital Platform During the COVID-19 Italian Lockdown	and cognitive experiences and the psychopathological symptoms of young Italian University students seeking help from our University student Counseling and Consultation Service during the COVID-19 lockdown. Also, aimed to identify the predictors of traumatic psychological distress, investigating variables that could influence the students' well-being, related to their socio-demographic and clinical condition, to the "exposition" to the social distancing, and related to their cognitive thinking style.	dysfunctional cognitive style, as a robust predictor of post-traumatic symptoms, can address intervention on such a modifiable risk factor. The implementation of psychological interventions to improve the mental health of vulnerable young subgroups during a global health emergency and to contain, as far as possible, the evolution and structuring of psychopathological profiles represents a fundamental challenge.
37	Sharp increase in depression and anxiety among Brazilian adults during the COVID-19 pandemic: findings from the PAMPA cohort	To compare the prevalence of depression and anxiety symptoms before and during the pandemic and identify factors associated with aggravated mental health symptoms	Women, younger age, clinically diagnosed chronic diseases, and negative economic impact from social distancing restriction were associated with a higher likelihood of aggravated mental health issues. Physical activity decreased the probability of worse depressive and anxiety symptoms at the same time point. Well-designed treatment and recovery plans for these groups need to take place urgently. If not addressed, the burden

associated with depression and anxiety could
be worse than the health impact from the virus
itself and lead to a longer, deeper, and more
uneven health crisis in Brazil

It was observed that all surveys met the objectives recommended in their studies and answered the established guiding questions. Regarding the demands in mental health triggered in social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, many considerations regarding the determinants of worse outcomes are raised. Being female was correlated with increased depression and anxiety in 48% of the studies and young age in 37% of them. In this regard, the issue of the social role of women and the disparity related to cultural expectations that place a disproportionate burden on domestic work and child care can be raised, suggesting the intensification of anxiety related to the pandemic. Furthermore, it is vital to highlight the increase in domestic violence, mainly affecting women and young people. The studies also point to a higher occurrence of symptoms of anxiety and depression in the younger population, and it is worth noting that old age is sometimes cited as protective, taking into account adaptive mechanisms and coping methods developed by the experience acquired in previous crises, being used to deal with the stress in the current pandemic environment.

Another point raised in 59% of the studies was the economic consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic mitigation strategies, raising concerns about the financial situation and accentuating inequality and social vulnerability. Furthermore, 30% of the articles also deal with the loss of jobs during social distance, which irretrievably leads to a reduction in family income. In this sense, studies point to economic vulnerability as a factor strongly associated with the risk of stress and worsening mental health.

The feeling of loneliness was associated with negative consequences for mental health in 56% of the studies. It was noted that social distancing could lead to worse psychological outcomes, exacerbated preoccupation with isolation, and financial issues were also more observed, especially in lonely individuals. The reduction in physical activity was also identified as a determinant of worse mental health during the isolation period in about 39% of the studies. Thus, individuals who had negative changes in exercise practice before and during restrictions report worsening mental health, and depressive symptoms were less frequently observed in physically active individuals during social distancing, regardless of whether they performed physical activities before the period of restrictions.

In general, an essential implication of social distancing is modifying behavior and bad habits in lifestyle, increased sedentary behavior, increased periods of inactivity, and electronic devices. Changes in eating habits increased consumption of unhealthy foods such as frozen and ultra-processed foods were also mentioned, as well as sleeping difficulties. Social support is cited as a protective factor concerning anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness in 25% of the studies. Reduced contact with close people who are part of daily life can lead to feelings of loneliness, but social resources alone cannot eliminate the impact of social distancing and its possible consequences for mental health on their own.

Concerning information about the COVID-19 pandemic and official social distancing and quarantine orders, 10% of the studies claim that misinformation, false or insufficient information are associated with worse mental health and well-being. Adequate communication is an important factor in mitigating uncertainty and confusion, culminating in psychological consequences, especially with individuals in quarantine, already deprived of face-to-face communication and subject to loneliness and pessimistic feelings.

Belonging to the risk group for the severe form of COVID-19 was associated with negative implications for mental health in 16% of the studies, such as increased stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms. Regarding alcohol use, 24% of the studies identified an increase in consumption, which may be linked to an increased risk of worsening anxiety and depressive components. The feeling of loneliness was also identified as a factor contributing to worse lifestyle habits and an increased risk for alcohol abuse.

The thirty-seven articles were grouped according to the themes addressed by each of them. The groupings were used to construct categories so that some articles covered more than one category in the groups formed, obtaining the result presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Categories, descriptions, and articles by category.

