

# HEALTH CARE PRACTICES ADOPTED BY THE FAMILIES TO BOOST IMMUNITY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN PERIOD

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## **Abstract**

COVID-19 has been declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization and India is also facing such disastrous situation because of which the government of India has announced complete lockdown all over the nation. In order to deal with such situation it is utmost important to boost up your immunity which helps to fight against various diseases and keep body fit and healthy. It is the best time because people are staying at their home with their family and they have enough time too and it is better to take this lockdown in a positive way. The study was conducted to assess the Health care practices adopted by the families to boost immunity during covid-19 pandemic lockdown period. Descriptive research design was used for the study. The sample of the study comprised of 64 respondents selected through convenience sampling method and the data was collected from all over the nation through Google forms. The findings of the study revealed that all the respondents have adopted

various health care practices to boost immunity during covid-19 pandemic lockdown period by consuming various diets, fluids and immunity boosting products rich in vitamins and by indulging themselves in various physical fitness activities such as walking, yoga exercises etc.

**Keywords:** healthcare practices, immunity, COVID-19, lockdown,

## 1. Introduction

Most of the people in the world are either into jobs, business, self-employed, or students or into some or the other earning and work related activities which brings stress in life. Nobody today has time for themselves as the schedule is very busy and most of us now a day are very professional and always worried about the completion of tasks, which indirectly leads to mental and physical problems in most of the people. On-going stress makes us susceptible to illness and disease because the brain sends defence signals to the endocrine system, which then releases an array of hormones that not only gets us ready for emergency situations but severely depresses our immunity at the same time. Some experts claim that stress is responsible for as much as 90% of all illnesses and diseases, including cancer and heart disease (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/how-the-mind-heals-the-body/201411/how-stress-affects-the-immune-system>)<sup>1</sup>. People today do not show any concern regarding their health, fitness, diet etc. as most of the time they are busy in their office and household work and are not having enough time for themselves. But now with the emergence of various diseases one of which we are currently facing which is Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic they are becoming aware of the fact that health and fitness is a very important part of life which was always neglected earlier. It is an infectious disease caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). This virus particularly affects the upper respiratory tract. Common signs and symptoms include respiratory symptoms and include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome and sometimes death ([https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-rights-roles-respon-hw-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=bcabd401\\_0](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-rights-roles-respon-hw-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=bcabd401_0))<sup>2</sup>. The symptoms in an infected person can be seen in between five to fourteen days from the time of exposure to the virus. While the majority of cases result in mild symptoms, some progress to viral pneumonia and multi-organ failure. People facing other diseases like diabetes, heart problems, kidney problems etc. are more susceptible and can lead to death.

To prevent this infection social distancing strategies are suggested and as a result of which the government of India has declared the lockdown in India. In order to avoid the contact of infected persons with large groups the government has made many restrictions such as closing schools, colleges and workplaces, restricting travel and cancelling large public gatherings. However country's economy is decreasing but lockdown has shown positive effects too like people are spending more time with their family, the environment has become less polluted, decrease in road accidents and crime cases also reported. So it is better to utilize the time which we have right now in a positive manner. As a vaccine is not expected until 2021 at the earliest, a key part of managing COVID-19 is trying to decrease the epidemic peak, known as "flattening the curve". ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus\\_disease\\_2019](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus_disease_2019))<sup>3</sup>. So it has become very essential to keep yourself away from such type of dangerous disease. People whose immune system is weak are more prone to disease. So in order to boost immunity various foods, drinks, and fitness exercises are suggested by experts. So for this it is essential boost up our immunity as a strong immune system has the ability to fight against various diseases. For this all should take proper care of hygiene and cleanliness, take balanced diet with foods rich in boosting immunity and perform certain kinds of yoga and exercises or any physical activity. This change is observed in people today as they are now taking proper care of their health in this quarantine period as they get enough time for themselves. In order to keep oneself fit and boost immunity, there are certain guidelines that must be followed. There are various ayurvedic products available in the market and are considered good in boosting immunity like amla juice, giloy juice, etc. Regular exercise, yoga or any physical activity is considered one of the pillars of healthy living. It improves cardiovascular health, lowers blood pressure, helps maintaining the body weight, and protects against diseases and along with that, it help to boost immune system naturally and keep it healthy too. Like a well-balanced healthy diet, physical activity can also contribute to general good health and therefore to a healthy immune system. It results in promoting good blood circulation, which allows the cells and substances of the immune system to move through the body freely and do their job efficiently (<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system>)<sup>4</sup>.

