

The coronavirus pandemic currently shocking the world gained entry into Nigeria with its first case confirmed on the 27th of February, 2020 in Lagos state. The discovery spiralled into a frenzy of misinformation as the NCDC and Federal Ministry of Health worked to allay citizens' fears and contain the outbreak. It is important that we all play a role in beating the virus by sharing only validated information and promoting effective preventive measures.

The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) gathers rumours, concerns and questions from communities across Nigeria to eliminate information gaps between the government, media, NGOs and citizens. By providing the public with facts, the CCC ensures a better understanding of needs regarding the coronavirus and debunks rumours before they can do more harm. Information sharing will be critical to defeating the virus, due to the diverse cultural backgrounds and drawbacks in national education.

Coronavirus poses a serious threat to Nigeria's population of over 180 million people given the country's weak healthcare system, high level of poverty, crowded living conditions and deep-set corruption in government. Economic and insecurity conditions in Nigeria were already tenuous before this outbreak, and Nigeria already fares badly against any health indicators, with high mortality rates and poor life expectancy. When and if coronavirus hits the highly populated communities of Nigeria's cities, it could be a disaster.

It is absolutely critical that Nigeria deals with this pandemic in forward-thinking, open, transparent ways to ensure the well-being of citizens, build resilience and rapidly curb the potential for social conflict. In Nigeria, this is a huge challenge but also a real opportunity to reimagine public health systems, redefine the relationship between citizens and those in power, and reinvigorate governance.

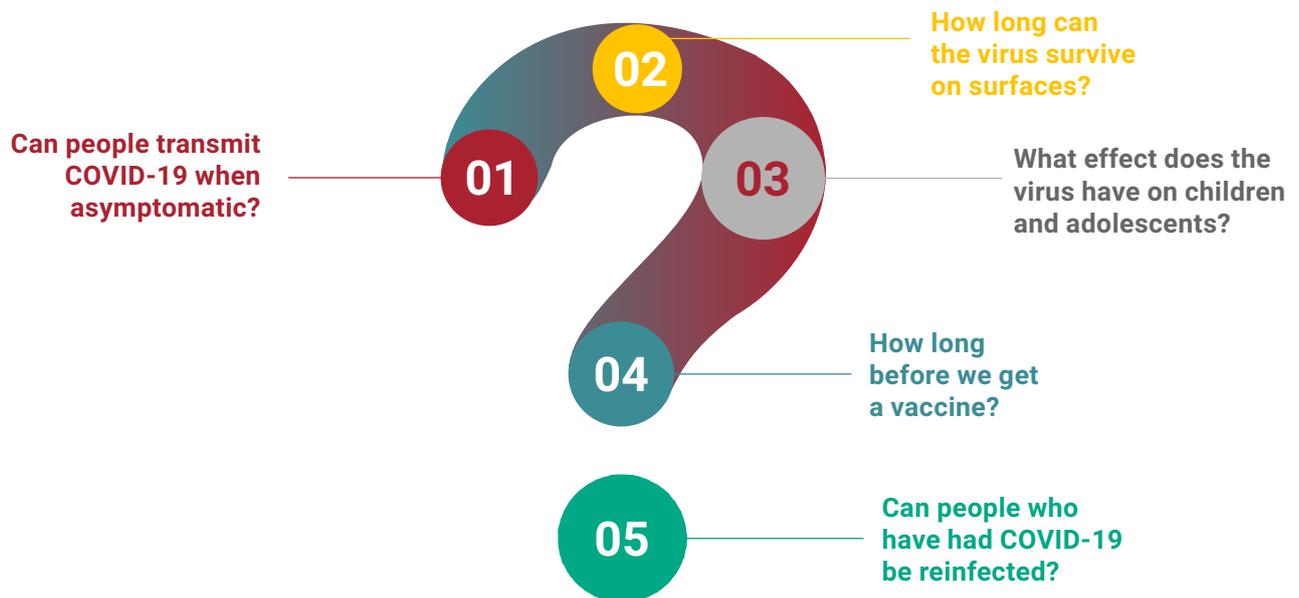
Combating fake news on the COVID-19 pandemic

The suddenness of the COVID-19 discovery and spread combined with the limited knowledge of the virus and unusual infection patterns have made it a prime candidate for misinformation and rumours. Both scientists and government representatives have made numerous and sometimes unavoidable errors in handling the pandemic, making it an ideal breeding ground for conspiracy theories and denials. Widespread propagation of such misinformation has been made easier through social media channels, prompting such companies as Facebook and Youtube to clamp down on user accounts that have been termed "misleading." As of the 10th of August, over 20 million people worldwide have been officially diagnosed of the coronavirus, with over 700,000 fatalities recorded but dissenting opinions still persist.