Categories	Descriptions	Articles
Physical Inactivity	The practice of physical activities is inversely	1, 6. 13, 18, 20, 21,
	associated with anxiety and depressive symptoms	22, 26, 29, 30, 32, 34,
	and may have been compromised during a period	35, 37
	of social distancing.	
Reduction of social contact	Social support is widely identified as a protective	7, 10, 15, 16, 26, 27,
and face-to-face	factor concerning mental health, and distancing	28, 32
interactions	brings a paradigm by imposing limitations on	
	physical interactions, including family and	
	friends.	
Financial concerns and	Apprehension about the economic consequences	4, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16,
economic vulnerability	of mitigation strategies and economic	17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24,
	vulnerability are associated with a substantial risk	25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33,
	of worsening mental health.	34, 35, 37
Loneliness	The feeling of loneliness is associated with poorer	2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14,
	mental health and an essential determinant of	16, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25,
	anxiety and depression symptoms.	27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 36
Alcohol consumption	The psychological suffering triggered by social	2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 16,
	isolation may be related to the worsening of	18, 35
	alcohol consumption patterns.	

4. Discussion

Regarding the publications about the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of symptoms of anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic, as shown in Table 5, five categories were raised and converted into topics for discussion.

The first category deals with physical inactivity during the period of social distancing. Social distancing measures culminated in closing many locations that allowed crowding, such as gyms and sports facilities, urban trails, green spaces, parks, and gymnastics spaces. While quarantine and social distancing requirements are demonstrably necessary to reduce virus transmission and disease spread, they end up reducing occasions and opportunities for physical activity, and thus unintentionally favoring sedentary behavior and unhealthy lifestyles, generating negative impacts on physical and mental health. It was observed that the period of confinement significantly reduced the practice of physical activities, especially the practice of more intense exercises and long periods of walking. The shift between the more active daily behavior of the everyday routine, which generally involved commuting to work or school, walking and other activities, and now the need for extended stays at home, perhaps explains the increase in sedentary time. (13)(14)(15)

The practice of physical exercise is inversely associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression. (16)(17)(18)(19). In less physically active individuals, higher levels of depression, stress, and anxiety were identified compared to people who were performing physical activities during the period of confinement provided by the COVID-19 pandemic and presented better mental health conditions. People who frequently exercised before and stopped after pandemic-related health restrictions reported worse mental health than those who remained active. (20)(21) It is also worth emphasizing the possibility that there is a relationship between exercise and the feeling of loneliness. It is likely that exercises in virtual group environments, where there is collective motivation, feel less lonely and more inclined to remain physically active. Likewise, individuals who feel lonely are less inclined to exercise, hence the need for people to stay connected to others to lessen loneliness. Furthermore, the feeling of loneliness negatively impacts mental health, and low self-esteem can create greater susceptibility to depression. (22)(23)

The second category was constructed by articles that address the reduction of social contact and face-to-face interactions during social distancing used as a containment measure for the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, social distancing remains the most effective alternative to control the spread of SARS-CoV-2, which has been a natural health challenge. (4)(24) Amid such a context of risks and uncertainties, social support is appointed as a protective factor concerning mental health, however, the distance leads to a change in the patterns of maintenance of interpersonal relationships by imposing limitations on contact opportunities and physical interactions, including with family and friends, which can have negative impacts on mental health. (25)(26)

During the pandemic, day-to-day activities were modified, with reduced community life and the routine of

studies and work via videoconference, without a return to the previous routine. This paradigm shift brings up insecurities in dealing with the unpredictability of the current situation. From this perspective, the impacts of social distancing in the maintenance of social support are pointed out, as the absence of face-to-face interactions is related to the feeling of deprivation of freedom, lack of autonomy, and isolation. Such feelings culminate in melancholy tendencies and a high prevalence of harmful psychological effects, especially anxiety, irritability, and insomnia episodes. (27)(28)(29)

Social relationships and social support from support networks are essential during coping with stressful events, such as the isolation period. Quality social support was identified as enhancing resilience to stress, so the presence of such support predicts better mental health, presenting an inverse association with symptoms of anxiety and depression and irritability, feelings of loneliness, and interfering positively in the quality of sleep. (25)(26)

The third category deals with financial concerns and economic vulnerability. During the COVID-19 pandemic, governments in many countries adopted social distancing measures to curb the rate of contagion and ease the pressure on health services. During this period, schools were closed, group events are canceled, as well as commercial activities. (30)(31) Depending on the economic sector, the impacts were minor or more significant; however, the restrictions affected production and consumption patterns, either by reducing the supply or forcefully containing demand. In general, the health crisis led, in the short term, to a consequent loss of production and a reduction in the consumption of goods and services, in the long term, it is related to a reduction in salaries, staff, and bankruptcy. The bankruptcy of companies leads to a persistent increase in unemployment by definitively reducing jobs. (32)(33) Unemployment, in turn, is indicated as a trigger for symptoms of anxiety and depression, as it generates economic insecurity, negatively influencing mental health. It is also noted that unemployed individuals and being more susceptible to depression have lower self-esteem. Thus, it can be said that a stable working state is related to better emotional stability and better quality of life, as it provides economic stability. (34)(35)(36) In situations like this, informal workers are the first and most intensely affected, as they are in a more vulnerable position as they do not enjoy any social support from the government or are even subject to protective actions by the State. As with the other social determinants of mental health, having informal employment and poor working conditions is associated with an increased risk of contracting SARS-CoV-2. (37)

