

## Healthcare Special Report: Social Media in the Time of the Coronavirus

HEALTHCARE  
SPECIAL REPORT:  
SOCIAL MEDIA IN  
THE TIME OF  
CORONAVIRUS

## Healthcare Special Report:

### Social Media in the Time of the Coronavirus

The healthcare industry has enough to deal with right now, without having to spend extra time worrying about if they're tackling social media correctly. With doctors and nurses bravely on the front lines in fighting the coronavirus, marketing departments want to communicate all the great work their colleagues are doing and share the right information to keep as many people as possible out of harm's way.

While that's always true, with our healthcare system being strained like never before, getting the right information in front of as many people as possible literally could save lives.

Healthcare teams need straight answers to such questions like what's the best time to post, and has that changed now that so many people are working from home? Is the social audience becoming more, or less afraid of the coronavirus over time? Is there a particular social platform the audience is turning to for coronavirus related information? Should hospitals be posting more, or less around this crisis?

In this special report, ListenFirst will provide concrete answers to all those questions and more, giving hospitals the full picture of what the rapidly changing status quo looks like and what the new social media best practices are during this trying time.

#### About ListenFirst

[ListenFirst](#) is the social analytics solution trusted by the world's leading brands. We unite billions of consumer signals from every social platform to give brands a complete picture of their performance and the analytics to drive successful strategies. For additional information, visit [www.listenfirstmedia.com](http://www.listenfirstmedia.com).

Our clients include:

**OLD NAVY**

**amazon**

*Walgreens*

 **AT&T**

 **Hackensack  
Meridian Health**

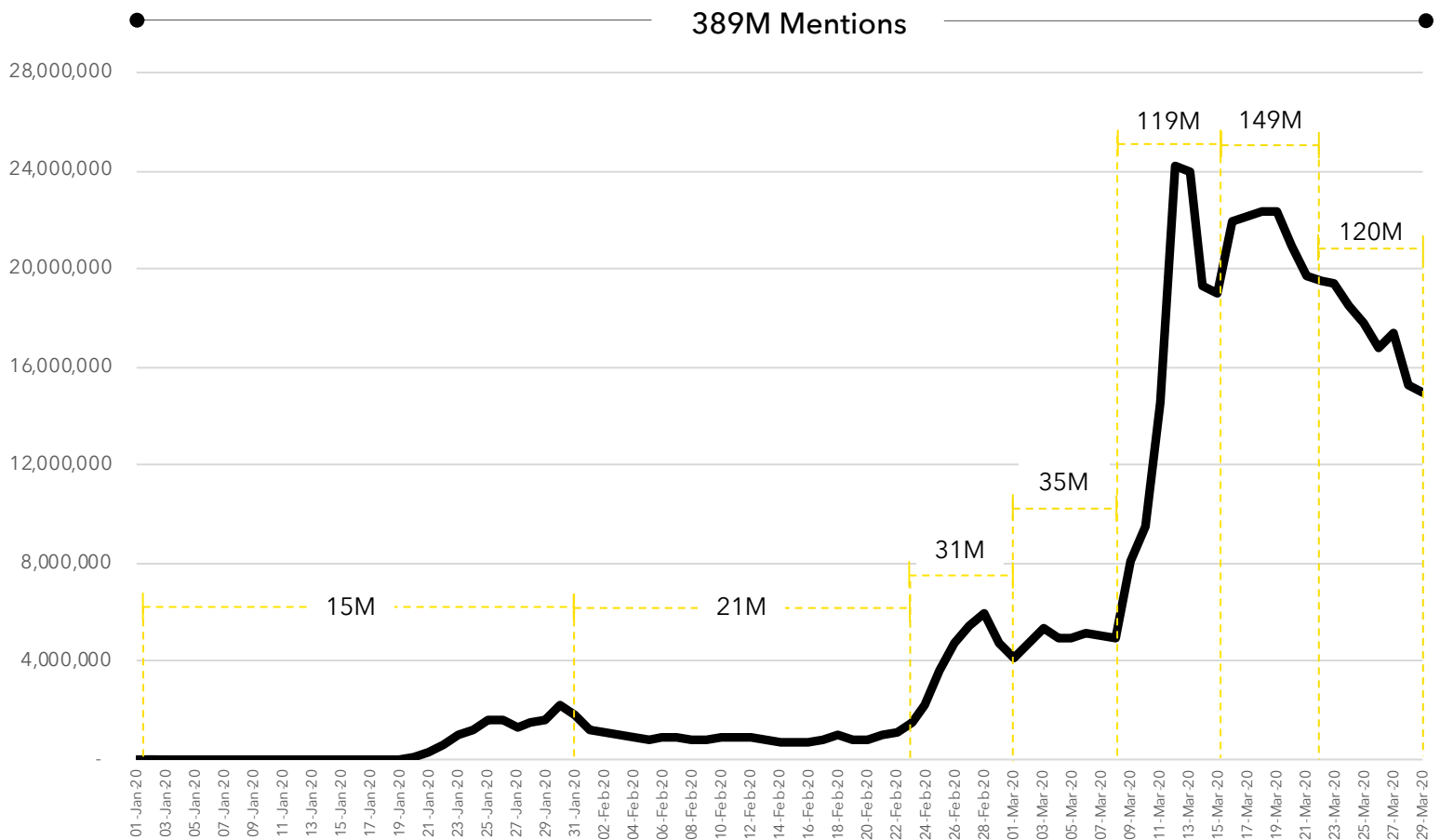
**VIACOM**

**NBCUniversal**

## Conversation Around Coronavirus

Conversation around the Coronavirus or Covid-19 picked up on February 26 when President Trump addressed the nation about the virus and when his administration sought \$2.5B from Congress to combat the epidemic. It peaked again on February 28 when the stock market continued to drop and soared thereafter as events changed quickly day to day, from the WHO declaring a pandemic, the stock market declining, states and cities shutting down, and more and more people testing positive. Conversation is still high, but starting to slow down as people settle into their new quarantined life.

