

HEALTH COMMUNICATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF IT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCESS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT. Knowledge is power. To help prevent disease, one must empower the patient. Thus, effective Health Communication gives us the ability to empower those we seek to treat. Health communication, which brings together the concepts of health and communication, is an interdisciplinary field that academic circles have been interested in recent years. The main purpose of a health communication program is to influence an individual's health behavior. For an effective health communication program, it is necessary to know the individual's behaviors and how these behaviors change. This research focusing on health communication was written to analyze health communication levels and health communication models. The SARS-CoV-2 infection outbreak has been named Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) by the World Health Organization (WHO). Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. This study also emphasized the importance of Turkey's health communication procedures in the fight against Coronavirus. In this essay, the concept of health communication was analyzed, and the communication strategies followed by the Republic of Turkish Ministry of Health in combating the Coronavirus were evaluated.

Keywords: *Health Communication, Covid 19, Pandemic, Turkey, Behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

Health communication is the application of communication concepts and theories to the interactions and processes that occur in relation to health among individuals in order to improve health. (Schiavo 2007: 5).

Informing, influencing and mobilizing the public, individuals and institutions about important health problems can be defined as art and technique. (Parrott 2004: 751) Health communication, which is considered together with new fields such as health psychology, health sociology, biomedical communication, behavioral health and medical communication, is closely linked with fields such as medicine, public health, health education, psychology, sociology. Health communication, which has developed since 1970s in North America, is among the issues discussed in recent years in Turkey (McQuail & Windahl 1993:51).

Effective health communication eliminates the negativities such as wrong treatment and unnecessary waste of time, and enables the presentation of a more effective treatment opportunity.

Today, individuals' desire to have more control and knowledge about their diseases and treatment methods by focusing on the topic of healthy living has made the issue of health communication gain more importance. It is vital that the information given on

health, which is closely related to human life, is reliable and accurate, and the health messages that reach the wider public through the media are not composed of wrong or incomplete information, threatening public health (Cooley 1971).

A new species of virus belonging to the family of Coronaviridae (has 46 species so far) is recognized in 2019 and named as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The infection with SARS-CoV-2 became an outbreak in a short time and has been renamed Covid 19 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 spread rapidly to many countries and was officially declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020, with more than 4000 deaths at that time (Park 2020:119).

COVID-19 disease is a respiratory disease caused by a new coronavirus and was first detected in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The disease is highly contagious and its main clinical symptoms are fever, dry cough, fatigue, myalgia, and shortness of breath (Çöl & Güneş, 2020:127). Since the first reported case of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China at the end of 2019, COVID-19 has rapidly spread in China and then to all countries of the world (CC Lai & Cy Wang, 2020).

Especially in times of pandemic, health communication is of vital importance in terms of delivering correct information to the public and realizing the desired behavioral changes in the target audience (Park 2020:119). With the coronavirus (Covid-19) becoming the only agenda of the world, health policies related to Covid 19 have been established in Turkey and ways to combat the disease have been sought.

This worldwide pandemic reveals how important it is to explain science to the public as well as the importance of science. If a healthy communication can be established between the scientific world and the public, behavioral and attitude changes can be observed at the social level, which positively affects the course of pandemics. At this point, it is of great importance to convey health-related information to the public in a simple and understandable language and to create social awareness while doing this.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK / METHODS

In this study, Health Belief Model, Planned Behavior Theory, Social Cognitive Theory were used. The study is a descriptive field study.

