Overview and Methodology

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed life in the United States. The MRI-Simmons COVID-19 study explores consumer attitudes and behavior related to the pandemic, and reveals two consumer segments that have emerged as a result of the crisis.

In this report, we explore:

- Demographics, psychographics, and attitudes of COVID-19 personality types
- Impact on product purchases and intent
- Delayed, postponed, and canceled activities
- Media usage and preferences by category and platform

Methodology

- 10-minute online study fielded March 26th to April 2nd, 2020
- 2,500 nationally representative completes among adults age 18+
- Final data was weighted and projected to the US population for tabulation and fused to MRI-Simmons national datasets for deeper profiling. Additional details available upon request.
Almost nine in ten Americans feel the COVID-19 pandemic has personally affected them; 93% are concerned for the world at large.

**Amount COVID-19 Pandemic has Personally Affected my Life**

- **Very Much/Somewhat Affected**: 86%
  - Very much: 41%
  - Somewhat: 45%
  - Not really: 11%
  - Not at all: 3%

**Concerned with Impact of COVID-19 on...**

- **Very/Somewhat Concerned**: 93%
  - Very concerned: 64%
  - Somewhat concerned: 29%
  - Not very concerned: 5%
  - Not at all concerned: 2%

- **Very/Somewhat Concerned**: 91%
  - Very concerned: 57%
  - Somewhat concerned: 34%
  - Not very concerned: 7%
  - Not at all concerned: 3%

- **Very/Somewhat Concerned**: 80%
  - Very concerned: 44%
  - Somewhat concerned: 36%
  - Not very concerned: 16%
  - Not at all concerned: 5%

**Q1:** How concerned are you with the impact of COVID-19 on each of the following?
**Q2:** How much has the COVID-19 pandemic personally affected your life?
One-third of Americans are ‘Nervous’ and feel the world is forever altered by COVID-19; two-thirds are ‘Accepting’ and believe that “what will be, will be”

The Nervous segment represents the group of consumers who are emotionally the hardest hit by the pandemic and are least likely to go back to their old ways. 77% say they will be a lot more cautious in what they do and how they do it, whereas 58% of the Accepting segment feel they will bounce back.

People in the Nervous segment are markedly liberal and skew female. People in the Accepting group are conservatives who skew male. Yet both segments are similar on many other demographics, including age, income, education, and ethnicity.

While politics color their reaction to the pandemic, people in the Nervous segment may have an inherently conscientious nature that drives a strong need for information from all available sources, a willingness to follow all mitigation tactics, and a lack of confidence in what the future may hold for the economy and their own financial prospects.

Q3a and Q3b: Which of the following best describes the type of personality attitude you are likely to identify with and the behavior you will most closely align with after COVID-19 passes?
The Nervous group skews female, and they are more likely to be politically liberal.

**Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Accepting</th>
<th>Nervous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Median 47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Median $66,995</td>
<td>$66,857</td>
<td>$67,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>College or more</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Political Outlook**

- Very or Somewhat Liberal: 21%, 29%, 42%
- Middle of the Road: 42%, 43%, 41%
- Very or Somewhat Conservative: 37%, 40%, 30%

**Political Party**

- Democrat: 30%, 25%, 41%
- Republican: 27%, 29%, 43%
- Independent - No Party: 41%, 43%, 36%
- Other: 3%, 3%, 3%

Q8: Thinking of your political outlook, which of the following best describes how you usually think of yourself? (Please select only one.)
Q9: Which of these political parties do you affiliate with? (Please select only one)
Eight in ten Americans feel that COVID-19 will change the world as we know it.

Feelings around Anxiety & Change
(% agree completely/somewhat)

- **COVID-19 will change the world as we know it**: 84% (Total), 81% (Accepting), 91% (Nervous)
- **I am going to be more cautious about what I do and how I do it moving forward**: 80% (Total), 75% (Accepting), 91% (Nervous)
- **I expect there will be more epidemics / pandemics in the future**: 80% (Total), 77% (Accepting), 86% (Nervous)
- **Recent health news has increased my anxiety**: 51% (Total), 61% (Accepting), 81% (Nervous)
- **COVID-19 has changed the way I will act permanently**: 52% (Total), 60% (Accepting), 76% (Nervous)
- **I need to stop following the news so closely because it’s making me anxious**: 47% (Total), 44% (Accepting), 53% (Nervous)
- **Social distancing is making me depressed**: 38% (Total), 44% (Accepting), 55% (Nervous)

Compared to total adults, the Nervous segment is at least 1.2x more likely to feel that recent health news increased anxiety, social distancing is depressing, and COVID-19 will change their behaviors permanently.