CORONAVIRUS MENTIONS (TWITTER & REDDIT) JAN 01 - MAR 23, 2020

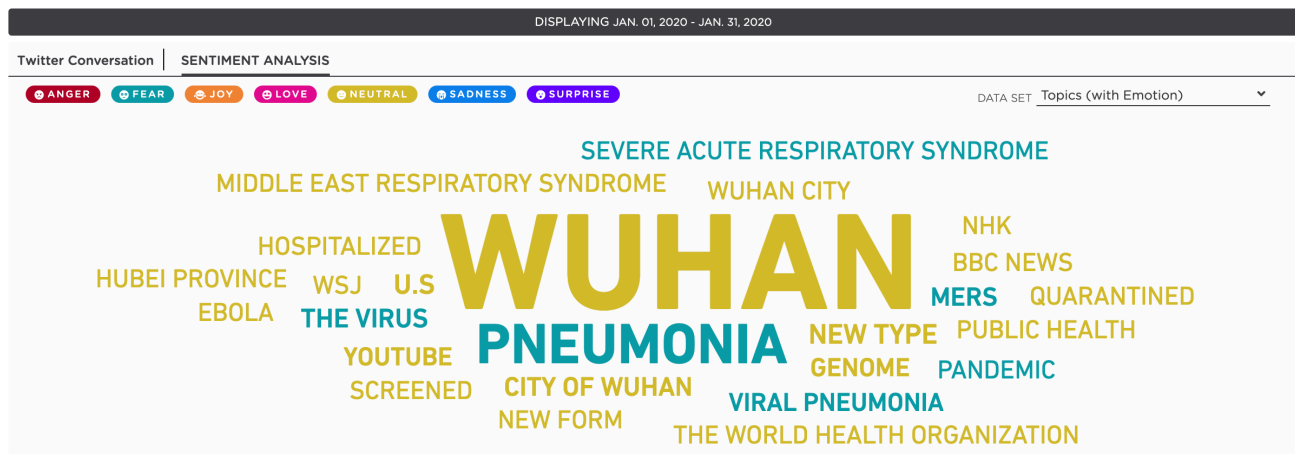


## Virus Detected and Spreads

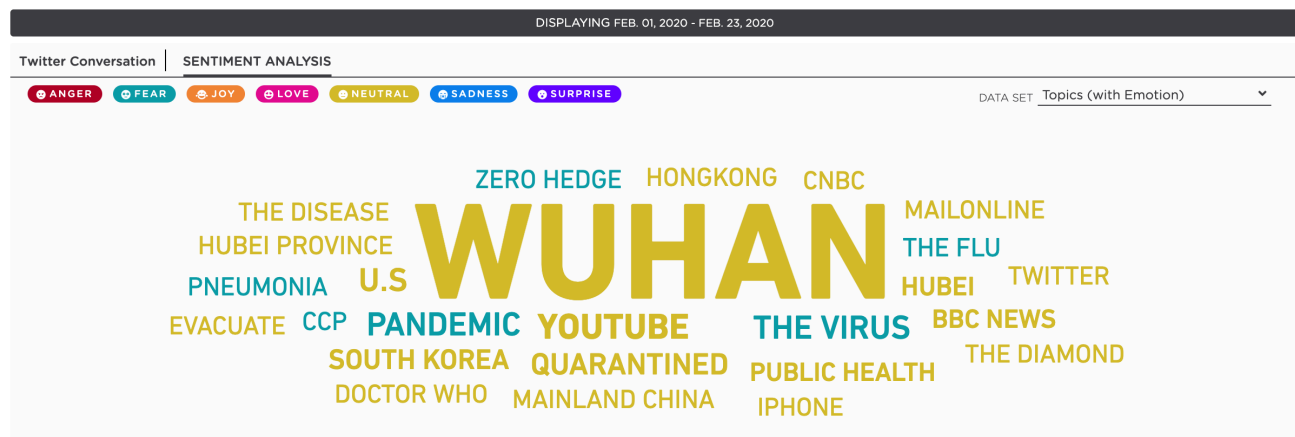
From Jan 1 - 31, there were 15M mentions of the Coronavirus, 30% of which was negative sentiment. At the time, much of what was known about the virus was focused around Hubei Province, particularly Wuhan, where the virus originated. There was limited information about the virus itself in January. Conversation spiked when cases were confirmed outside of China, when Wuhan and Hubei Province was placed under quarantine, and then when the WHO declared the virus a global emergency.

From Feb 1 - 23, there were 21M mentions about Coronavirus, and negative sentiment grew to 31%. During this 3-week+ period, the first deaths occurred outside of China, the Diamond Princess cruise ship was quarantined in Japan waters making it the largest Covid-19 outbreak outside of China, and the death toll from the virus crossed the 1,000 mark. While "Wuhan" and "The Virus" were still top topics, conversation also turned to "Quarantined" and "Pandemic" entered the conversation.