Government of India has also taken initiative to make their citizens fit and healthy. AYUSH Ministry has launched a mobile application to enable people to locate yoga events and centres providing training and instructors. It is a map-based location app. Certain vitamins like vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E are very important to boost our immunity. Out of all vitamin C is one of the biggest immune system boosters. So it is very important to

consume vitamin C through the diet because it is not directly produced in our body and its deficiency can lead to various diseases. But the good thing is that you do not have to take Vitamin C supplement because it is available in most of the food items (<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/3-vitamins-best-boosting-immunity/>)<sup>5</sup>. Food items rich in vitamin C are: orange, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, kiwi, papaya, red, peppers, tomatoes, sweet potato, strawberries, and spinach etc. Along with it one should also consume proper amount of Vitamin D by exposing themselves in sunlight for some time and Vitamin E is considered as a powerful antioxidant that helps the body to fight against various infections. Vitamin E rich foods include nuts, seeds, almonds, spinach and oils like olive oil, sunflower oil etc.

Apart from food and physical activity there are certain drinks also that have shown effective results in boosting immunity. Such drinks include: turmeric tea, turmeric milk, lemon tea, lemon with honey and hot water, ginger tea, mint (pudina) tea, tulsi tea, clove tea, warm water, fruit juice etc. Instead of consuming tea, coffee it is better to replace it with any of these because there are lots of health benefits.

It was observed that people were not using these ayurvedic products earlier but now it is very important to adopt these healthcare practices by the families to boost up their immunity due to the emergence of COVID 19. All these practices like balanced diet (rich in vitamins, immunity boosting products, juices etc.), proper sleep pattern, physical activity (yoga, meditation, exercises, walking, breathing exercises, zumba etc.) together will not only boost up your immune system but bring a change in your daily habits in a positive way which is going to help us to keep our self-fit in life.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the background information of the homemakers
2. To assess the healthcare practices adopted by the homemakers to boost immunity

### **2. Methodology**

For the present study Descriptive research design was used. The data was collected across the nation through Google forms. Total 64 responses were received on the basis of which results were analysed.

### **3. Major Findings of the Study**

#### **(a) Age of the Respondents**

The age of the selected respondents ranged between 21 to 61 years with the mean age of 37.5. It was found that 35.94 % respondents belonged to the age group of 21- 35 years. 43.75 % respondents belonged to the age group of 36-45 years, 20.31% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 46 and above.

#### **(b) Educational Qualification**

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents (59.3%) were Post graduate, 34.40% respondents were Graduate, 6.30% respondents were Ph.D.

#### **(c) Occupation**

It was found that 39.10% respondents were in job, 31.20% respondents were self-employed, 20.30% respondents were housewife and 9.40% respondents possess their business.

#### **(d) Type of family**

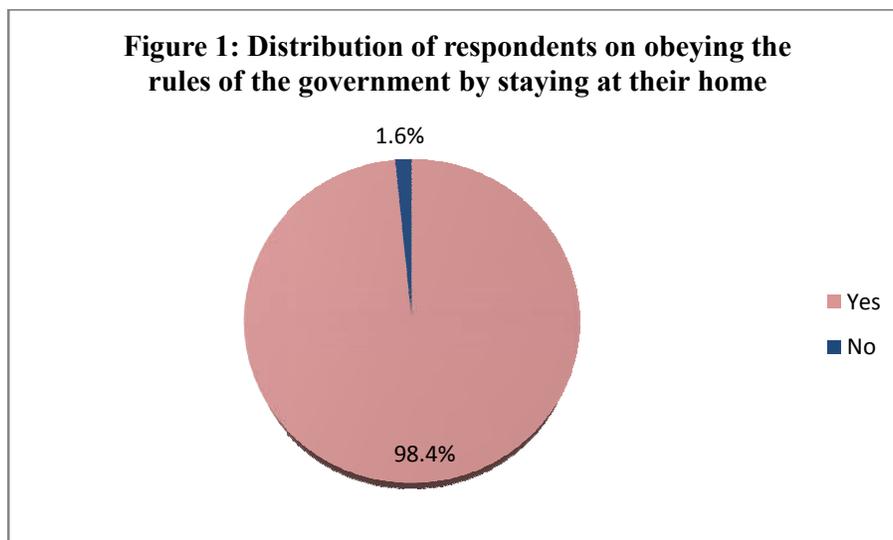
The findings of the study revealed that more than 70% of the respondents belonged to Nuclear family whereas less than 30% respondents were from Joint family.