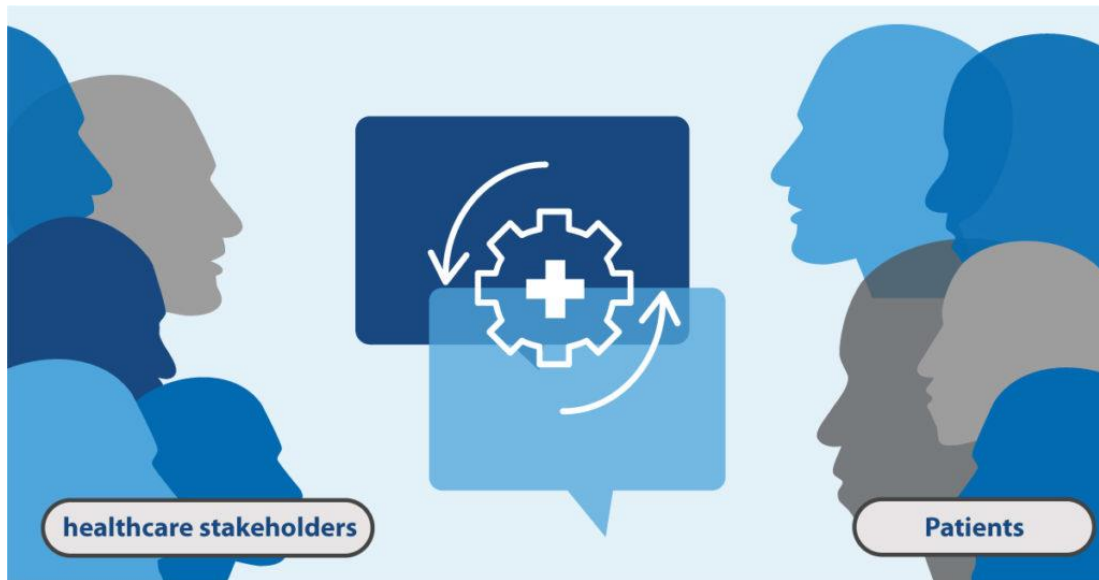
Table 1. Key Characteristics of Health Communication

- People-centered
- Evidence-based
- Multidisciplinary
- Strategic
- Process-oriented
- Cost-effective
 - Creative in support of strategy
- Audience- and media-specific
- Relationship building
- Aimed at behavioral and social results
- Inclusive of vulnerable and underserved groups.

(https://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/94/11181221/1118122194-4.pdf).

The value of Health Communication has already been highlighted in the United States of America (USA)'s Healthy People objectives since 2010. It is highly relevant to virtual areas of health and well-being which include disease prevention, health promotion and quality of life. Changing the health behaviour of the public is critical for disease prevention (<https://www.chcr.org.uk/importance-health-communication/>).

Health communication operates within a very complex environment in which encouraging and supporting people to adopt and sustain healthy behaviors or policy makers and professionals to introduce new policies and practices or health care professionals to provide adequate and culturally competent care are never easy tasks (Schiavo 2007: 2).



Health communication often uses various principles such as prevention of diseases, advocacy of some important points about health, production and marketing of health services, informing and educating health care consumers about treatment processes, treatment options and health care quality. At the same time, it is within the scope of health communication in terms of increasing access to new computer-based technologies in accessing health information, effective use of these new technologies and ensuring equal access (Ratzan 1994: 225).

In health and disease, communication is the most vital aspect of human experience. No human phenomena is as basic as disease and health, and no other phenomenon affects our wishes, desires in our inner World more. The relationship established between the human body, the human mind and the society in which it lives is motivating these dynamics. Health communication plays a key role in establishing this relationship. (Babrow & Mattson 2003: 39, Mittelmark 2007: 98). Health communication is the application of communication concepts and theories to the interactions and processes that occur between individuals in order to improve health. (Schiavo 2007: 5).

Some elements such as raising awareness and providing information about a health problem and its solution, motivating individuals about positive health behavior,

increasing efficiency in health services can be counted as targets of health communication (Tabak 2003: 29).



Health Communication Levels

Health communication plays an important role in improving individual and social health and improving the quality of health services. Health communication, which contributes to health promotion through disease prevention, health education and health protection, is realized at various levels by raising awareness individually and socially.

These levels are:

Physician-Patient Communication: The level of communication between physician and patient, including face to face, without mediation and mutual interaction. In the field of health communication, interaction is mostly face-to-face, with the aim of behavioral change. It is related to this dimension of health communication that the patient listens to the instructions given by the physician during the health service, the physician explains the details of the discomfort to the patient, guiding the treatment process during this sharing and the formation of a trust network between the two sides in this way (Mittelmark 2007: 93).



Mass Communication: As a result of the rapid movement of technology, communication on health can be achieved through mass media. It is possible to publicize a health problem and to adopt a desired health behavior to the masses through a campaign to be conducted through mass media. Opportunities provided by mass communication are mostly limited in campaigns targeting large masses and inter-individual health communication has some important advantages over campaigns carried out through mass media (Ratzan 1994: 224). The rapid spread of television and the internet in particular has facilitated the acquisition of health information through these channels. Mass media alone may not have a direct impact on changing health behavior. However, health campaigns carried out through these tools are capable of raising awareness of individuals and structuring the agenda for health problems. (Wallner1997: 22, MacDonald 1998: 110).

Mass media affects health behaviors on two levels: individual and social. On the individual level, these tools can trigger positive or negative changes in health attitudes and behaviors. At the social level, it can increase the level and speed of policy-makers' awareness of health problems and contribute to the development and change of public health. (Brown & Walsh-Childers 2002: 453).