In addition to this, the phenomenon called "COVID-19 fatigue" has begun to set in; where despite mask wearing, social distancing and the disruption in our daily lives, there seems to be no end in sight. Because of this, many feel burned out and tired of the new and uncomfortable routine and long to reconnect physically with friends and family, social groups and rekindle cultural norms. In fact, many individuals have begun to reform social

groups based on defiance of COVID-19 restrictions and the longing to return to daily life.

Some of the unclear and constantly changing COVID-19 information that has led to misinformation on the pandemic include answers to questions such as:



Combating fake news on the COVID-19 pandemic will require some due diligence from health care experts, government officials and citizens. Citizen awareness for a successful response involves getting information from valid sources and proper vetting. It is important not to give into fear when sourcing COVID-19 information, as a lot of such rumours are spread by igniting emotions and rarely have a factual basis to them.

Some of the strategies that can be undertaken by public health experts and government to ensure citizens are carried along in the response include:

Find ways to creatively engage and identify with the most popular and prevalent networks



Be very transparent about what is not known about COVID-19

Undertake two-way communication with the public to get valuable feedback and respond to citizen concerns as much as possible



Identify sources of rumours and misinformation and shine a light on their possible motivations

Avoid political and ideological affiliation with any information being communicated



Partner with community storytellers to get the point across further.

RUMOURS



VS



FACTS

Ultraviolet lamps and black lights can kill coronavirus on the skin

Vaccines against pneumonia can protect against COVID-19

Rinsing your nose with saline (salt and water) will prevent COVID-19

Dirty shoes can spread COVID-19 rapidly

Masks should be worn while exercising

UV lights should not be used to disinfect hands or other parts of the skin as the radiation can cause skin irritation and damage the eyes. Cleaning hands with alcohol-based sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water remain the most effective ways to remove the virus from the skin.

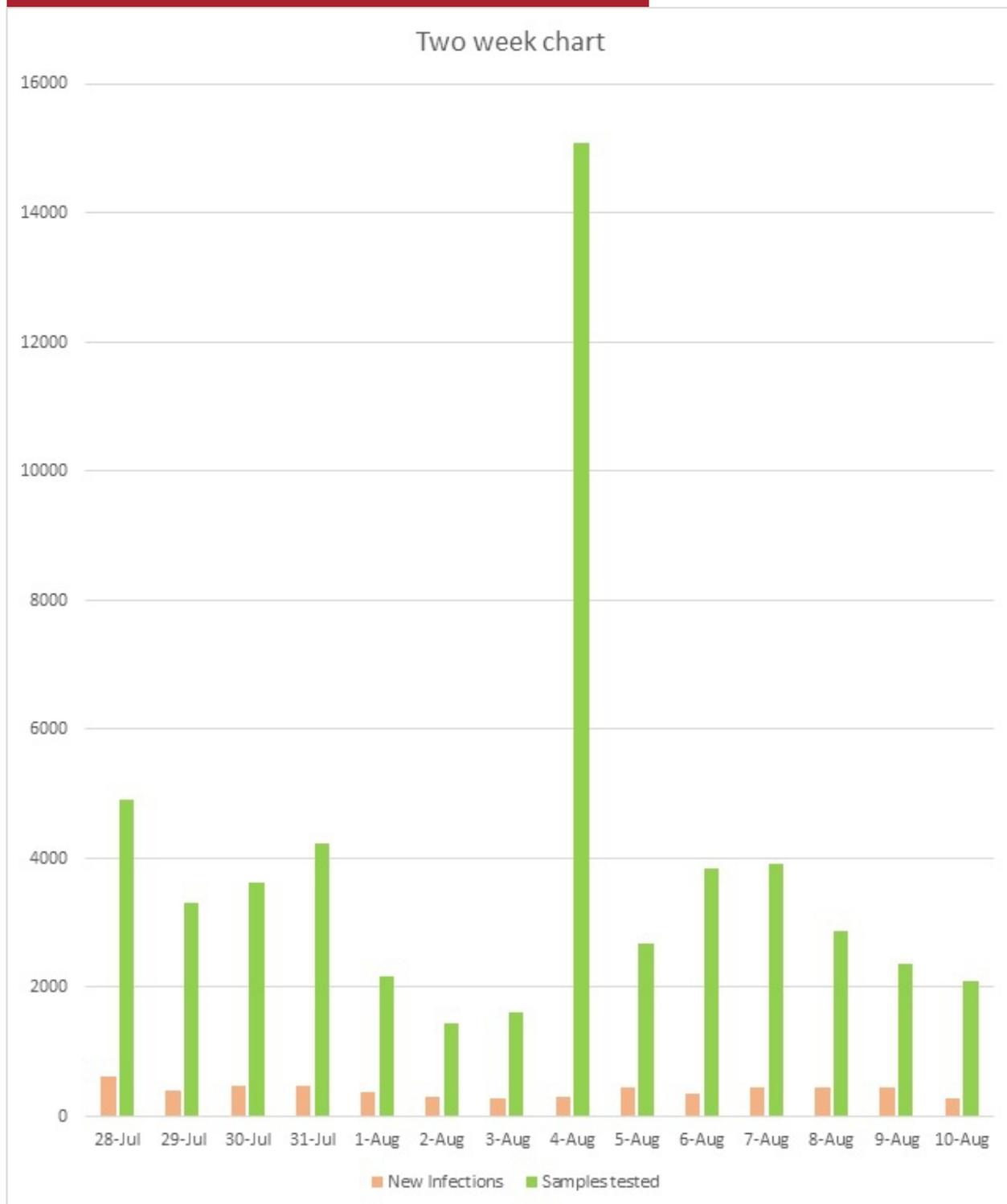
Vaccines against pneumonia, such as pneumococcal vaccine and Haemophilus influenza type B vaccine, do not provide protection against the coronavirus. The virus is so new and different that it needs its own vaccine.

