

Essential facts about

Covid-19

**The disease,
the responses and
an uncertain future**

**For South African Learners,
Teachers and
the General Public**



Commissioned by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)



The **Academy of Science of South Africa** (ASSAf)

was inaugurated in May 1996. It was formed in response to the need for an Academy of Science consonant with the dawn of democracy in South Africa:

activist in its mission of using science and scholarship for the **benefit of society**, with a mandate encompassing all scholarly disciplines that use an **open-minded** and **evidence-based** approach to build **knowledge**. ASSAf thus adopted in its name the term 'science' in the singular as reflecting a common way of enquiring rather than an aggregation of different disciplines. Its Members are elected on the basis of a combination of two principal criteria, **academic excellence** and **significant contributions to society**.

www.assaf.org.za



APPENDIX A

RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND FURTHER READING

Here, we provide a number of websites with reliable information to learn more about Covid-19 and the other topics covered in this report.

The following South Africa government websites provide a wealth of data about the prevalence and the spread of the disease in South Africa as well as more general information.

<https://www.gov.za/Coronavirus>

<https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>

<https://covid19.who.int/region/afro/country/za>

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/>

The World Health Organization, which is part of the United Nations, provides worldwide Covid-19 statistics and other information about Covid-19, its treatment, and medical aspects.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

The following non-governmental websites are an invaluable resource for the latest data.

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

<https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>

These other websites are also excellent sources of additional information.

<https://www.pasteur.fr/en/all-sars-cov-2-covid-19-institut-pasteur>


<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/interactive/inside-the-coronavirus/>

The entrance, entertainment, and exit of the viral lifecycle is nicely explained in the blog.

<https://rybicki.blog/2010/09/16/on-the-utility-of-pink-floyds-the-grand-viziers-garden-party-as-a-metaphor-for-virus-multiplication/>



For more information about HIV/AIDS in South Africa and its treatment, see for example

<https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/southafrica>

<https://hivinfo.nih.gov/understanding-hiv/fact-sheets/fda-approved-hiv-medicines>

https://sahivsoc.org/Files/Adult_ART_2017.pdf

<https://unitaid.org/news-blog/south-africa-to-introduce-state-of-the-art-hiv-treatment/#en>

For information about drugs against Covid-19 see

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/treatments-for-covid-19>

<https://rebelem.com/the-recovery-trial-dexamethasone-for-covid-19/>

and

<https://www.contagionlive.com/publications/contagion/2020/august/using-il6-inhibitors-to-treat-covid19>

The WHO website provides a wealth of information on immunization programmes, vaccines, and the diseases targeted.

https://www.who.int/immunization/programmes_systems/supply_chain/benefits_of_immunization/en/

The news article

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn4743-controversial-mmr-and-autism-study-retracted/>

provides an account of debate concerning the purported link between the MMR vaccine and autism, subsequently refuted by others and retracted by most of the authors of the original Lancet publication.

See

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02501-3>

for an account of the partial, not yet complete, eradication of polio thanks to the widespread use of the polio vaccine.

<http://www.victorianweb.org/science/health/depaolo.html>

gives an account of 19th century medicine.

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The Parliament of South Africa passed the Academy of Science of South Africa Act (No 67 of 2001), which came into force on 15 May 2002. This made ASSAf the only academy of science in South Africa officially recognised by government and representing the country in the international community of science academies and elsewhere.

<https://www.assaf.org.za/>