It has been shown that mass media are very effective on the emergence of targeted health behaviors in a health campaign designed especially for a social health risk.

Group Communication: In health communication, learning, attitude change, adoption and application processes occur in groups of various sizes. Group characteristics and group communication are important, especially in cases of joint decision-making (Tabak 2003: 45).

Groups can transfer health messages to their members and change the lifestyle of their members through efforts to improve health.



Health communication models

Since health communication is a developing discipline, it is difficult to talk about consensus approaches in the literature.

In general, it is observed that the behavioral models of social psychology and some approaches of communication discipline are adapted to health communication and these adaptations are called health communication approaches (McQuail & Windahl 1993).

Some of these models;

Rhetoric Model: It is defined as the process of creating meaning aimed by the source in the mind of the recipient through verbal or nonverbal messages (Craig: 1999). Rhetoric Approach is defined as the use of persuasive discourse in communication process as a functional art. The approach, which is based on scientific theory and phonology, focuses on the effective use of the contents of discourse and texts in health communication (Hornik, 2002).

Phenomenological Model: Phenomenological Model suggests that it is the individual's experiences that are important in making signs gain intersubjective meaning. According to the phenomenological approach, the individual's experience emerges as a result of his interaction with his environment. It is an approach aimed at observing and describing the basic characteristics of events through subjective experiences. (Babrow & Mattson 2003: 49).

Semiotic Model: Theorizing communication as a sharing of meaning between subjects using signs and signal systems.

Critical Approach: According to the critical tradition, communication emerges as a reflection of a discursive process. Ideological practices and materials often cause social discourse to be distorted, and prevent real communication. Other forms of communication, especially interpersonal communication and mass communication, take place within the framework of these rules that become traditional as they are applied.

Critical tradition emerged in response to this traditional framework and is in a way a rebellion against dominant ideologies (Babrow & Mattson 2003: 53). This discourse is also effective in relations with health practices and health care organizations.

Socio-psychological Model: The model reduces the current tensions between expectations and uncertainties. According to this model, communication is a process influenced by individual beliefs, emotions and judgments. The model also assumes that each individual in society affects each other. (Babrow & Mattson 2003: 50-51).

Sociocultural Model: In the model, the concept of communication refers to the relationship and interaction of the individual, including the society, group or hereditary-cultural elements. Without being able to choose, the individual finds himself in the social strata, health and illness definitions with his birth. Especially in parallel with the education level of the undeveloped or developing countries, the impact of cultural factors on health may increase with the contribution of beliefs and values. Health communication should be structured considering these structures (McQuail & Windahl 1993:27).

During Covid 19 pandemic health communication in Turkey

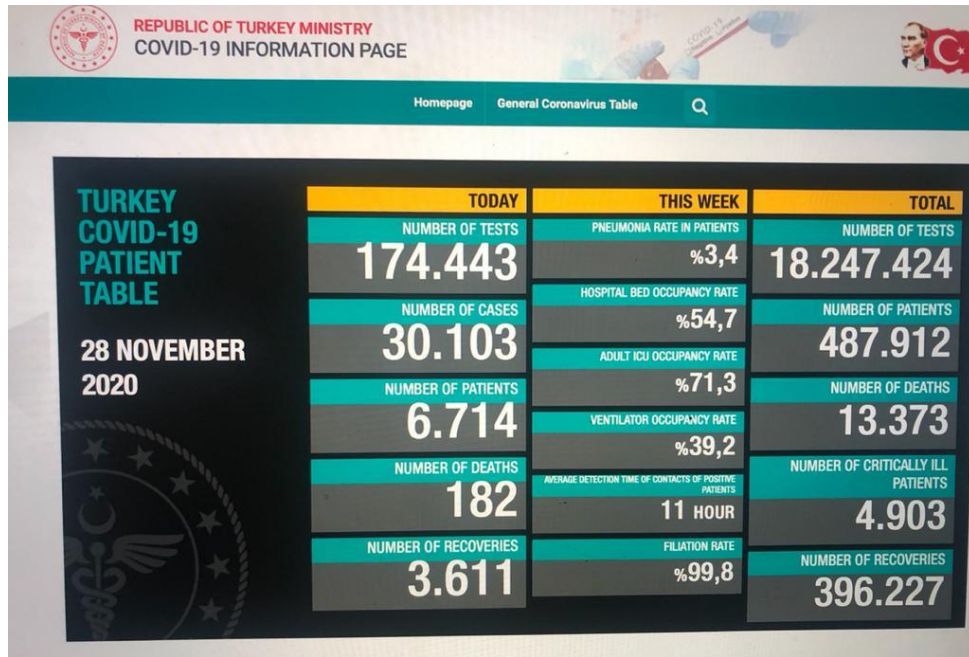
In the coronavirus pandemic, which has affected the whole world, in our country, under the leadership of the Turkish Ministry of Health, information about the disease related to health communication has been provided to large public masses.