There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the coronavirus; though there is limited evidence that it can help people recover more quickly from the common cold.

The likelihood of COVID-19 being spread on shoes and infecting individuals is very low. As a precautionary measure, consider leaving your shoes at the entrance of your home to prevent contact with dirt or waste on the soles of shoes.

People should not wear masks while exercising as they may reduce the ability to breathe comfortably. Sweat can also make the mask wet and promote the growth of microorganisms. The important preventive measure while exercising is to maintain physical distance of at least one meter from others.

COVID-19 Infection vs Testing chart



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE IN NIGERIA AT AS TODAY - 22/09/2020

57,437

CONFIRMED CASES

1,100

DEATHS

48,674

RECOVERED

480,874

TESTED

The coronavirus matter wey don dey cause wahala everywhere first enter Naija on 27 February and e start for Lagos state. The tin cause many many fake news wey make NCDC and Federal Ministry of Health dem begin try calm pipo down, try make the sickness no spread. All of us need join hand make sure say we knack this virus correct apako so make we dey talk only news wey we don confam say na true; and make we dey do the ones wey go make the virus fear to near our domot.

The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) dey gather different rumour and tori wey Naija pipo dey talk for different states make we help ordinary pipo understand wetin dey happen; so that beta information go dey flow well well for government, media, NGO and even the citizens dem. Once we talk the real gbege of wetin dey happen, all dem fake news go stop to dey spread before they cause more wahala for our country pipo. You know say no be all of us get the same language and no be everybody sabi this English well well so we need this CCC make everybody understand wetin dey happen so that we go finally throwaway this bad sickness comot for our country.

Coronavirus na serious threat to Naija pipo -- wey be over 180 million – because the healthcare system weak, the pipo dey very poor, the living conditions no good and the Government too dey corrupt. Economic and insecurity conditions for Naija dey bad before this coronavirus kasala burst, and Naija dey already score fail for health parameters; pipo too dey die and life expectancy dey poor. When and if coronavirus enter communities wey get high population for Naija, kasala go burst.