This context of reduced or lost family income, unemployment, fears of an impending economic crisis, and recession is associated with negative consequences for mental health, especially in individuals belonging to lower-income households. (38)(29) Younger people are presented as the most affected and susceptible to the consequences of the economic crisis, leading to anxiety and depression, as well as an increased risk of suicide triggered by unemployment and impoverishment. (39)(49)(41) The economic crises, when it generates insecurity due to impoverishment, and negative impact on mental health, especially by affecting housing issues and causing indebtedness, thus aggravating the risk of depressive evolution and suicide, interfering with the health of individuals belonging to all social strata. (35)(42)

Despite the economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigation measures affecting people from all social classes, as already mentioned, an important point to emphasize is the intensification of social and economic inequalities that already existed and which become more discrepant and evident in the current economic scenario. Therefore, an unequal society is not homogeneously affected. Thus, a portion of the world population is subject to a more significant impact and is more vulnerable to the economic consequences of the pandemic. (43) Economically and socially disadvantaged family circles are more likely to have compromised mental health than individuals in a more advantageous position. (44)(45)(46) As well as individuals belonging to minority groups, which the pandemic has disproportionately affected, such as refugees, unemployed, ethnic minorities, individuals subject to structural barriers, including racism and homeless people. (47)

There are many uncertainties brought by the pandemic, generating stress and negative emotions. This adds to the impossibility of interactions and face-to-face meetings, as the closing of institutions that promote social contacts, such as churches, schools, and companies, can lead to feelings of vulnerability and the perception of loneliness. (28) The feeling of loneliness, in turn, has adverse effects on mental health, being associated with anxious and depressive outcomes in men and women, as well as an increased risk of suicidal ideation. (48)(49)(50) Another point raised is the role of the subjective sense of loneliness, which is not always associated with the number of social interactions, people that the individual knows, or with whom they interact. Therefore, even individuals who have social support can experience the feeling of loneliness. Individuals may feel lonely even though they are in a stable relationship or living with someone, and this feeling may be less strongly related to the absence of practical support than to social distance. (51)(50)

Family life also plays a significant role in loneliness since, despite offering emotional, financial, and social support, many families are full of conflicts and hostilities, contributing to loneliness. In general, the experience of distancing has implications for interpersonal relationships, and restrictions tend to intensify relationships between residents of the same household. Being deprived of an environment full of social problems or living with the aggressor, in domestic violence cases, is related to feelings of vulnerability and loneliness. (27)(28)

The fifth category deals with the increase in alcohol consumption during the period of social distancing. During the pandemic, the pattern of alcohol use increased, and this increase is related to psychological distress and the perceived threat of disease caused by SARS-CoV-2. Restricted circulation tends to play an important role in increased alcohol consumption. The long stay at home, unemployment, uncertainties about the future during the aftermath of the pandemic, and feelings of loneliness greatly impact mental health and trigger a greater consumption of alcohol in individuals with moderate regular use before. In addition, social distancing measures can be considered risk factors for relapse in individuals with a history of substance abuse and anxiety and depression symptoms, and sleep disorders. Since alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, it exacerbates depressive symptoms, and under these circumstances, alcohol abuse is associated with an increased risk of death from suicide. (52)(53)(54)(55)(56)

In addition to the deleterious effects of alcohol abuse on mental health, excessive exposure to alcoholic beverages has adverse implications for the individual's response, including mechanisms related to immunity, and is known to increase susceptibility to viral infection. (57)(58) Many studies have indicated patterns of adverse changes in alcohol use, with consumption on more than four occasions per week, especially among the younger population. (59)(60)

5. Conclusion

Through this research, it was possible to identify 37 studies focused on the theme of mental health regarding the impacts of social distancing on the occurrence of anxiety and depression symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. They were categorized into five discussion topics: Physical Inactivity, Reduction of social contact and face-to-face interactions, Financial concerns and economic vulnerability, Loneliness, and Alcohol Consumption. The significant impacts of social distancing on mental health were the drastic change in routine, favoring sedentary behavior, and limitation in interpersonal contact indicated in many studies as a generator of the high prevalence of harmful psychological effects, especially depression, anxiety, irritability, and irritability episodes of insomnia. The perception of loneliness as a consequence of the period of social distancing was also identified by most studies as associated with anxious and depressive outcomes and with an increased risk of suicidal ideation, as well as the increased use of alcohol, widely used as an escape from reality in the current context of economic resection, unemployment, indebtedness, and death of family and friends by COVID-19.

It was possible to identify some of the main determinants of worse mental health outcomes raised in most articles and widely associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression. These include female gender, young age, economic impacts of mitigation strategies, job loss, misinformation, false or insufficient information, belonging to the risk group for the severe form of COVID-19, and abuse drugs such as alcohol and cigarettes. The need to prepare health systems for the large number of mental health demands that will inevitably emerge is highlighted, highlighting that the negative repercussions on mental health triggered during the pandemic persist for long periods.

This study could highlight the main effects of social distancing on mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on symptoms of anxiety and depression. The pandemic represents a moment of enormous disruption of routine and deterioration of mental health. Given the number of people in confinement, it is necessary to create evidence-based interventions to mitigate the adverse side effects of social distancing measures. It is expected that this study may trigger new questions about the effects of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic in the short and long term on mental health demands.

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