

COVID-19

THE AUSTRALIAN

REACTION

INITIAL REACTION MARCH 17 TO 19

REPORT APRIL 2020



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StollzNow
Research & Insights Advisory

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1 OVERVIEW



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About this research

Dynata and StollzNow Research



Data for this research was carried out by Dynata the world's largest first-party data and insight platform.

With a reach that encompasses 62 million consumers and business professionals globally and an extensive library of individual profile attributes collected through surveys, Dynata is the cornerstone for precise, trustworthy, quality data. The company has built innovative data services and solutions around its robust first-party data. It brings the voice of the customer to the entire marketing continuum – from strategy to innovation, to branding, advertising, measurement and optimization.

Dynata serves nearly 6,000 market research, media and advertising agencies, publishers, consulting and investment firms and corporate customers in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.

The research is part of a wider multi country survey including USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Spain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, India, Singapore, China, Japan and Australia. [Click here](#) for the Dynata reports.

The data has kindly been provided by Dynata to StollzNow Research for additional Australian analysis.



StollzNow Research is a leading research and insights advisory specialising in travel and tourism, visitor and venue research, health and pharmaceuticals, and community relations.

In this analysis we have used our experience in health and community relations to understand the attitudes of Australians to the onset of the pandemic.

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APPROACH & METHODOLOGY



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Approach and methodology

Methodology

Dynata

Questionnaire design and data collection was carried out by Dynata and the analysis uses this data with their permission.

Fieldwork timing

Fieldwork was completed between Tuesday 17th March and Thursday 19th March.

Statistical significance

Confidence level

All reporting is at the 95% confidence level or higher.

Colors in tables

In the report text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average. The Net (total) shows significance for differences in the total column. Significance in age shows differences between age groups.

Weighting

Data has been weighted to interlocking age and gender from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.



1,112 fully completed surveys

Confidence level of ± 2.9
@ 95% confidence level



Sample source

Dynata online panel



Criteria for inclusion

Australian residents

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HOW AUSTRALIA IS REACTING TO COVID-19



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Concerns and attitudes to COVID-19

Australian overview

Setting the scene - what was happening when the survey was conducted

When reading this report, understanding the timing of the survey is crucial.

This survey was open to the public from Tuesday 17 to Thursday 19 March. To understand the context of these results, it is important to know where Australia was at this time in terms of the unravelling of COVID-19:

- People were still able to attend sporting matches; for example, the NRL was in its second week of competition
- There were no restrictions on where people could eat or congregate
 - People could still attend pubs, clubs, restaurants and cultural institutions
- Shops were low on stock, particularly toilet paper
- There were few cases of the virus in Australia
- Italy was beginning to report high numbers of cases

At this point in time, some Australians were starting to become nervous and were showing signs of fear the virus could have a significant impact on how they live, while others were not as concerned, believing the media and the government were being overly pessimistic.

Key findings

All Australians

Key concerns

- ✓ World and Australian economies
- ✓ Financial markets
- ✓ Health of the elderly
- ✓ Ability of the health care system to cope
- ✓ Availability of food and medicines

Least concerned about

- ✓ Personal employment
- ✓ Self isolation
- ✓ Health of young people
- ✓ Personal health

Attitudes

Half think there could be some positives coming from COVID-19



Australians feel they understand the illness and would know what to do if they had symptoms

Attitudes

Just over half are convinced the government is taking the right steps to protect the country



Australians feel it is important to put the common good ahead of their own needs

Attitudes

Just over half feel other people are over-reacting to the risks.



A third of Australians are worried about running out of household products and food

Self-isolation

FEARS
Running out of food and household products

Self-isolation

LEAST CONCERNED ABOUT
What they will do all day and being able to keep in contact with elderly relatives

Analysis by age – under 35 years

Younger Australians more concerned about everything

Australians are concerned about the ever-growing COVID-19 crisis but the data shows those aged under 35 have quite different levels of concern to those aged 55 and older.

The behaviour and attitudes of those under 35 years show a sense of panic which is reflected in aspects of their behavioural response to COVID-19. The findings show they are far more likely than those aged over 55 years to be more alarmed, concerned and generally more anxious than older Australians.

Those under 35 years are concerned about the impact of COVID-19 for :

- Elderly in both the community and their own families
- Economy, both in Australia and the rest of the world
- Healthcare system being able to cope
- Financial markets
- Enough household products and food
- The availability of medicine

They are less likely to feel knowledgeable about COVID-19 and what to do if they should show symptoms.

Just over half are concerned they will run out of household products and food. This age group have always had access to products and services and it is a shock that these are not always available. They are the age group buying a more sanitizers and soaps and many are spending more on household goods than they have previously.

Finances are an issue; they are worried about their employment and household income. Job security is not strong and many are feeling anxious they will be unemployed. Having had less time to build up assets they are highly vulnerable to any downturn in the economy.