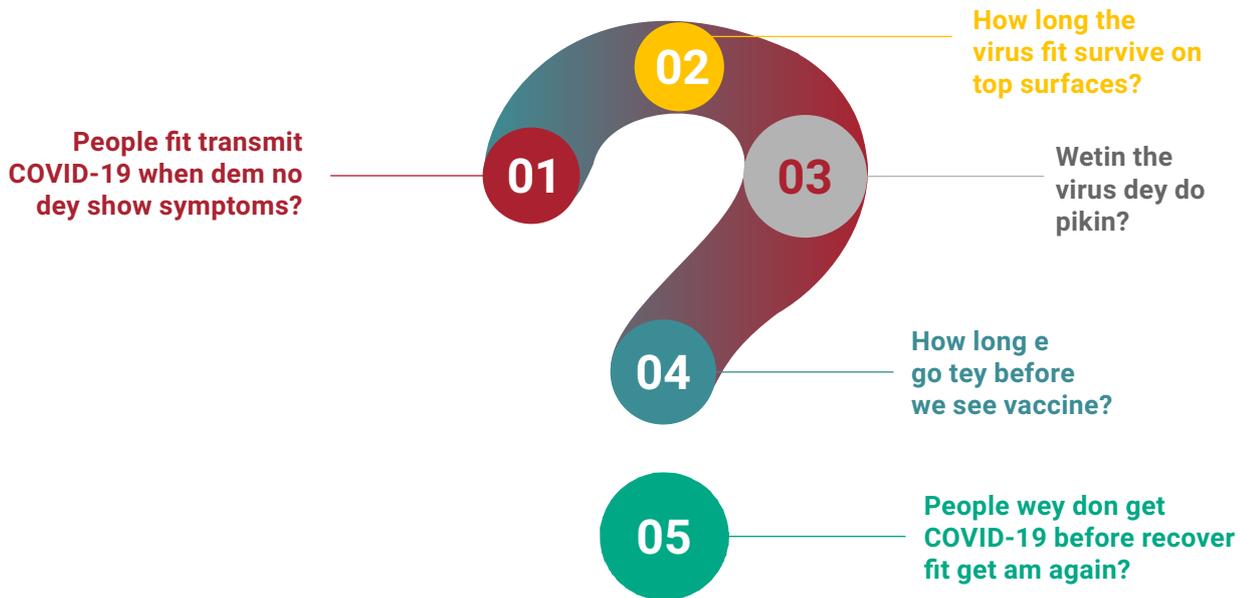
E dey important make Naija handle this pandemic in a way wey dey progressive and transparent, to ensure the well-being of citizens, build resilience and prevent any social conflict wey fit happen sharp sharp. This na huge challenge for Naija, but na also opportunity to renovate public health systems, improve relationship between Naija pipo and those who dey in power, and improve governance.

How we fit take fight yeye tori on top COVID-19

Plenty yeye tori don dey spread on top COVID-19, and na because the virus way no too pure and the way e dey spread no too clear. Scientists and Government reps don make many many mistake as dem dey handle this pandemic, na this make yeye tori plenty. Social media come join for the fake news wahala so tey Facebook and Youtube come delete some accounts wey they feel say dey mislead pipo. As of August 10, over 20 million people around the world don officially get coronavirus, and dem don record over 700, 000 people wey no survive am.

Anoda problem na the one wey dem dey call “COVID-19 fatigue” wey don start; pipo don dey tire because even when they dey wear mask, do social distancing, and their daily lives don dey disrupted, e no look like sey this virus go soon end. Pipos don dey tire and they wan go connect with dem padi, their family, and associations wey dem bin dey before. E don reach say plenty pipo dey use coronavirus wahala form association wey dem go dey follow dey gist, dey blame government on top say they don tire.

Some of the tins wey no too clear for COVID-19 tori wey dey cause fake news on top the COVID-19 pandemic na answers to query like:



If we wan fight fake news wey dey spread on top this virus, e dey important make everybody do their job well whether na experts, government or citizens. We suppose dey get information from sources wey dey valid if we wan create awareness for successful response. E dey important make we no dey fear when we dey try get information on COVID-19, because a lot of yeye tori dey spread because of this kain fear.

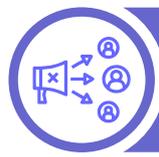
Some strategy wey public health experts and government fit take to make sure say dem dey carry citizens along for the response na:

Make dem find unique way how dem go take engage the popular networks.



Dey straight forward about tori way we sabi about COVID-19

Make dem dey do two-way communication with the public so dem fit get valuable feedback dey respond to any question wey contry people get.



Make dem identify the places wey these yeye tori dey come from and shine light on the things wey fit dey cause dem.

Make dem dey avoid any kain politics for any information dem dey give pipo.



Make dem dey work with community story tellers so them fit tell the story better.

YEYE TORI



UV lamps and black lights fit kill coronavirus wey dey skin.

Vaccines wey dey work against pneumonia fit protect person against COVID-19

You no go get COVID-19 if you rinse nose with salt and water

Dirty shoes fit spread COVID-19 quickly

You suppose wear mask even when you dey exercise

VS



TRUE TORI

Make you no dey use UV light disinfect your hands or any other parts of your body because the radiation fit cause skin irritation come spoil your eyes. The best way you fit comot the virus from your skin na by sanitizer or soap to wash your hands.