Q14: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you might feel during this crisis and after?
Americans are torn: 58% feel the government has done a good job on COVID-19, while 52% don’t trust the administration to handle a pandemic.

The politics of people who are in the Nervous and Accepting segments are apparent in their opinions on government and media handling of the pandemic. Fewer people in the Nervous group feel that mitigation measures are an overreaction, and more distrust the administration.
Due to COVID-19, over one-third of consumers think twice about making purchases, and 33% do more of their shopping online.

**Started Doing More Since News Broke of COVID-19**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Accepting</th>
<th>Nervous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wash my hands more frequently and thoroughly</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social distance / stay home</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare food at home more often</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use hand sanitizer or use it more frequently</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow the news more closely</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think twice about making purchases</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock up on non-perishable items and water</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase items online rather than going to a physical store</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work from home</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop in-store only during off-peak hours</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use restaurant delivery / take out services more often</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cashless payment when possible (e.g., credit card, Venmo, etc.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow financial market more closely</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop taking public transportation</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear surgical gloves in public</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear a mask in public</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take out cash from the bank to have on hand</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow the presidential election more closely</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-allocate funds</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy / sell financial assets</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pandemic changed the Nervous segment's day-to-day lives. Compared to all adults, they are more likely to:

- Take preventative measures like wearing gloves in public (+1.5x), stop taking public transportation (+1.5x), and wearing a mask in public (+1.4x)
- Stock up on non-perishables (+1.4x), purchase more items online (+1.3x), use cashless payments (+1.3x), and think twice about making purchases (+1.2x)
At least one-third of Americans have delayed or canceled personal appointments and travel plans.

Q8: Which of the following, if any, have you had to delay, postpone, or cancel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? (Please select all that apply.)

- Travel plans
- Visit to doctor/dentist
- Non-essential purchases
- Personal service appointments
- An event
- Home improvements or renovations
- Membership to gym or club
- Job change
- Purchase of a car or truck
- Investing in funds/stock market
- Household services
- Purchase of a home
- Moving residences
- TV services
- Paid streaming video service

Although the average income and levels of employment in the Nervous segment suggest they are no less likely to be able to afford non-essential spending, they are more actively canceling:

- Doctor visits (44%)
- Non-essential purchases (42%)
- Personal appointments /haircuts/manicures (39%)
- Events like weddings and funerals (21%)
- Home improvements (17%)
Americans looking to fill their time at home are mostly turning to cooking, organizing their home, exercising, watching TV, using social media, and reading.

While at home, Americans are occupying themselves with:

**Self / Home Care**
- Cooking / baking: 40%
- Organizing your home: 38%
- Exercising (indoor/outdoor): 34%
- Spending time outdoors: 33%
- Working on home improvement projects: 17%
- Taking online classes: 9%
- Practicing Yoga / Meditating: 8%

**Viewing Activities**
- Streaming TV shows and / or movies: 39%
- Watching more TV for entertainment (not news): 37%
- Watching live TV: 35%
- Watching repeats of sporting events: 8%
- Subscribing to a new free or ad supported streaming service: 6%
- Subscribing to a new paid streaming service: 5%
- Watching esports: 4%

**Social / Communicating**
- Looking at, sharing, or posting on social media: 34%
- Hosting or participating in video calls with friends/family: 18%

**Hobbies / Leisure**
- Reading: 34%
- Playing games on a mobile device: 29%
- Playing games / board games: 24%
- Participating in other hobbies: 23%
- Playing video games on a console: 22%
- Working on artistic projects: 14%

**Listening Activities**
- Listening to music on streaming audio services: 25%
- Listening to music from my own collection: 22%
- Listening to news/ talk on the radio: 17%
- Listening to music on the radio: 17%
- Listening to podcasts: 13%

**Miscellaneous**
- Drinking alcohol: 15%
- Consuming cannabis or CBD: 7%

Q10: In some places people are staying home more, some are in quarantine, and some cities have closed non-essential businesses. If you’re spending more time at home which of the following, if any, are / have you been doing to fill your time?
Broadcast and cable news are the top sources Americans turn to for COVID-19 information.