The official website of the Ministry includes announcements about the measures to be taken for the public and healthcare personnel, and the steps to be followed in almost every field of social life are detailed. On the site, where the measures to be taken by institutions and organizations in order to successfully continue the pandemic management in the society, it is seen that successful works are carried out in terms of health communication with both posters and written documents (<https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/en/covid-19-i-ngilizce-dokumanlar/covid-19-i-ngilizce-afis-ve-brosurler.html>).

The Turkish Ministry of Health has launched a series of communication strategies under control and the course of the disease to inform the public on this issue (https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr/?_Dil=1). Ministry of health on Covid-19 information page includes; home page, Covid 19, publications, COVID-19 status report, general coronavirus table; This web site provides information about the all necessary materials and documents.

- **Home page,**
- **COVID-19**
 1. What is COVID-19?
 2. COVID-19 Treatment (Information on Drugs to be Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 (SARS-COV2 Infection) (Oseltamivir 75 mg Hard Capsule) Determining the Drugs to be Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 (Sars-Cov2 Infection) (Hydroxychloroquine Sulphate 200 mg Film Tablet), Information on the Drugs to be Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 (Sars-Cov2 Infection) (Lopinavir 200 mg / Ritonavir 50 mg Film Tablet), Determining the Drugs to be Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 (Sars-Cov2 Infection) (Favipiravir 200 mg Tablet), COVID-19 Isolated Biomedical Durable Portable, Intervention Instruction, Magistral Hand Antiseptic Preparation Guide, Drugs Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 - Drug Interactions, Drugs Used in the Treatment of COVID-19 - Drug Interactions Module for Online)

3. COVID-19 Guide (COVID-19 Outbreak Management and Study Guide, Study Guide and Infection Control Measures in Health Institutions, General Information, Epidemiology and Diagnosis, Adult Patient Treatment, Child Patient Management and Treatment, Management of Severe Pneumonia, ARDS, Sepsis and Septic Shock, Antisitokin-Anti-inflammatory Therapies, Coagulopathy Management, Contact Tracking, Outbreak Management, Home Patient Monitoring and Fillation, Infection Control and Isolation, Morgue and Burial Services, Pregnancy Follow-up in Health Institutions during the Prevalence of COVID-19 Respiratory System Diseases)
 4. COVID-19 Presentations (Supportive Therapy-1 in COVID-19 Patients; General Approach Presentation, Patient with Severe Pneumonia, ARDS, Sepsis, Septic Shock, Supportive Therapy-2 in COVID-19 Patients; Anti-cytokine and Anti-inflammatory Therapy, Coagulopathy Management, COVID-19 Contact Tracking Presentation, Home Patient Tracking, Morgue Embedding Operations, COVID-19 Infection Control and Isolation presentation, COVID-19 Epidemiology, Diagnosis, Treatment presentation)
 5. COVID-19 Algorithms (Adult Treatment Algorithm, Tracking Algorithm for Passengers and Flight Attendants, Assessment of Healthcare Professionals with COVID-19 Contact, Discharge and Isolation Rules for COVID-19 Patients, Home Tracking Algorithm, Inpatient Algorithm),
 6. Case Inquiry Guide (Triage is performed by a healthcare professional dressed in accordance with the COVID-19 Case Algorithm (gown, medical mask, face shield or goggles), Possible COVID-19 Case Inquiry Guide for Outpatients)
 7. COVID-19 Forms
 8. COVID-19 Authorized Diagnostic Laboratories List
- **Publications**
 1. Posters (For Public, For Healthcare Personnel, Business Directory Posters, for Sectors)
 2. Brochures (For Public and For Healthcare Personnel)
 3. Billboard (Billboard, CLP (Racket), Giant board)
 4. CLP Videos (Social Media, Videos Expert, Videos, Public Service Ads)
 5. Radio Spots
 6. COVID-19 Glossary
 7. Applied Training Program (Guides Posters Books, Videos Brochures, Presentation for Teachers)
 - **COVID-19 status report;**
 - It also provides information about the **General Coronavirus Table.**