#### **(e) Number of family members**

It was found that more than 60 % respondents were having 1-4 members in a family whereas only 35.94% respondents were having 5-9 members in their family.

**(f)** Majority of the respondents (98.4%) were obeying the rules of the government by staying at their home and only 1.6 % was not obeying the rule.

(Figure 1)



(g) More than 84% of the respondents indulge in any kind of physical exercises to keep themselves fit during lock down period whereas only 15.6 % respondents does not indulge in any kind of physical exercises during lockdown.( **Table 1**)

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the Respondents according to their involvement in physical exercises during lock down period**

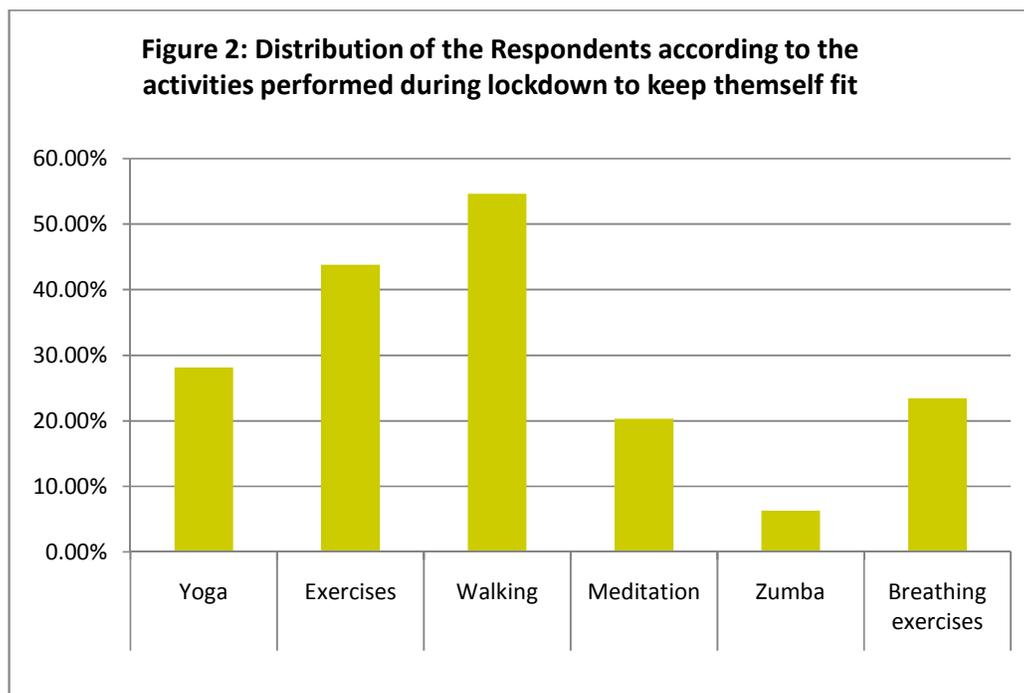
S. No.	Statement	Yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1.	I indulge in any kind of physical exercises to keep yourself fit during lock down period	54	84.4	10	15.6

(h) Findings showed that 70% respondents involve their family members in performing fitness activities whereas 21.9% respondents do not involve their family members in fitness activities. (**Table 2**)