### Jan 1-31, 2020 | 14,971,171 Mentions



### Feb 1 - 23, 2020 | 21,161,261 Mentions



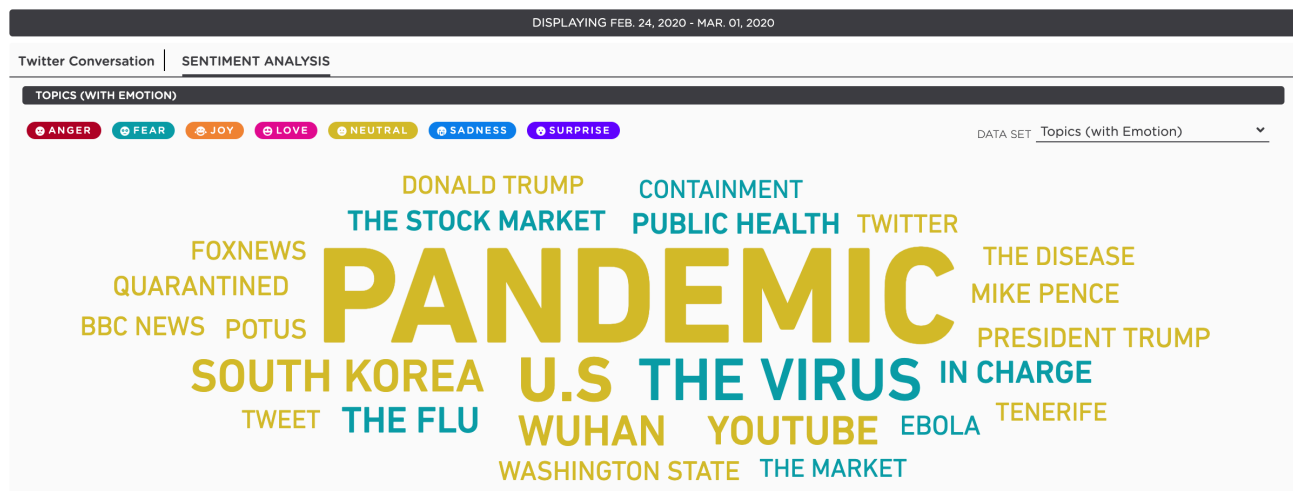


## Stock Market Reacts to New Cases Globally

The last week of February saw a spike in conversation to 31M mentions with negative sentiment increasing to 39% from 31% in the first three weeks of February. “Pandemic” took center stage, capturing the largest share of conversation. While “Fear” inched up one point to 17%, “Sadness” increased to 7% and “Anger” rose to 4% from 2% during the first three weeks of February. During this time, Iran became a focus of the virus, Italy reported a surge in cases in the North, there were cases detected in Washington State, the White House asked Congress for \$2.5B in funding to combat the virus, President Trump did a nationwide address on February 26, and the Stock Market started falling on fears of Coronavirus uncertainty.

The first week of March, the U.S. started reporting more cases of community spread of the virus, particularly in California, New York, and Washington. Household items like toilet paper and hand sanitizer entered the conversation as shortages were reported across the country, and measures for protection, such as hand washing, became main topics.

Feb 24- Mar 1, 2020 | 30,982,096 Mentions



Mar 2 - 8, 2020 | 35,178,960 Mentions

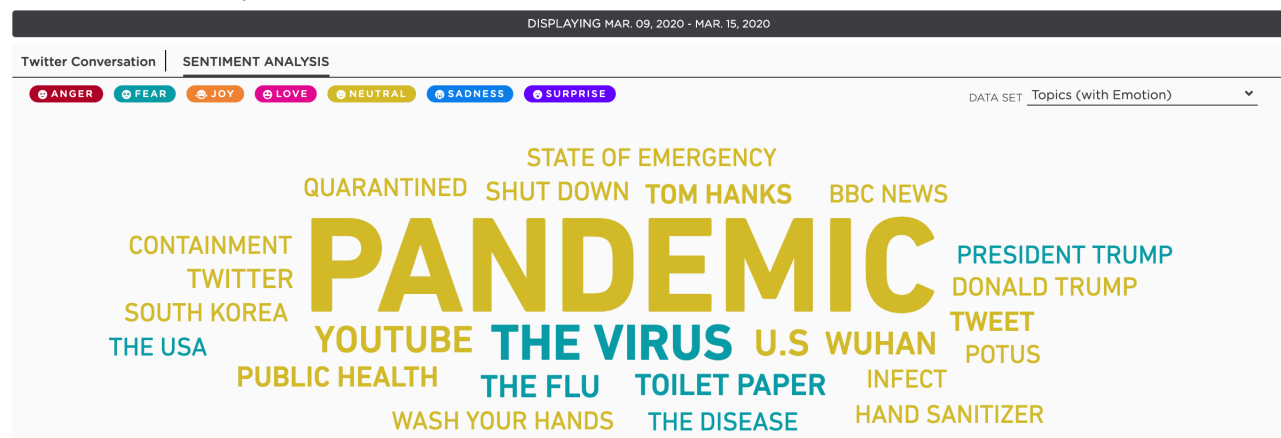


## WHO Declares a Pandemic & U.S. Stays Home

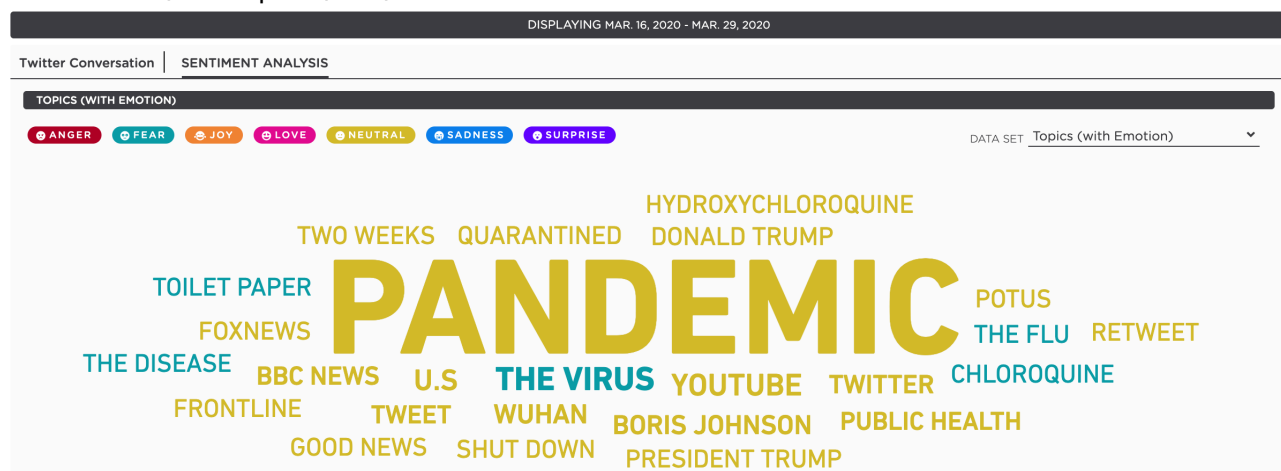
Conversation spiked significantly the week of March 9 when many business across the country closed or asked employees to work from home. When the WHO declared Covid-19 a “Pandemic” on March 12, the economic consequences from the virus were beginning to surface. Negative sentiment remained steady from the week prior, with positive sentiment up to 22% from 18% as more measures were being taken to protect individuals from exposure. The lack of public health infrastructure received significant negative sentiment, as did the actions of President Trump. Negative sentiment continued to center around the lack of toilet paper and hand sanitizer.

By the week of March 16, most of the U.S. were under orders to stay home extending through the week of March 23. People are becoming less fearful, dropping to 13% from 16% two weeks prior, and positive sentiment ticked back up. With reality settling in, brands need to contend with a new consumer mindset.

### Mar 9 - 15, 2020 | 118,553,833 Mentions



### Mar 16 - 29, 2020 | 268,998,396 Mentions



## Sentiment Around Coronavirus

Analysis shows that over time, people became less fearful about the coronavirus as they become more aware of it at scale. In general, the more the population knows about the virus and what they can do to prevent the spread of the disease, the less anxious they are. The 'stay at home' measures taken by the states to control the transmission of the virus are working to drive up positive sentiment. However, while fear has tracked down slightly, it has given way to an increase in sadness and anger.