Younger Australians are more likely to be concerned about their and their peers' health (as well as the elderly); despite the evidence saying that younger people are less at risk. Not being able to see a doctor is a big concern.

At the time of the fieldwork, few had modified their frequency of visiting restaurants; only a third were worried about being around strangers; the message about social distancing had not been fully understood.

Having a social life is an important factor for the under 35s and one of the biggest challenges they believe will be their ability to self-isolate and to work from home. Being away from other people will be challenging for those in this age group.

They are also the ones least able to figure out what they would do all day if they had to stay at home.

Analysis by age – 55 years and over

Older Australians confident, secure but possibly complacent

Those aged 55 years and over are almost opposite to those under 35 years.

While older Australians are concerned about issues, from health and the economy to leisure time, their level of concern with each is significantly lower than younger Australians.

Some potential explanations of this difference are that over 55's have:

- Higher financial stability with cash reserves
- A living memory of harder times
- Feel better informed

Older Australians report they are knowledgeable about COVID-19 or Coronavirus, as most call the virus. They feel they know how to protect themselves, what the symptoms will be like and they would know what to do if they had the symptoms.

This may sound as if this age group are on top of the situation, except that 42% of are not concerned about being around strangers and 39% are not concerned about their personal health.

Older Australians are far less concerned than their younger counterparts for:

- Self isolating
- Personal wealth
- Being able to see a doctor
- The health of younger people
- Employment
- Household finance

For older Australians staying at home and keeping occupied is an easier concept. Financial stability helps. Their outlook is far more positive for a whole range of issues that younger Australians are concerned about.

They are less concerned about:

- Running out of household products or food
- The impact on their mental health
- Their ability to work from home
- Being able to contact elderly friends or relatives
- What they will do all day

The adjustments they perceive they will have to make do not appear to be anywhere nearly as dramatic as those who are aged under 35.

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THE DATA IN DETAIL



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Concerns about COVID-19

Economy and health are the two main areas of concern

Top concerns about COVID-19 are:

- The economy
- Care of elderly
- Healthcare system coping
- World economy
- Elderly family members
- Financial markets

The data shows that Australians are concerned as much about the economy as health issues.

Availability of household products and foodstuffs are also a concern. When the fieldwork took place panic buying was at its height.

	%	TOP 2 BOX	Extremely worried	Very worried	Somewhat worried	Slightly worried	Not at all worried
The economy in your country		58	29	29	24	12	4
The health of the elderly in your community		58	29	29	25	11	5
Healthcare systems being able to cope		57	28	29	25	13	4
The world economy		55	28	28	26	13	5
The health of elderly family members		54	29	26	19	11	6
The financial markets		50	22	27	25	15	7
The availability of household products		47	22	25	24	18	10
The availability of foodstuffs		46	24	22	24	18	10
The availability of medicines		43	18	24	25	18	12
Your household's financial position		38	18	20	23	22	15
The health of other adults in your household		34	16	19	23	19	13
Your being able to see a doctor		34	14	20	26	19	20
Being around strangers		34	16	18	26	25	13
Your personal health		29	14	16	29	24	17
The health of young people in your household		26	12	14	17	16	15
The idea of having to self-isolate		26	13	13	26	21	26
Your employment		26	13	12	16	11	19

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.

Concerns about COVID-19

Everyone is concerned but by different aspects

The data shows that top concerns for all people are:

- The health of the elderly in your community
- The economy in your country
- The health of elderly family members
- Healthcare systems being able to cope
- The world economy
- The financial markets

Those under 35 years are more concerned and those 55 years and over are less concerned about:

- The health of other adults in your household
- The household's financial position
- Being around strangers
- Personal employment
- Health of young people in the household
- Being able to see a doctor
- Personal health
- The idea of having to self-isolate

Those under 55 years are more concerned about:

- The availability of household products
- The availability of foodstuffs

	Index score*	NET	Under 35 years	35 to 54 years	55 years +
The health of the elderly in your community		67	68	67	65
The economy in your country		67	68	67	66
The health of elderly family members		66	69	66	64
Healthcare systems being able to cope		66	67	67	65
The world economy		65	66	66	64
The financial markets		61	63	60	61
The availability of household products		58	63	62	49
The availability of foodstuffs		58	64	61	47
The availability of medicines		55	61	54	49
The health of other adults in your household		51	54	51	49
Your household's financial position		51	57	52	43
Being around strangers		50	56	49	45
Your employment		47	54	47	30
The health of young people in your household		47	53	46	40
Your being able to see a doctor		47	57	46	39
Your personal health		46	51	46	42
The idea of having to self-isolate		41	49	41	34

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.