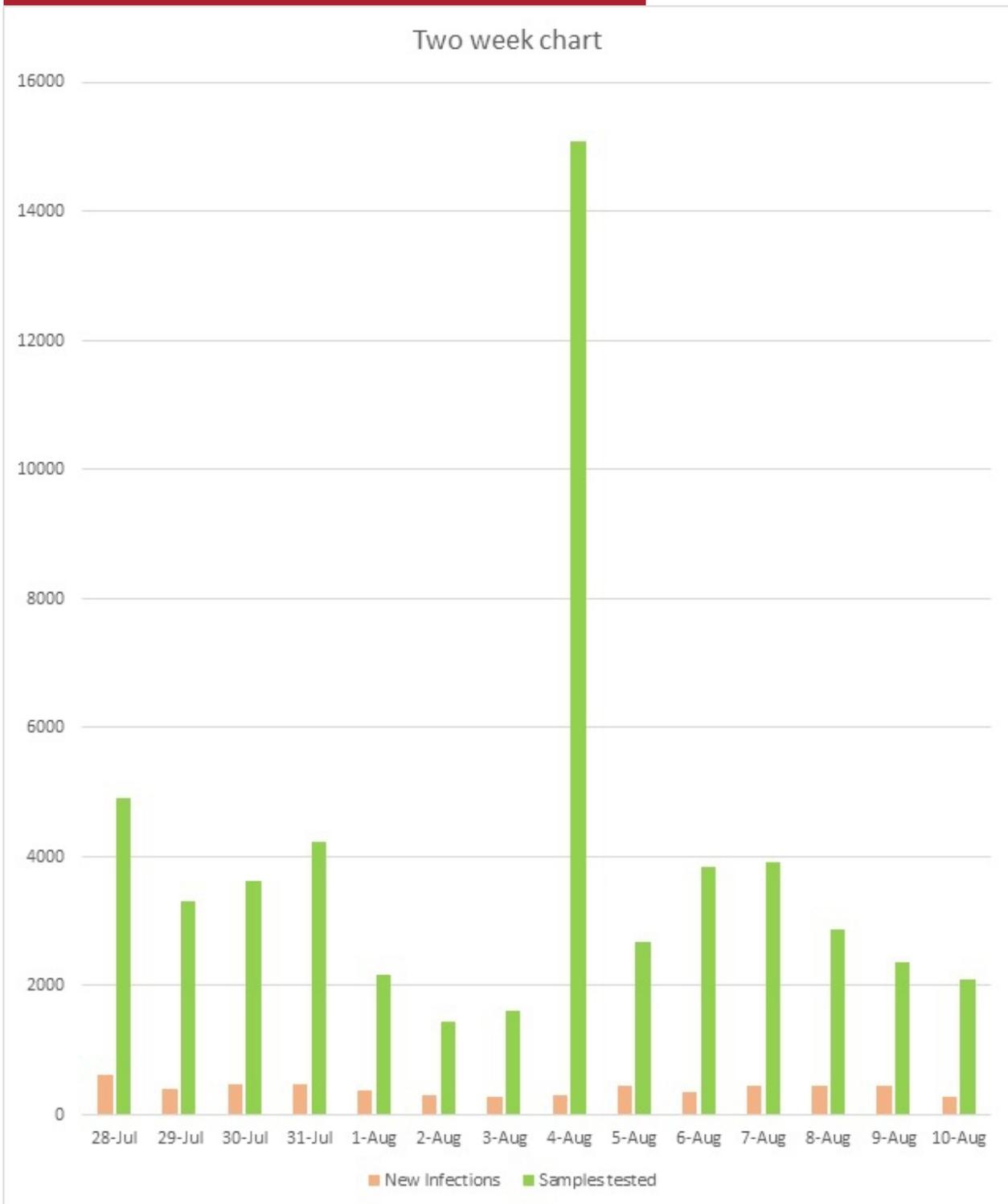
Vaccines like pneumococcal vaccine wey dey work for pneumonia, and Heamophilus influenza type B vaccine no dey protect pesin against coronavirus. The virus dey very new, so e need hin own vaccine.

No evidence dey wey show sey people wey rinse their nose with salt water no go get coronavirus; even though small evidence dey wey show sey e fit help person recover quickly from common cold.

Possibility sey COVID-19 fit spread through shoes dey very low. For prevention, you fit leave your shoes in front of your house so e no go bring dirty or waste wey dey under your shoes come inside.

People no suppose dey wear masks when dem dey exercise because e fit reduce their ability to breathe well. Sweat fit make the mask wet and germs fit grow on top am. The prevention wey you fit do when you dey exercise na to maintain physical distance of at least one meter from oda pipo.

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