

# The Covid-19 pandemic: when will it be under control?

Dear Reader,

One might think that these corona times are good for journals. With the telework many of us are obliged to do, the travel restrictions and inability to attend scientific congresses abroad, researchers have more time to read scientific literature and write manuscripts. This has certainly provided researchers the extra time needed to write papers on data they still had in their drawer but did not have time for before.

On the other hand, lab access and experiments may be restricted, by which less data from new research can be generated under pandemic conditions. Furthermore, clinical studies may be delayed, as it will be harder for patients to attend their recall, and it is certainly difficult to initiate new clinical trials in these uncertain times. It is thus not unthinkable that a boost in publication output may be followed by a decline.

Checking JAD's statistics (Fig 1), a peak in JAD manuscript submissions was indeed recorded in April through June 2020 (as compared to 2019). This period corresponds to the worldwide outbreak of the Covid-19, so that many countries went into lockdown. After this first corona wave, normal submission rates were again seen, with a trend towards fewer manuscript submissions by the end of 2020. Overall, a 13% increase in JAD manuscript submissions was recorded in 2020 as compared to 2019, which thus could be related to corona.

When will this world-wide corona crisis be fully under control?

At dental schools, we have learned to teach virtually, to digitally record student lectures, to hold online meetings, to give/attend webinars, etc. BUT we all are also tired of all these virtual encounters, sitting in front of our laptops, speaking to our laptops, ...

We all are looking forward to once more being able to leave our institutes, travel and meet colleagues in person at congresses abroad.

Nobody knows when the pandemic will be (sufficiently) under control or when the vaccination programs will have reached a sufficiently high efficiency for country borders to be fully re-opened and we will finally be able to travel abroad for meetings and meet again in person.

After having cancelled nearly all congresses after March 2020, many scientific and clinical specialty meetings scheduled for 2021 have already been postponed to 2022 or will be held in a virtual meeting format. For example, IADR recently and understandably decided to go fully virtual instead of the planned hybrid meeting in Boston at the end of July 2021.

Nevertheless, some organizations like that of the 2021 CED-IADR/NOF Oral Health Research congress in Brussels (<https://ced-iadr2021.com/>) have recently decided to stay with the planned hybrid meeting for September 2021. Calculated risks were taken in the hope that many oral-health researchers will be able to travel to Brussels in mid-September 2021; perhaps it will be one of the first meetings one can again attend in person.

Let's hope that we can soon leave these times of uncertainty behind and return to our normal life, or better yet, the new normal!

Stay healthy,



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Roland Frankenberger