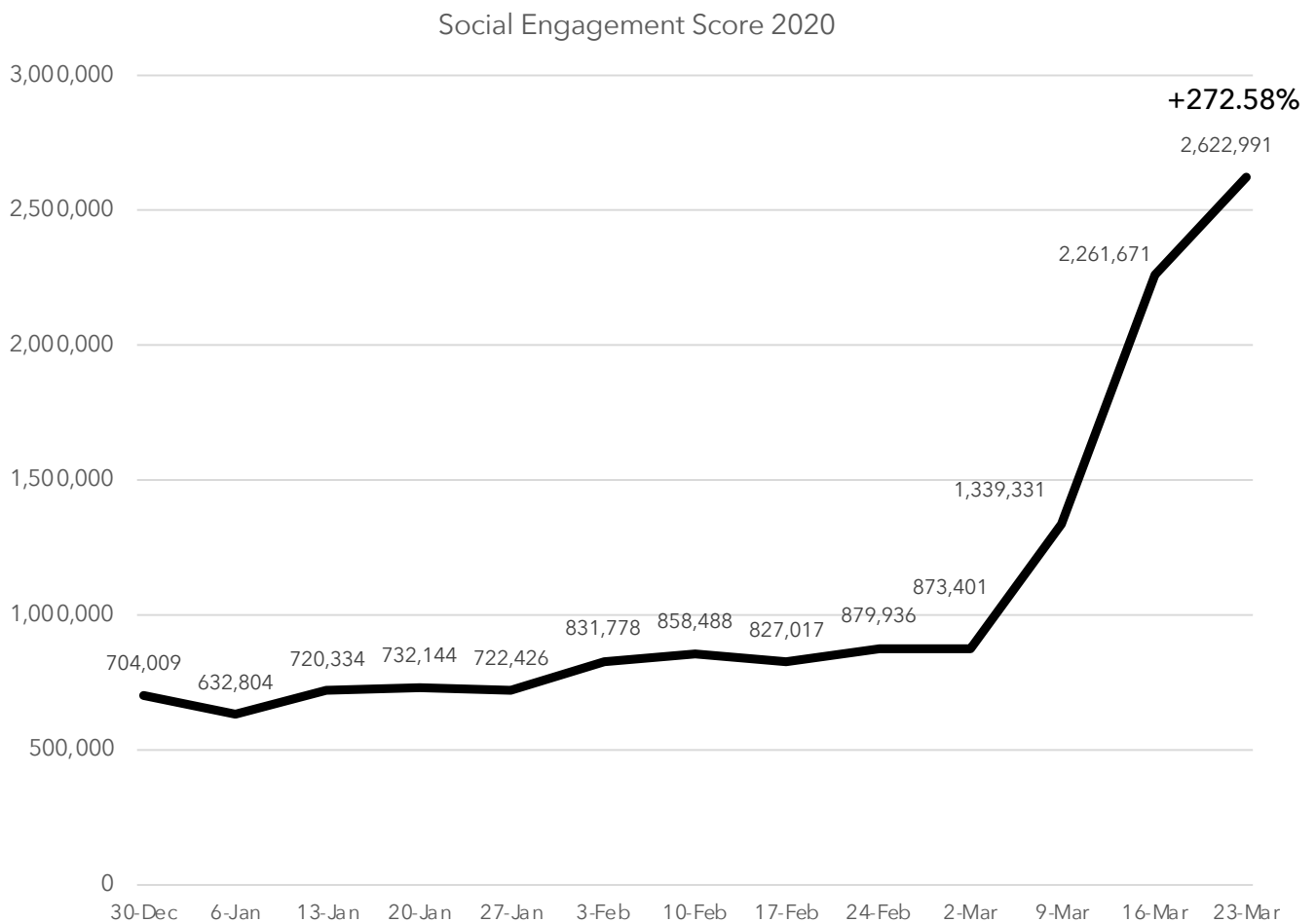
### Sentiment Classification & Emotional Sentiment of Conversation

Sentiment	1/1-1/31	2/1-2/23	2/24-3/1	3/2-3/8	3/9-3/15	3/16-3/22	3/23-3/29
Positive	16%	17%	18%	18%	22%	23%	22%
Negative	30%	31%	39%	36%	37%	34%	33%
Neutral	54%	52%	43%	46%	41%	43%	45%
Fear	20%	16%	17%	17%	16%	14%	13%
Surprise	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Sadness	5%	5%	7%	6%	8%	7%	7%
Anger	1%	2%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Joy	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%	7%
Love	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%

## How Social Engagement Has Changed for Healthcare

Social Engagement has increased significantly for hospitals beginning the second week of March when community spread of the Coronavirus started to be felt more broadly. Social engagement jumped 53.35% the week of March 9 compared to the week prior and spiked by 96% the week of March 23 compared to the week of March 9.