https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr/?_Dil=2

General Coronavirus Table

Date	Total Number of Tests	Total Number of Patients	Total Number of Deaths	Pneumonia Rate in Patients (%)	The Number of Seriously Ill Patients	Total Number of Recovered Patients	Number of Patients for Today	Number of Tests for Today	Number of Deaths for Today	Number of Recovered Patients for Today
Nov 28, 2020	18.247.424	487.912	13.373	3,4	4.903	396.227	6.714	174.443	182	3.611
Nov 27, 2020	18.072.981	481.198	13.191	3,4	4.816	392.516	6.592	171.113	177	3.645
Nov 26, 2020	17.901.868	474.606	13.014	3,4	4.711	388.771	6.876	168.348	174	3.291
Nov 25, 2020	17.733.520	467.730	12.840	3,4	4.641	385.480	6.814	164.547	168	3.911
Nov 24, 2020	17.568.973	460.916	12.672	3,4	4.543	381.569	7.381	162.231	161	3.678
Nov 23, 2020	17.406.742	453.535	12.511	3,4	4.409	377.891	6.713	161.125	153	3.254
Nov 22, 2020	17.245.617	446.822	12.358	3,8	4.217	374.637	6.017	155.516	139	3.812
Nov 21, 2020	17.090.101	440.805	12.219	3,8	4.121	370.825	5.552	152.214	135	3.233
Nov 20, 2020	16.937.887	435.273	12.084	3,8	3.990	367.592	5.103	156.642	141	3.019
Nov 19, 2020	16.781.245	430.170	11.943	3,8	3.850	364.573	4.542	157.756	123	2.916
Nov 18, 2020	16.623.489	425.628	11.820	3,8	3.742	361.655	4.215	158.811	116	2.592
Nov 17, 2020	16.464.678	421.413	11.704	3,8	3.657	359.063	3.819	156.692	103	2.688
					3.610	356.375	3.316	151.516	94	2.712

<https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr/EN-69532/general-coronavirus-table.html>

With the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic becoming the only agenda in the world, health policies related to Covid 19 have been established in our country and ways to combat the disease have been sought. Members of the scientific committee, including Dr. Fahrettin Koca the Minister of Health, have played a central role in delivering information about the pandemic to the wider public. The Ministry of Health, which transparently shares the developments regarding the course of the disease with the public, creates a sense of trust in the public, while the Twitter account of the Minister of Health has become one of the most popular accounts. In communication, especially in health communication,

the reliability of the source is of great importance in terms of the credibility of the message and persuasion literature. From this aspect the highly credited continuous explanations of Ministry of Health demanding citizens to stay at home and warnings to wear masks, wash hands and keep the social distance, are very important to control the dissemination of the disease.

Continuous warnings to the citizens play an effective role for the public to understand better the seriousness of the situation. The call "stay at home" has become the motto for everyone from seven to seventy. The Ministry of Health informed the public in a timely manner about the daily developments without neglecting the communication of the process management. As the first cases began to appear social psychology was used effectively.

With the support of the media, the Ministry of Health conveyed its messages to the wider public via mass media, while specialist doctors invited to television programs informed about the reported course and what information could be obtained at the point of protection from the disease.



Two sets of 14 rules were prepared by Ministry of Health to be used in the action against Covid-19. First set of rules included precautions to be taken not to be infected by the virus, like proper washing of hands, keeping the distance, avoiding physical contact, not sharing personal belongings, etc. The second set of 14 rules regulated the guideline for home quarantine. These two sets of rules and other explanations like hand washing basics were published on the official web site of Ministry of Health and frequently broadcasted on television.

14
RULE

THE CORONAVIRUS
AGAINST RISK

For information:
www.saglik.gov.tr

- 1 Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds by scrubbing.
- 2 Keep at least 3-4 steps away from people who show symptoms of colds.
- 3 Cover your mouth and nose with disposable wipes during coughing and sneezing. If there are no wipes, use the inside of the elbow.
- 4 Avoid physical contacts such as handshaking and hugging.
- 5 Do not touch your eyes, mouth and nose with your hands.
- 6 Cancel or postpone your travels abroad.
- 7 Spend the first 14 days at home on your return from abroad.
- 8 Ventilate your environment frequently.
- 9 Wash your clothes at 60-90 °C with regular detergent.
- 10 Clean frequently used surfaces such as door handles, fixtures and sinks with water and detergent every day.
- 11 If you have cold symptoms, avoid contact with people, especially the elders and those with chronic diseases and do not go out without wearing a mask.
- 12 Do not share your personal belongings such as towels.
- 13 Drink plenty of fluids, maintain a balanced diet and pay attention to your sleep patterns.
- 14 If you have persistent fever, cough and shortness of breath, go to a health facility wearing a mask.