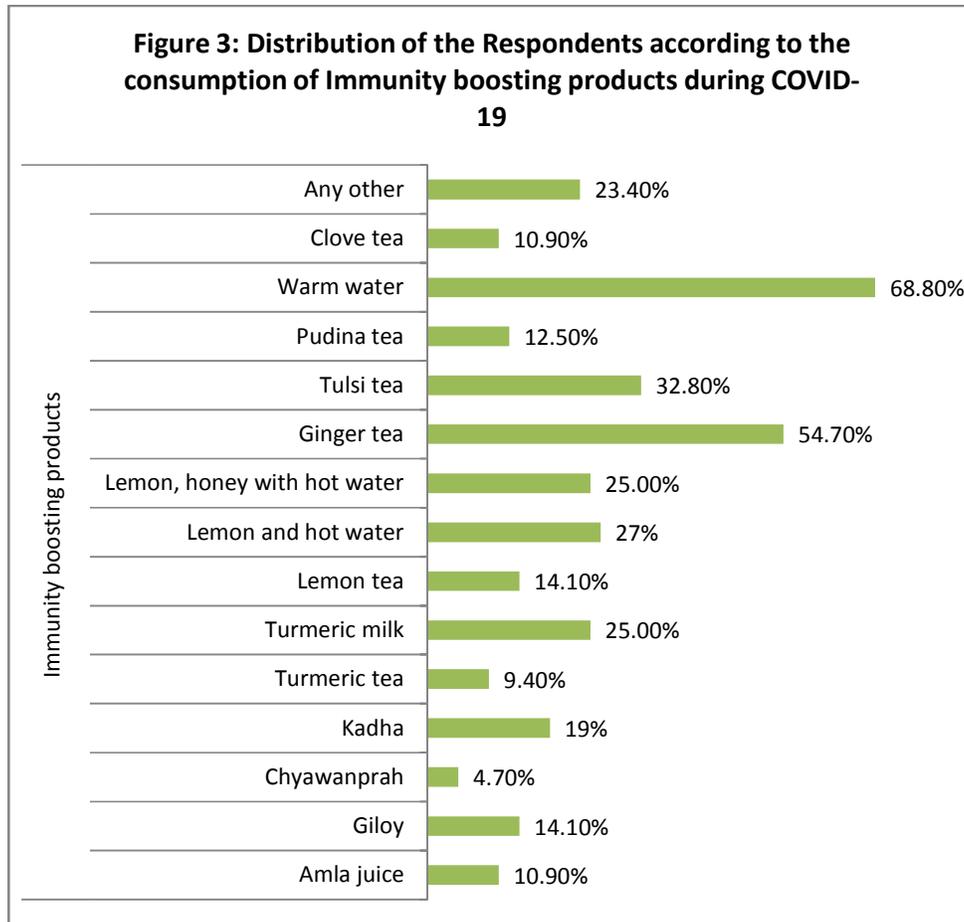
**Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of the Respondents in involving their family members in performing fitness activities**