How Currently Accessing News / Updates About the COVID-19 Situation

**Broadcast Media**
- Local broadcast television station news: 42%
- Broadcast network national news: 40%
- Cable news channels: 38%
- Radio (AM/FM stations): 23%
- Local cable news networks: 20%
- Public television news: 18%
- Podcasts: 7%

**Newspapers / Magazines**
- Local newspapers (print/digital copies): 22%
- National newspapers (print/digital copies): 14%
- Magazines (print/digital copies): 4%

**Websites / Apps**
- Websites or Apps of local TV news: 19%
- Websites or Apps of national or local newspapers: 18%
- News aggregators (Huffington Post, etc.): 17%
- Websites or Apps of national broadcast TV news: 17%
- Websites or Apps of cable TV news: 16%
- Websites or Apps of AM / FM radio stations: 7%
- Websites streaming audio services: 7%
- Websites or Apps of magazines: 7%
- Other news websites or apps (CDC, govt, etc.): 22%

**Social Media**
- Facebook: 37%
- Instagram: 17%
- Twitter: 16%
- Reddit: 7%
- Other social media: 11%

Americans aged 50+ are more likely to access local TV news (52%) and local papers (29%).

People in the Nervous group turn to websites/apps for local TV news, national and local papers, and non-news sites 1.3x more than the average American.

Q4: How are you currently accessing news and updates about the COVID-19 situation? (Please select all that apply.)
Americans are spending more time watching news and streaming media; conversely, the softening job market and new work-from-home routines mean fewer are using LinkedIn and listening to audio.

**Consumers Spend More Time Watching Media**

Top Ten for % Doing More

- **Watching local news**: 47% More, 43% Same, 10% Less
- **Watching the national/world news**: 46% More, 43% Same, 12% Less
- **Watching movies on streaming services**: 44% More, 46% Same, 10% Less
- **Watching TV shows on streaming services**: 43% More, 46% Same, 11% Less
- **Watching TV shows live**: 29% More, 58% Same, 14% Less
- **Watching short video clips**: 26% More, 60% Same, 15% Less
- **Watching movies through DVD/digital downloads**: 23% More, 63% Same, 14% Less
- **Watching TV shows on DVR/VOD**: 23% More, 63% Same, 14% Less
- **Watching past/classic sports events on TV**: 15% More, 64% Same, 21% Less

**Consumers are spending less time…**

- **Using LinkedIn**: 18%
- **Listening to Traditional Radio**: 19%
- **Listening to Audio Books**: 19%

People in the Nervous segment are 1.5x more likely to be spending increased time with print newspapers, and they are 1.3x more likely to be spending time with TV, national or world news, Facebook and Twitter, social media posts from print outlets, and digital books.

**Q6**: Since news of the COVID-19 pandemic hit, what are you doing more, less, the same amount of in terms of entertainment and media choices?
Before resuming previous activities, Americans are looking for the number of COVID-19 cases to go down and clearance from health professionals

**Need to Happen to Resume Activities Stopped Doing as a Result of COVID-19 Pandemic**

More so than the average adult, the Nervous Segment will rely on the medical community -- citing indications on number of cases (56%), clearance from health professionals (51%), and news on an available treatment or vaccine (38%) -- as benchmarks that need to happen before they will resume pre-COVID activities.

Q13: What do you need to have happen in order to do some of the things you’ve stopped doing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? (Please select all that apply.)
Americans are craving social interactions and the ability to shop and travel without fear or restrictions.

Looking Forward to After COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing family/friends in person</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to restaurants/bars/night clubs</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being in public</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling within the country</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the salon/barber/spa</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the movies</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching sports on TV</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going back to work</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the gym</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having my child return to school</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching sporting events in person</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to concerts</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling internationally</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working from home</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going on a cruise</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“When things get back to normal, I will...”