 **TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ**
SAĞLIK BAKANLIĞI

THE CORONAVIRUS IS NOT
STRONGER THAN THE
MEASURES YOU WILL TAKE

Poster 1. 14 Rules Against The Risk Of New Corona Virus
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/SB_14_kural_afis1_50x70cm-EN.pdf

**14
DAY
RULE**

GUIDELINES FOR HOME QUARANTINE

For information:
www.saglik.gov.tr

- 1 Do not go abroad. Cancel or postpone your travels abroad.
- 2 If you have been abroad, spend the first fourteen days at home on your return from abroad.
- 3 Isolate yourself at home to protect your family members.
- 4 Do not accept visitors during the time spent at home.
- 5 Do not enter the room of the isolated person without a mask.
- 6 Ventilate your room frequently.
- 7 Avoid contact with people, especially the elders and those with chronic diseases.
- 8 Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds by scrubbing.
- 9 Clean frequently used surfaces such as door handles, fixtures and sinks with water and detergent every day.
- 10 Do not share your personal belongings such as towels.
- 11 Wash your clothes at 60-90 °C with regular detergent.
- 12 Drink plenty of fluids, maintain a balanced diet and pay attention to your sleep patterns.
- 13 Wear a mask if you have to leave home.
- 14 If you have persistent fever, cough and shortness of breath, go to a health facility wearing a mask.

 REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**THE CORONAVIRUS IS
NOT STRONGER THAN
THE MEASURES YOU WILL
TAKE**

Poster 2. Home Monitoring (Quarantine) Rules 14 Days Rule
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/SB_14_gunkurali_afis2_a4_EN.pdf



Poster 3. Protecting From The Virus Is In Our Hands
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/VIRUSTEN_KORUNMAK_ELIMIZDE_50x70_AFIS-ing.pdf

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS?



- Before and after preparing food
- Before and after meals
- Before and after using the toilet
- Before brushing your teeth or cleaning your face and eyes



- Before cleaning your nose
- After coughing and sneezing
- After touching garbage and rotten food
- After handling raw foods
- After using public transportation



- After using public transportation
- After touching animals
- When hands become visibly dirty
- After getting home

HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS?

- 1 Before washing your hands, remove any accessories such as ring, watch.
- 2 Wet your hands with running water





- 3 Vigorously rub soap over wrists, palms, backs of hands, nails and between fingers by scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.

- 4 Thoroughly rinse your hands with running water.
- 5 Dry your hands with paper towel from the wrists.
- 6 Turn off the tap using that used paper towel.



Ministry of Health | saglik.gov.tr |  /SaglikBakanligi | 

Poster 4. When And How Should We Wash Our Hands?
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/Ellerimizi_Ne_Zaman_ve_Nasl_Yikamaliyiz.pdf



Poster 5: Wash Your Hands and Protect Your Health
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/Afis_8_A4_EN.pdf

In the official Turkish websites many warnings are made to provide protection from the virus. People are asked to follow advice provided by local health authorities. Individuals are demanded to protect themselves and others by knowing the facts and following appropriate precautions.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.

- Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.
- Calling in advance allows your healthcare provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This protects you, and prevents the spread of viruses and other infections.
- Masks can help prevent the spread of the virus from the person wearing the mask to others. Masks alone do not protect against COVID-19, and should be combined with physical distancing and hand hygiene. Follow the advice provided by your local health authority.



Poster 6: Wash Your Hands Frequently

https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/elleri_yika-compressed.pdf

With the studies carried out under the leadership of the Ministry of Health, a series of communication strategies have been followed in order to control the course of the disease and the mass media was used effecticely. On the official website of the Ministry, announcements prepared for the public and healthcare personnel and the points to be taken into consideration about the ways of protection from the disease are included in detail. Well designed easily understandable adequate information are serviced as the steps to be followed in almost all areas of social life. The Ministry, backed by the support of the media, takes concrete steps towards the successful continuation of the pandemic management in the society, while constantly informing about the issues that institutions and organizations should pay attention to in workplaces and daily life.

The Turkish Ministry of Health has also prepared a new communication campaign to combat the new type of coronavirus. The campaign, which was prepared to inform citizens about the measures to be taken and to prevent the spread of the disease, featured the leading actors of two TV series in the medical drama category. The campaign is broadcasted simultaneously on television, radio, outdoor and internet channels.