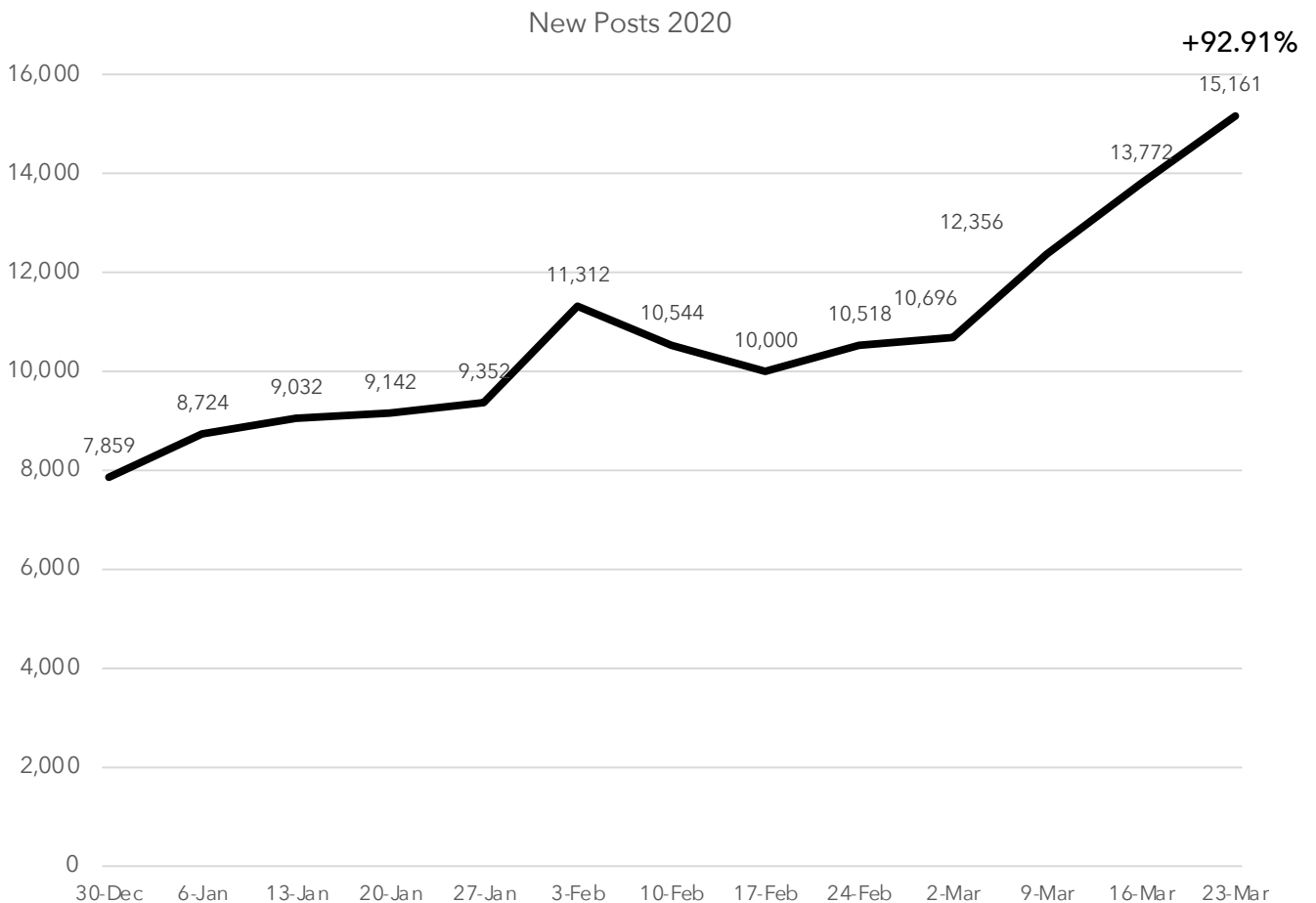
As the general population looks for Coronavirus/Covid-19 related content, especially as it relates to protecting themselves and loved ones, many have turned to hospitals as one of their most credible sources of information. Hospitals have become the central hub for communities and while people want information from their local hospitals, they are also ready to give back. On social media, people are showing solidarity with the doctors, nurses and hospital staff on the front lines by volunteering to make masks, sharing important updates and information, donating medical supplies in severe shortage, and encouraging their friends and family to stay home.



## For Healthcare, There Is Appetite To Post More

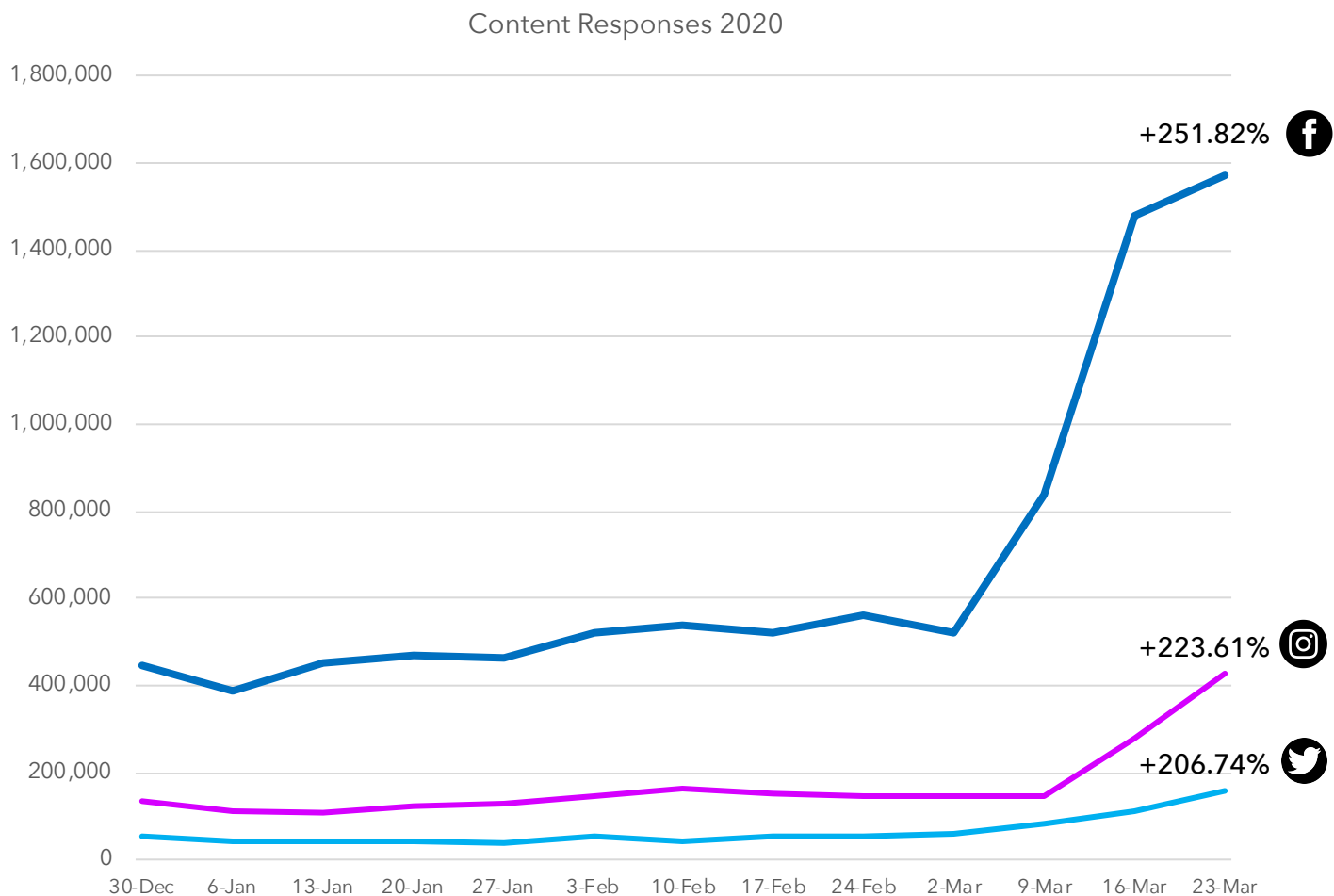
Hospitals posted 58% more the week of March 23 compared to the average number of posts in January and February. That's a good thing. As hospitals post more, they are gaining more followers and engagement. The week of March 23, hospitals gained 255% more fans across social platforms compared to the average new follower growth in January and February. Based on how much more follower growth and engagement is outpacing the % of new posts, there's room to keep publishing more content.

