COVID19 Symptom Tracker: Social Media Toolkit

Introduction

Unprecedented times call for innovation and creative problem solving. While there are many researchers working to *predict* infection and transmission rates, actually tracking real-time symptoms and the rate of infection is challenging. Many traditional tracking methods used by the CDC and other health organizations rely on information provided by doctor's offices, clinics and hospitals. With many people working hard to slow the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing, the usual data sources for tracking symptoms are now less available.

COVID Symptom Tracker is an app created by doctors and scientists that will study the symptoms of COVID-19 and track the spread of this virus. It is a growing collaborative effort between Massachusetts General Hospital, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public health, King's College London, Stanford University School of Medicine, ZOE (a health science company), and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health.

Key messages

- This is a unique opportunity for Texans to help contribute to COVID-19 tracking and relief efforts. Data collected from the app will provide the state healthcare system with critical information to slow the outbreak.
- To participate, download the app and complete a daily survey about your health and how you're feeling that day.
- It's quick and easy, each daily survey takes approximately 1-2 minutes.
- Getting as much information as possible is important, so even if you feel well, downloading the app and logging that you have no symptoms will help.
- The app is already being used by millions of people in the US and UK.
- The information gathered through the app is confidential and de-identified, and will be used to better understand the symptoms of COVID-19 and track the spread of the virus.

Shareable links

Please use https://go.uth.edu/COVIDTracker so that we can better track link clicks.

The above link redirects to https://covid.joinzoe.com/us?fbclid=IwAR2idsIZr9YVUeGVkYKiggsHEqUFQNmsAykd1PmT59wne2WIBshlvC52ms0, where you can download both an iOS and Android version of the app.

Hashtags and tagging

We're recommending a combination of the following hashtags:

#COVID19 | #covidsymptomtracker |#COVID | #coronavirus | #texas | #tx

In addition to any city-specific hashtags that might be appropriate, e.g. #austin, #atx, #hou.

UTHealth School of Public Health's social media handles are: facebook.com/UTexasSPH (Facebook), @UTexasSPH (Twitter), @UTHealthSPH (Instagram). You're welcome to tag us if it's helpful!

Sample social media messaging

The #COVIDSymptomTracker is being used in the UK & US to study symptoms and spread of #COVID19. Join the #citizenscience effort to help #Texas slow the outbreak by downloading the app and completing daily surveys. https://go.uth.edu/COVIDTracker

The #COVIDSymptomTracker helps @UTexasSPH researchers identify how fast the virus is spreading, high-risk areas in the state, and better understanding symptoms linked to #COVID-19 in #Texas – report your health even if you feel well! https://go.uth.edu/COVIDTracker
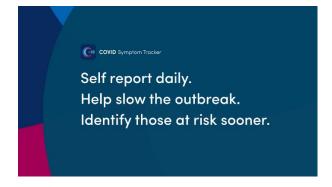
This #COVIDSymptomTracker is a way to find out where #COVID19 hot spots are and new symptoms to look out for. If enough Texans share daily how they're feeling, @UTexasSPH researchers can provide the healthcare system with invaluable information to slow the outbreak. https://go.uth.edu/COVIDTracker

Millions of people across the US & UK are supporting scientists to help guide #COVID19 health services. Join the #citizenscience effort to give #Texas researchers new insight into #coronavirus –download the app and complete your daily symptom surveys! https://go.uth.edu/COVIDTracker

I'm completing daily surveys on the #COVIDSymptomTracker to help researchers at @UTexasSPH study #COVID19 symptoms and spread. Even if you feel healthy – sharing how you feel each day can provide critical insight needed to #flattenthecurve – download the app today.

Social media graphics

Sample email outreach

Feel free to edit as needed.

Dear ----,

The University Texas of Health Science at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health is part of a growing collaborative working to track COVID-19 symptoms and outbreaks in real time using an app called COVID Tracker. We're asking for your help sharing information about the COVID Tracker and encouraging people to use it. While taking part in the project is completely optional, we hope you're willing to join us in this unique opportunity to contribute to our state's response to this unprecedented threat.

COVID Tracker was developed by physicians and epidemiologists at Harvard, King's College in the UK and software engineers at ZOE, a health data science company, and is already being used by millions of people across the world. All data collected is completely confidential and de-identified, and only aggregate data is reported. UTHealth will receive the de-identified data on the backend for analysis which will help us here in Texas to understand the extent of potential community transmission and support public health decision making efforts.

If you're interested in promoting some citizen science, attached to this email is a communications and social media toolkit that provides more background about the app, sample social media posts, graphics and sample outreach text. For this project, we are interested in information from everyone, <u>even if they feel well</u>. Therefore, please share this information with your family members, friends and colleagues. The more people that use the app, the more helpful it will be!

Sincerely,