Poster 7: *Protect Your Health During Your Travel*
<https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/seyahatyeni-ing.pdf>



Poster 8. Use of Fabric Face Mask in The Society
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/COVID-19_TOPLUMDA_BEZ_MASKE_KULLANIMI_AFIS_50X70.pdf



Poster 9. Waste Management
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/COVID-19_ATIK_YONETIMI_AFIS_A4.pdf

Ministry prepared mainly five posters about Standard Measures, Contact Isolation, Droplet Isolation, Respiratory Isolation, Proper Use of Personal Protective Equipment for the Healthcare Professionals.

Posters for the Healthcare Professionals



Poster 1. Standard Measures
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/IZOLASYON-ONLEMLERI_STANDART_ONLEMLER_EN-converted.pdf



Poster 2. Contact Isolation

https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/IZOLASYON-ONLEMLERI_TEMAS_EN-converted.pdf


The official website of the Ministry of Health includes announcements for the public and healthcare personnel and it is in fact an obligation to be followed in almost every aspect of life. It is seen that for the sake of successful pandemic management, the measures to be taken by institutions and organizations in the society have to continue. It is also interpreted that posters and written documents are quite fruitful in health communication.

It will do little help to criticize furiously the policies of the desperate countries like Italy and France which followed inadequate health policies in this extraordinary pandemic process. However, in comparison to them management of this course was better in Turkey and this was accepted as a valuable public diplomacy model by the society. This situation has increased trust towards the media and health management system in Turkey. During the management of the Covid-19 in Turkey, officials of the Ministry of Health, members of the Covid-19 scientific board (summoned from the leading physicians) and the country's administration shaped the policies in the pandemic process after inspecting the developments in the World and benefitting from the continuously updating data and clinical practises. The presentation of refreshed knowledge appears to be an other important factor that strengthens trust and communication between public and officials.


DROPLET ISOLATION

Implement in addition to the standard precautions




They are implemented against diseases that can be transmitted through coughing, sneezing and speaking. The patient is admitted to a single room.







ENSURE THE PATIENT USES A MEDICAL MASK





WHEN WORKING AT A DISTANCE OF CLOSER THAN 1 METER

- **CLEAN YOUR HANDS**
Scrub your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or wash your hands
- **WEAR A MEDICAL MASK**
- **WEAR GOGGLES/FACE SHIELD**

WHEN LEAVING THE PATIENT AREA

- **CLEAN YOUR HANDS**
Scrub your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or wash your hands
- **REMOVE THE GOGGLES/FACE SHIELD**
- **REMOVE THE MASK**
After moving at least one meter away from the patient
- **CLEAN YOUR HANDS**
Scrub your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or wash your hands

 **T.C. SAĞLIK BAKANLIĞI** | saglik.gov.tr |  /SaglikBakanligi

Poster 3. Droplet Isolation
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/IZOLASYON-ONLEMLERI_DAMLACIK-EN-converted.pdf

RESPIRATORY ISOLATION

Implement in addition to the standard precautions

They are implemented against diseases that can be transmitted through respiration. (measles, chicken pox, disseminated shingles, lung or larynx tuberculosis)
The patient should be monitored in a negative pressure isolation room, if possible.

IF THE PATIENT IS TO BE TRANSFERRED ENSURE THE PATIENT USES A MEDICAL MASK

ALWAYS KEEP THE DOOR OF THE PATIENT'S ROOM CLOSED

BEFORE ENTERING THE PATIENT AREA

- CLEAN YOUR HANDS**
Scrub your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or wash your hands
- WEAR YOUR GOWN**
- USE A MASK**
N95 / FFP2
- WEAR GOGGLES/FACE SHIELD**
In cases where there is a possibility of aerosol forming procedure and splash
- WEAR GLOVES**

WHEN LEAVING THE PATIENT AREA

- REMOVE YOUR GLOVES**
Clean your hands afterwards
- REMOVE THE GOGGLES/FACE SHIELD**
- REMOVE THE GOWN**
- REMOVE THE MASK**
After leaving the patient area
- CLEAN YOUR HANDS**
Scrub your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer or wash your hands.

