



# PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON INDIVIDUALS WITH PRIOR TRAUMA

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## INTRODUCTION

- The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic in early 2020.
- The lack of effective methods of treatment, the fear of contagion of the disease, and the interventions enforced by governments (e.g., social distancing) created anxiety, stress, helplessness, and fear among people.
- The inability to escape the stressors caused by the pandemic contributed to excessive vigilance in the general population.
- Worsening of mental health during the pandemic has been reported in individuals with a previous history of psychological illness.

## METHOD

### Participants

- To be included in this study, participants must be 21 to 89 years old and citizens or residents of the U.S.

### Recruitment

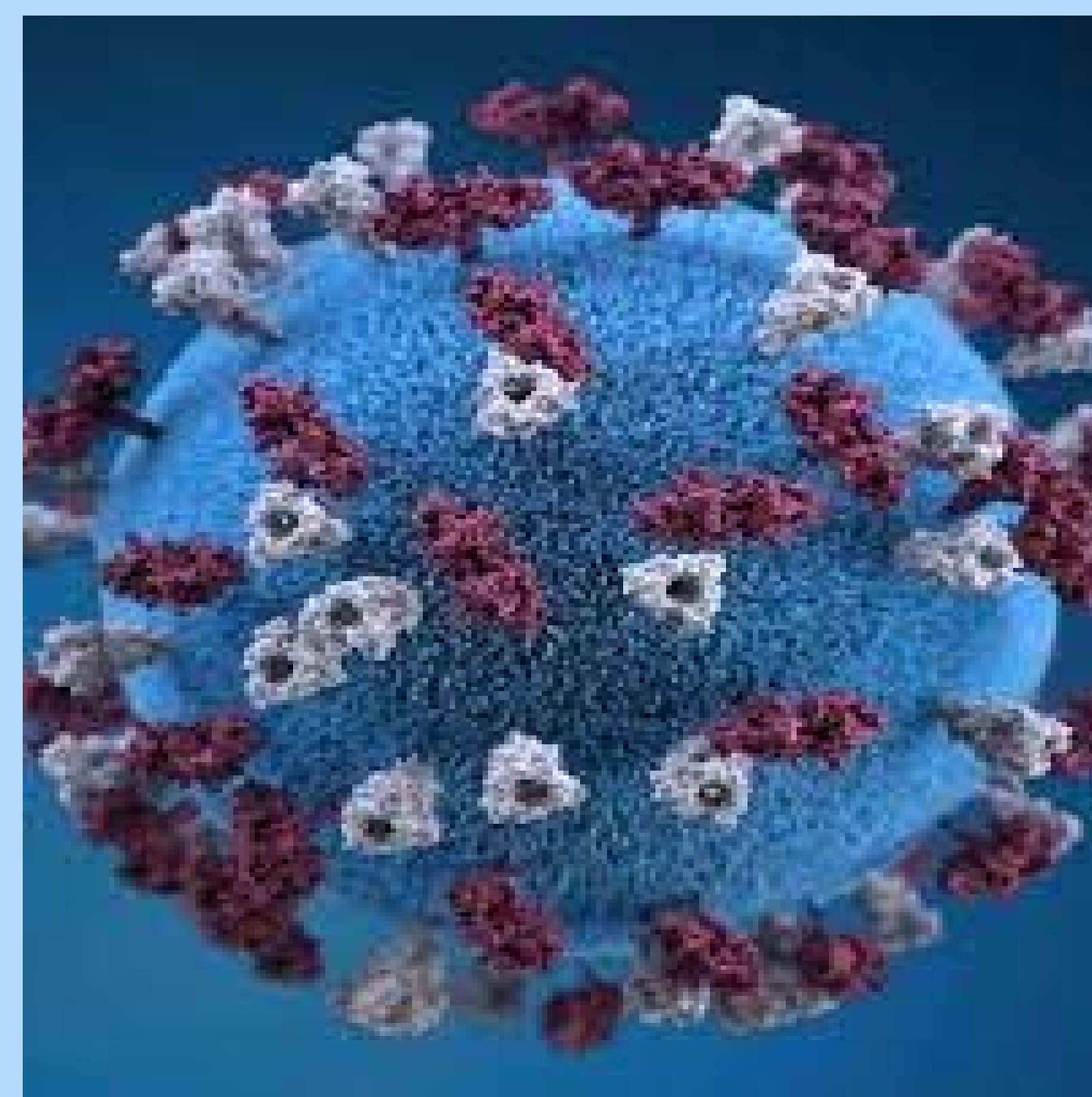
- Participants will be recruited through ResearchMatch and Facebook posts.

### Measures

- **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist** (PCL-5; Weathers, 2008; Weathers, Litz, Herman, Huska, & Keane, 1993) a 23-item self-report measure assessing for DSM-5 symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- **Coronavirus Anxiety Scale** (CAS; Lee, 2020) a 5-item self-report screener measuring dysfunctional anxiety associated with the coronavirus pandemic.
- **The Obsession with COVID-19 Scale** (OCS; Lee, 2020) a 4 item self-report screener measuring persistent and disturbed thinking about COVID-19.
- **The Coronavirus Reassurance Seeking Behaviors Scale** (CRBS; Lee, 2020) a 5-item self-report screener measuring reassurance-seeking behaviors about the COVID-19 pandemic.

## HYPOTHESES

- It is hypothesized that **anxiety and coronavirus reassurance-seeking behaviors** will be **significantly higher among individuals with a history of previous trauma**, whether they have been directly or indirectly exposed to the virus, than individuals without a history of trauma.
- It is also hypothesized that **individuals with prior trauma, experienced trauma – related stress** due to anxiety over the coronavirus more significantly than individuals without a history of trauma exposure.



## IMPLICATIONS

- May shed light upon the potential adverse effects of enforced interventions for those with a past history of trauma, informing mental health professionals
- May contribute towards the development of interventions accounting for past trauma and providing help in adapting to the “new normal”.

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