- Go grocery shopping and actually be able to find the products I want to buy.
- Shop without the fear of food being gone.
- Go grocery shopping and actually be able to find the products I want to buy.
- Go shopping. I miss shopping for clothes.
- Go to my grandchildren’s sports events. Love them.
- Hang out with some friends and maybe have a few drinks. Discuss how everyone is and what everyone did during social distancing to pass the time.
- Have a family and friends gathering like a BBQ so we can socialize and not worry.
- The first thing I will do is attend services at my church and fellowship with the congregation.
- Go for a great steak dinner and not cook!
- Go out to dinner to a nice restaurant with my best friend and indulge in great food and a great conversation.
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38% of all adults will continue to avoid large gatherings; people in the Nervous group will be the hardest for companies to court back into the public realm.

Q9: How will your behavior change in the future because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Please select all that apply).

Behavior Change in Future due to COVID-19

- I will continue to wash my hands more often: 68% Total, 64% Accepting, 76% Nervous
- I will take my health more seriously: 37% Total, 42% Accepting, 37% Nervous
- I will continue to avoid large gatherings: 33% Total, 38% Accepting, 50% Nervous
- I will pay more attention to global news & events: 36% Total, 30% Accepting, 46% Nervous
- I will avoid traveling abroad or to foreign countries: 24% Total, 28% Accepting, 35% Nervous
- I will try to use cashless payments as much as possible: 24% Total, 21% Accepting, 31% Nervous
- I will avoid mass transit: 21% Total, 24% Accepting, 21% Nervous
- I will avoid traveling within the country: 16% Total, 19% Accepting, 25% Nervous
- I will work from home more often: 16% Total, 16% Accepting, 17% Nervous
- My behavior will not change at all: 10% Total, 17% Accepting, 21% Nervous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Accepting</th>
<th>Nervous</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>I will continue to wash my hands more often</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will work from home more often</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My behavior will not change at all</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
63% of adults feel that their own situation is the same or better compared to a year ago; 75% are confident that in the next year, their situation will at least stay the same.

### Views on Financial and Economic Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Worse</th>
<th>Same</th>
<th>Better</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household financial situation vs. year ago</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated household financial situation a year from now</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy and business conditions in the country vs. year ago</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated economy and business conditions a year from now</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Nervous segment may be slower to engage in spending once the economy re-opens.

- 45% feel their household is worse than a year ago, and 40% feel it will continue to be even worse in the next year.
- Two-thirds (67%) think the economy is worse off now, and one-half (51%) believe it will be even worse next year.

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**QMRI_1:** Thinking of the last 12 months, do you believe that you and your household are better off or worse off financially than you were one year ago?

**QMRI_2:** Thinking about the next 12 months, do you think you and your household will be better off or worse off financially one year from now?

**QMRI_3:** Thinking about the last 12 months, do you believe that the economy and business conditions in the country as a whole are better or worse now than one year ago?

**QMRI_4:** Thinking about the next 12 months, do you think that the economy and business conditions in this country as a whole will be better or worse one year from now?
While some public figures have referred to the virus by various names, American adults most commonly refer to it as “Coronavirus,” followed by “COVID-19”

Q15: Varied sources from the press and the President refer to COVID-19 in assorted ways. How do you prefer to refer to this situation?

How Prefer to Refer to COVID-19 Situation

- Coronavirus: 48%
- COVID-19: 40%
- Chinese Virus: 8%
- Novel Coronavirus: 2%
- Novel Virus: 1%
- Other: 2%
Attitudinal themes reveal some broader takeaways about Americans as they process COVID-19 developments and adapt to the crisis.

**Personal Politics**

Political leanings are noticeably woven into individual perceptions of, and reactions to, the COVID-19 crisis.

**Hopefulness**

Despite facing this unprecedented and traumatic event, many Americans still hold out hope that their finances and the economy will improve.

**Anxiety**

Some consumers’ conscientious nature may be perpetuating the anxiety that they are feeling.
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