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Poster 4. Respiratory Isolation

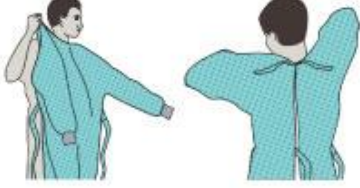
https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/IZOLASYON-ONLEMLERI_SOLUNUM-EN-converted.pdf

PROPER USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The required PPE will vary depending on the current transmission risk, patient and disease condition in line with the proposed protection measures (standard, contact, droplet or respiratory tract isolation methods). **WEAR YOUR PPE IN FOLLOWING ORDER**


1. GOWN

- It should have long sleeves, wrist straps, and extend to the knees and cover the back.
- It should be tied from the neck and waist area.




2. MEDICAL MASK AND N95/FFP2 MASK

- The mask should extend to cover the nose, mouth and lower part of the chin, and should be tied tightly preventing ingress of air from the sides. The flexible wire strap on the nose bridge part should be bendable.




3. PROTECTIVE GOGGLES OR FACE SHIELD

- It should be adjusted to cover the face and eyes.




4. GLOVES

- It should be worn to cover the wrist part of the isolation gown.



SAFE WORKING GUIDELINES

- Avoid touching your face with your hands.
- Do not touch any part of the mask other than the rope or elastic band.
- Limit the surfaces you touch.
- Replace the torn or extremely dirty gloves.
- Clean your hands before and after a procedure.



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Poster 5. Proper Use of Personal Protective Equipment
<https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/depo/covid19/Ingilizce/Afis/KKE-UygunKullanimi-EN-converted.pdf>

CONCLUSION

In recent years, many scientific researches aiming to bring together the concepts of communication and health have led to the emergence of health communication as a sub-discipline of communication science.

Health communication in general can be defined as the application of communication concepts and theories to the interactions and processes that occur between individuals. Health communication is a set of strategies that significantly affect the quality and success of medical care and contribute to the development of individual and social health. Informing individuals about important health problems is frequently used to make decisions about social health. In addition, health communication, which is effective on the formation of health care policies, is frequently used in the prevention of diseases, in the production and marketing of health services, in the process of informing and educating individuals about the treatment and quality of health care. First of all, it is seen that health programs are monitored with the necessity of being informed about health developments, recent innovations in medicine and being aware of health risks. The issue of health communication is also important in terms of making people aware of the importance of their health. Through health communication and communication tools, individuals gain awareness. Health communication is also a very essential subject in public health. Transferring and directing the correct information to individuals should be seen as a social responsibility.

Communication studies play a big role in health, and it is crucial to realize the desired attitude and behavior changes in the target audience as well as conveying the correct health information. Accessing the right information in an area related to human life such as health is of great importance to public health. You can communicate with this target audience, provide the desired attitude and check the outcomes. Throughout this pandemic course it becomes clear that explanation of science to the public is essential as the significance of it.

If a healthy communication can be established between the scientific world and the public, behavioral and attitude changes can be observed at the social level, which positively affects the course of pandemics. At this point, it is decisive to convey health-related information to the public in a plain and understandable language and to create social awareness while doing this.

While the Ministry of Health, which transparently shares the developments regarding the course of the disease with the public, creates a sense of trust in the public, the Twitter account of the Minister of Health has become one of the most popular communication tools in the country in a very short time. Ministry of Health had used many different tools of media and this multimodal approach in health communication was a well appreciated triumph. The continuous warnings of the Ministry had an impressive role in the public perception about the solemnity of the disease. Successfully pursued health communication policies increased the reputation of the Ministry of Health.

As a result, by the date November 29, the calculated cumulative amount of Covid-19 cases in the world reached 61,839,370 and the number of deaths were 1,448,896. As for Turkey there were 487.912 total number of cases and 13.373 total number of deaths. There is no doubt that this pandemic course will evade with the aid of vaccinations, treatments and precautions in the near future. Until then it will continue to be a serious issue in the whole world and surely in our country (<https://covid19.who.int/table>). Health communication has become a crucial tool both in our country and in the world during this process. In the control of the pandemic, the most essential points are the prevention of

transmission routes with the measures taken in the society, determination of the patients and contacts, treatment and follow-up, isolation, hospital facilities and therapeutic services and hopefully vaccination. This pandemic should be managed by all countries, in line with epidemiological data and using a suppression method, with an approach focused on preventing cases and deaths. It carries utmost importance to increase awareness of the society through health communication during the pandemic process. The example of Turkey in health communication practices can be given as a sample for the beneficial effects in controlling the pandemic process. Throughout this pandemic course, Ministry of Health can be criticized by not updating the knowledge in its website about the current already applied treatment protocols and by the confusion about the declaration of the number of Covid-19 sick people.

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