S. No.	Statement	Yes		No	
		f	%	F	%
1.	I involve my family members in performing fitness activities	50	78.1	14	21.9

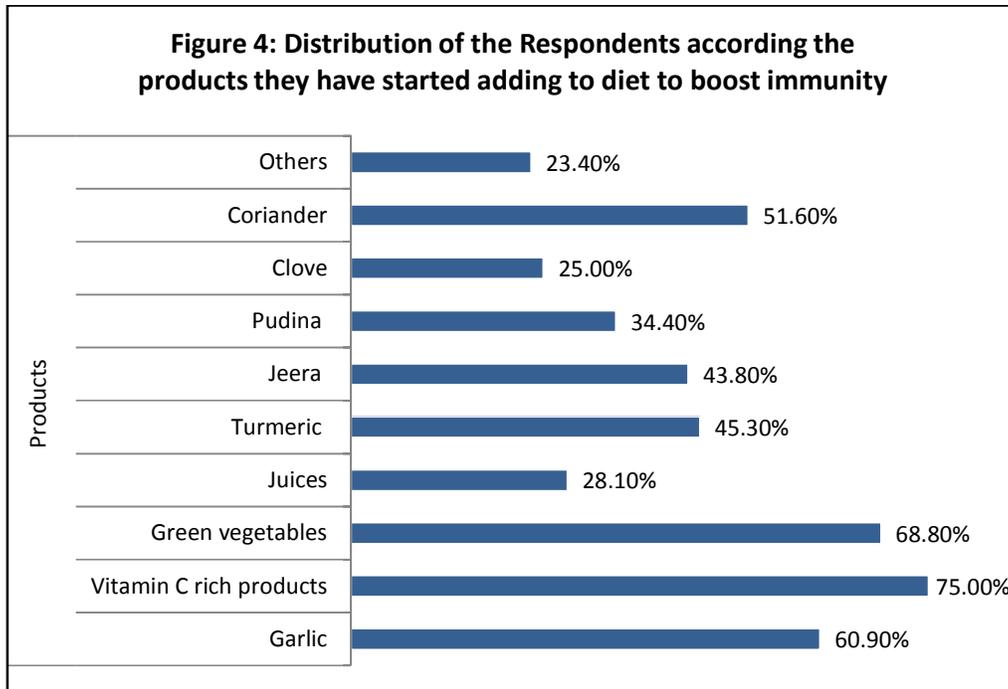
- (i) On the basis of multiple responses, it was found that more than half of the respondents (55%) perform walking, 43.80% respondents perform some kind of exercises, approximately 28% respondents perform yoga, 23.40% respondents involve them in breathing exercises, 20.30% does meditation and only 6.30% respondents perform zumba. **(Figure 2)**



- (j) It was observed that 68.8% were consuming warm water for boosting their immunity, followed by 54.7% consuming ginger tea, 32.8% respondents were taking tulsi tea, 27% were taking lemon and hot water, 25% respondents were consuming lemon honey and hot water and turmeric milk, 23.4% were consuming some other products, 19% respondents consume kadha, 14% were taking lemon tea and giloy, approximately 10% were consuming amla juice, clove tea and turmeric tea and only 4.70% respondents consumed chayawanprash. **(Figure 3)**



- (k) It was found that majority (75%) of the respondents had started consuming Vitamin C rich products, followed by 68.8% consuming Green vegetables, 60.9% consuming garlic, more than half of the respondents (51.6%) consuming coriander, less than 50% of the respondents were consuming turmeric, jeera, pudina, clove, juices and other products. **(Figure 4)**



(l) More than half of the respondents (59.4%) perform physical activities in morning time whereas approximately 40% respondents perform physical activities during evening.(Table 3)

**Table 3:Frequency and percentage distribution of the Respondents according to preferred time for performing physical fitness activities**

S. No.	Statement	Morning		Evening	
		f	%	f	%
1.	Time preferred for the physical fitness activities	38	59.4	26	40.6

(m)It was found that more than half of the respondents (54.7%) spend half an hour in fitness activities, less than 40% respondents spend 1 hour, 4.7% respondents spend 2 hours. (Table 4)

**Table 4:Frequency and percentage distribution of the Respondents on the basis of daily hours they spend for physical fitness**

S. No.	Statement	Half an hour		1 hour		2 hour		Other	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Hours spent for physical fitness in a day	35	54.7	25	39	3	4.7	1	1.6

### Conclusion

From the present study it can be concluded that all the respondents of the study were following the healthcare practices to boost immunity during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period. They were performing various fitness activities and consuming foods effective in boosting immunity (garlic, mint, coriander, ginger etc.) and are rich in vitamins (vitamin C) also. They also involved all their family members in all these activities. Government has also taken various initiatives to make people aware about the causes, symptoms, careful measures and remedies related to COVID-19. The ministry of AYUSH has provided certain guidelines regarding immunity boosting measures for self-care, general measures, ayurvedic immunity promoting measures etc. in the AYUSH official website (<https://www.ayush.gov.in/>)<sup>6</sup>. Many experts has suggested that if the immunity of a person is high he is not at so much of risk in diseases compared to a low immunity person. A person with good immunity system can survive the effects of diseases and recover fast. Therefore the efforts of Indian Government to urge the citizens to implement the AAYUSH guidelines to stay fit and boost immunity and adopt Ayurveda methods in life is a positive step taken which majority of the people have adopted.

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