* The question was asked as a Likert Scale (not at all worried to extremely worried). For analysis this is converted to an index (score from 0 to 100)

Attitudes to COVID-19

Certainty and some cynicism

Australians have strong agreement that:

- I have a good understanding of what sort of illness it would be if I caught it
- I know exactly what to do if I think I have the symptoms
- We must think of the common good first, and put our own needs second

Many feel that:

- Media are sensationalising the issue and creating unnecessary panic
- People are over-reacting to risks
- Government is taking the right steps to protect us
 - This also means that 48% are less sure of Government action.

In understanding these findings it is important to remember the timing of the research, before the level 3 restrictions and widespread deaths in other countries.

	%	TOP 2 BOX*	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly
I have a good understanding of what sort of illness it would be if I caught it		72	23	49	20	6	2
I know exactly what to do if I think I have the symptoms		70	24	46	19	9	2
We must think of the common good first, and put our own needs second		66	27	39	26	5	3
The media are sensationalizing the issue and creating an unnecessary panic		62	31	30	21	10	7
I know everything I need to know about how to protect myself from contracting it		59	17	42	27	11	3
I think we will see more pandemics like this in the future		54	18	36	38	6	3
Companies and brands have acted very responsibly		54	15	39	33	8	5
People are over-reacting to the risks		53	24	29	22	13	12
Our government is taking the right steps to protect us		53	15	38	26	14	8
In the end this might actually be good for us, shake up the way we do things		47	15	32	31	13	10

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.

* The Top 2 Box combines 'agree strongly' and 'agree slightly'.

Attitudes to COVID-19

Everyone is concerned but by different aspects

The data shows that most believe they have a good understanding of COVID-19 and would know what to do if they had the symptoms.

Those under 35 years are less likely to agree and those 55 years + more likely to agree.

There is a degree of cynicism that media are sensationalising COVID-19 and creating unnecessary panic.

Index score*	NET	Under 35 years	35 to 54 years	55 years +
I have a good understanding of what sort of illness it would be if I caught it	71	67	71	75
I know exactly what to do if I think I have the symptoms	70	65	69	77
We must think of the common good first, and put our own needs second	70	69	70	72
The media are sensationalizing the issue and creating an unnecessary panic	67	66	69	67
I think we will see more pandemics like this in the future	65	65	67	64
I know everything I need to know about how to protect myself from contracting it	65	61	65	67
Companies and brands have acted very responsibly	63	62	62	63
People are over-reacting to the risks	60	57	60	63
Our government is taking the right steps to protect us	60	55	60	64
In the end this might actually be good for us, shake up the way we do things	57	56	57	59

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.
 * The question was asked as a Likert Scale (agree strongly to disagree strongly).
 For analysis this is converted to an index (score from 0 to 100).

Self-isolation concerns

Food and household items the biggest worries

This question had an option for 'does not apply' that has been removed from this data.

Around one-third of Australians are worried about 'running out of household products' (Top 2 Box 33%) and 'running out of food' (Top 2 Box 31%).

Overall relatively few are concerned about 'keeping in contact with elderly friends or relatives' (Top 2 Box 22%) and 'what you would do all day' (Top 2 Box 18%).

	%	TOP 2 BOX*	Extremely worried	Very worried	Somewhat worried	Slightly worried	Not at all worried
Running out of household products		33	16	17	23	27	18
Running out of food		31	16	15	24	28	17
Your ability to work from home		25	12	13	21	15	38
The impact on your mental health		25	11	15	23	18	33
Your ability to keep in contact with elderly friends or relatives		22	9	13	25	17	35
What you would do all day		18	8	11	19	17	46

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.

* The Top 2 Box combines 'extremely worried' and 'very worried'.

Self-isolation concerns

Younger Australians more worried about self-isolation

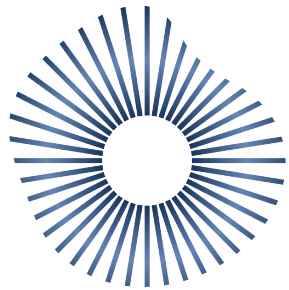
The findings show that those under 35 years are more worried about every aspect of self-isolation.

Hitting younger Australians much harder is 'keeping in touch with elderly friends or relatives' and 'what would you do all day'.

Those 55 years and over are much less worried about all aspects of self-isolation.

Index score*	NET	Under 35 years	35 to 54 years	55 years +
Running out of household products	47	54	51	35
Running out of food	46	54	50	34
The impact on your mental health	38	47	40	26
Your ability to work from home	36	45	35	17
Your ability to keep in contact with elderly friends or relatives	36	44	37	26
What you would do all day	29	42	28	16

Note: Text in blue is above average, black on average and red below average.
* The question was asked as a Likert Scale ('extremely worried' to 'not worried at all').
For analysis this is converted to an index (score from 0 to 100).



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