Beyond sharing updates and information about the fight against Covid-19, people are also looking to consume personal stories, whether from healthcare workers on the front lines, or success stories from patients who have battled Covid-19.



## Facebook Is Seeing the Biggest Spike in Engagement

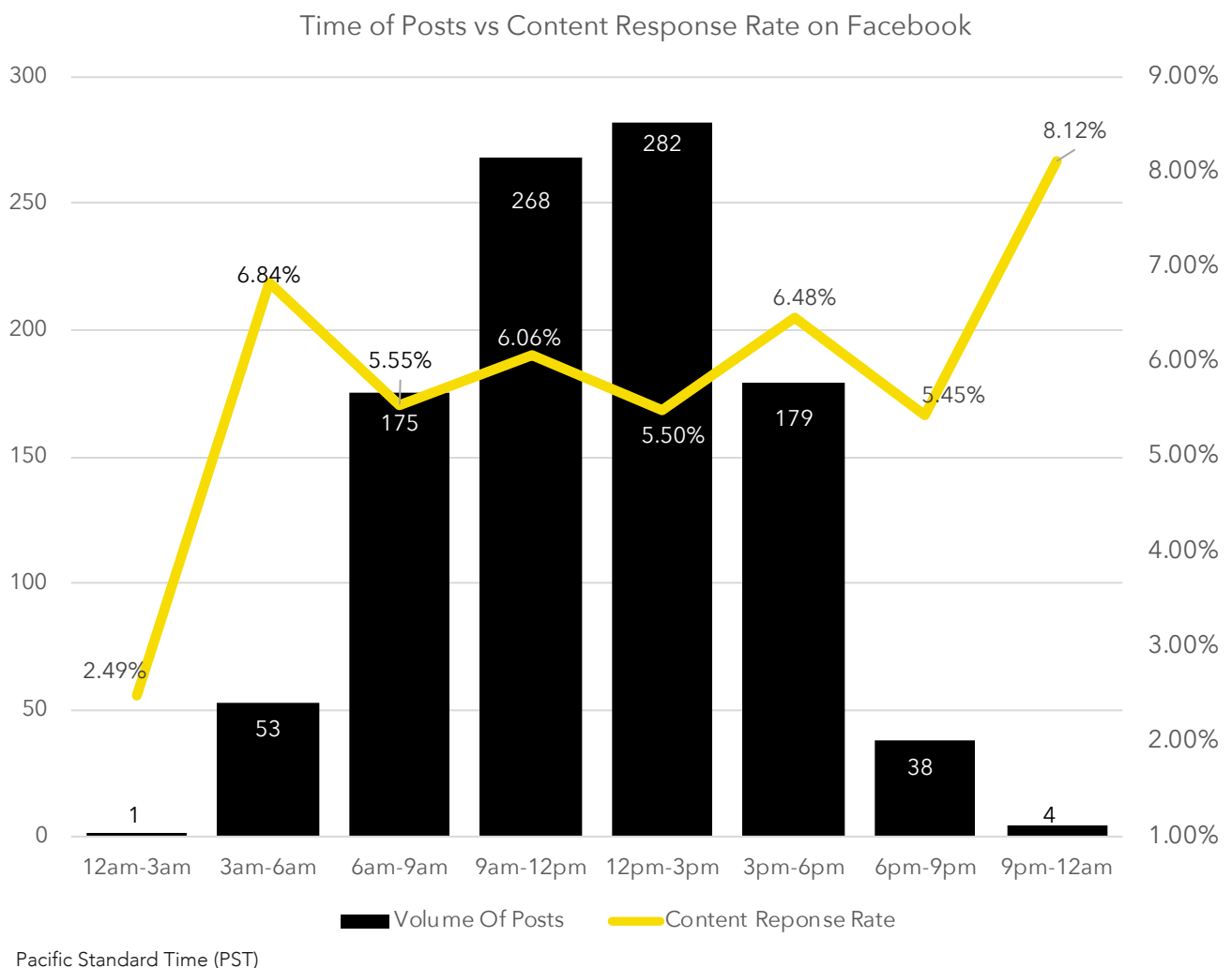
While healthcare networks have seen a lift across all platforms, Facebook has been the platform of choice for hospitals. So, its no surprise to see that hospitals gained their biggest lifts in responses (likes, reactions, comments, shares, retweets, replies) from Facebook. Content from doctors, nurses and hospital staff from the front lines are going viral, increasing the share rate from the average 0.12% year to date, to 0.28% the week of March 23.





