

Anxiety and depression among adolescents during the Covid-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis

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Background

The COVID-19 global pandemic has greatly affected the psychological well-being of adolescents globally. Physical distancing and isolation practices have impacted the mental health of adolescents due to the loss of social contacts. It has made them become more susceptible in developing depression and anxiety. This is because at this particular stage of development, social interactions outside of the family unit are more prevalent. The aim of this study is to examine the literature's results in the prevalence of anxiety and depression among adolescents.

Objectives

To determine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to anxiety and depression.

Methods

Electronic searches were done in 5 databases from inception to December 15, 2021. The following search strategies included mental illness of adolescents, and COVID-19. The I² statistic was used to test for heterogeneity with I² >50% being regarded as substantial.

Results

Across 30 studies, the pooled prevalence of clinically elevated anxiety and depression were seen among study participants. Since the beginning of the pandemic, there was 24.2% elevation in anxiety and 27% elevation in depression.

Conclusion

Anxiety and depression prevalence among adolescents has been elevated during this COVID-19 pandemic. Measures should be put in place to protect the mental well-being of adolescents especially at this delicate stage of their development into adulthood. Future testing of adolescents at regular intervals may provide insight into the long-term mental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.