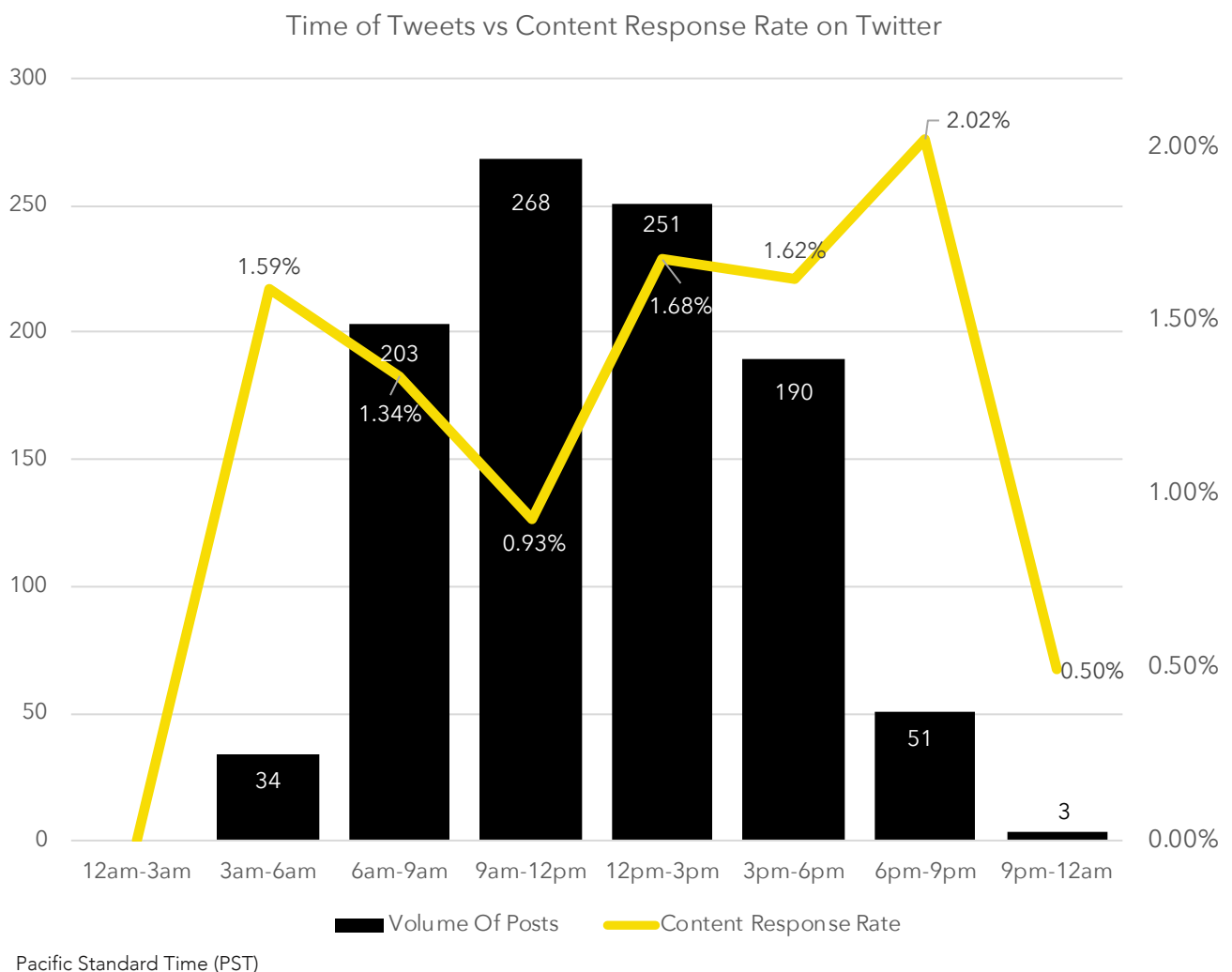
## Best Time to Post: Facebook

Looking at the top 1,000 Facebook posts published during the week of March 23-29, 55% of the posts were shared between 9am-3pm PST/12-6pm EST. However, by far the best content response rate for hospital posts while people are under self-quarantine is between 3-6am PST/6-9am EST, 3-6pm PST/6-9pm EST, and 9pm-12am PST/12-3am EST. For hospitals looking for their content to be shared more broadly, consider the off hours.



## Best Time to Post: Twitter

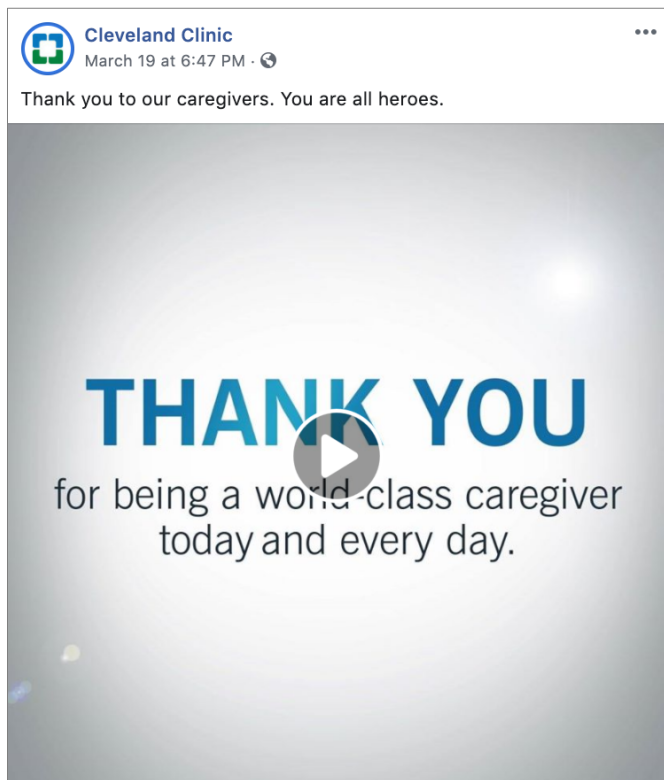
Looking at the top 1,000 Tweets published during the week of March 23-29, 52% of Tweets are posted between 9am-3pm PST/12pm-6pm EST. Hospitals should also consider the 3am-6am PST/6am-9am EST and 3pm-9pm PST/6pm-12am EST windows when engagement with Tweets is at its highest.





## Best Practices: Community Support

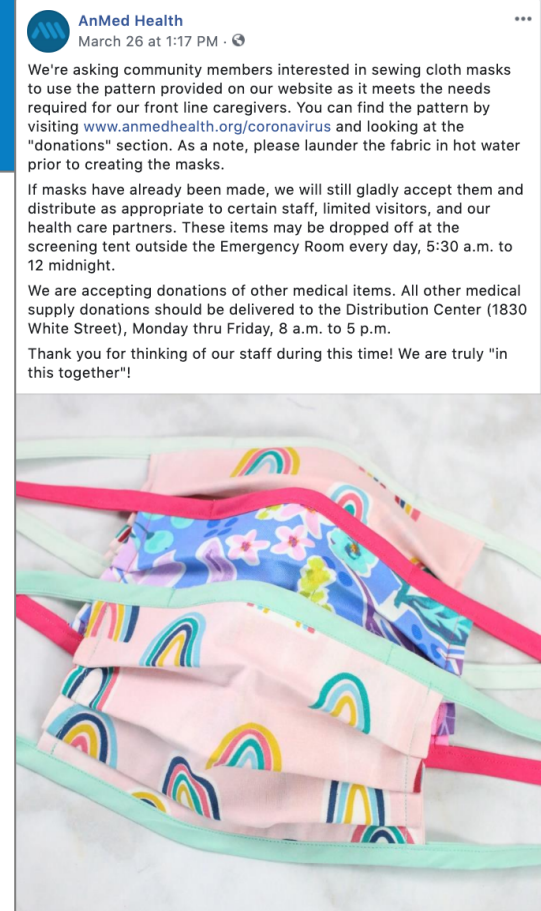
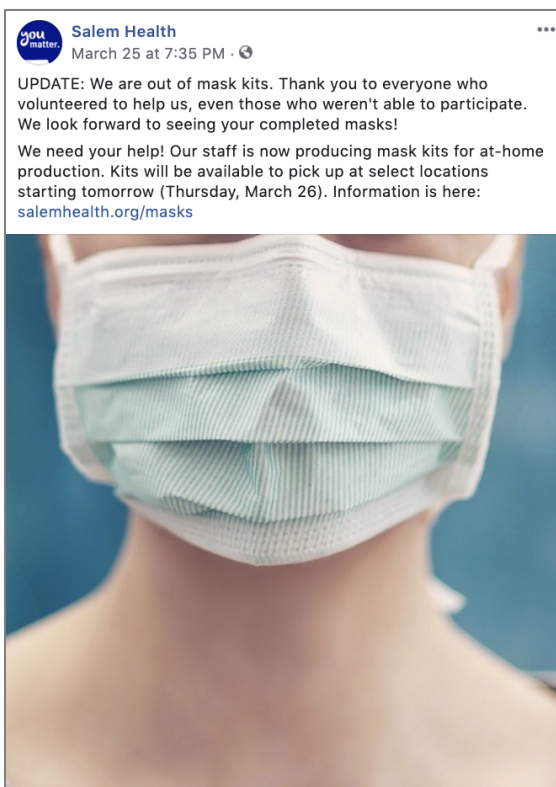
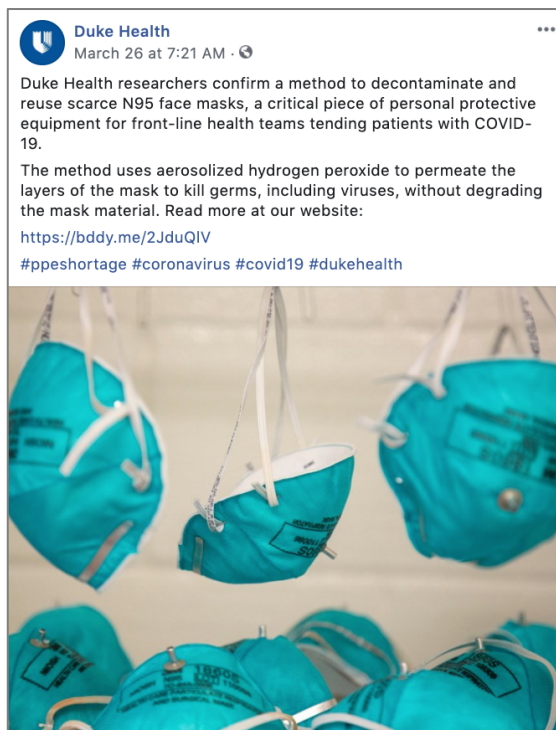
Heartwarming stories of community support for hospitals and healthcare workers, such as Elon Musk/Tesla's mask donation to UCLA Health, James Taylor's donation to Mass General, and more local efforts by restaurants serving healthcare workers for free, are also keeping people engaged.





## Best Practices: Call for Help

Posts about the severe shortage of medical supplies have been the most shared. Whether it's finding innovative ways to reuse face masks or calling on the public to volunteer to sew face masks or donate medical supplies, it's clear the community is eager to help.



## Best Practices: Research Updates


Audiences are hungry for the latest news on the research front, responding well to updates on new testing capabilities and symptoms and behaviors of the virus. WAKE FOREST BAPTIST HEALTH received praise on their press conference with infectious disease expert Dr Christopher Ohl. leaving comments such as "Good...explanation without...panic or downplaying," and "So much better than the overreaction we are hearing through most media right now."





## Best Practices: How to Prepare Using Simple Infographics

Social audiences have turned to the nation's hospitals for the latest news on COVID-19. Audiences have been most responsive to posts containing useful information about treatment or prevention, distinguishing symptoms, what to do when symptoms appear, and even what to buy.


**Banner Health**  
 March 18 at 12:02 PM · 🌐

If you've been to any grocery or convenience store in the last week, things are looking a little bleak. Is all this really necessary? Learn what you can do to be prepared, not panicked, when shopping during this uncertain time.

For more information, check out our blog:  
<https://www.bannerhealth.com/.../your-coronavirus-shopping-li...>


**WHAT TO BUY + WHAT TO SKIP**  
**Your Coronavirus Shopping List**


**Food supplies**  
 Canned, frozen or dried fruits and vegetables  
 Canned fish: tuna, sardines, mackerel  
 Beans (dry/canned)  
 Nut butters and tahini  
 Pasta  
 Flour for baking  
 Flavor boosters: condiments, soy sauce, jellies, dried parmesan cheese, olives  
 Cooking oils, butter  
 Dry grains: rice, quinoa, oats  
 Hardy vegetables: broccoli, celery, carrots, potatoes

Hardy fruits: apples, bananas, oranges  
 Sliced bread  
 Baby food, formula  
 Pet food  
**First Aid supplies**  
 30-day supply of needed medication  
 Common over-the-counter medications  
 Fever reducers: acetaminophen, ibuprofen  
 Thermometer  
 Band-Aids  
 Small supply of electrolyte replacement drinks


**Activities**  
 Card/board games  
 Puzzles  
 Movies  
 Arts and craft supplies  
 Reading books  
 Crafting/coloring books  
**Hygiene supplies**  
 Hand soap  
 Shampoo, conditioner  
 Toothpaste  
 Personal hygiene products  
 Diapers, wipes  
 Skip: Bottled water, Masks, Hand sanitizer and wipes, Alcohol


If you have concerns about your symptoms, please contact your PCP.






**Children's Healthcare of Atlanta**  
 March 11 at 9:03 AM · 🌐


While COVID-19 is making headlines, the flu, common colds and spring allergies are all in full swing. If your child has concerning respiratory symptoms, please call your pediatrician to discuss next steps before going to a hospital, emergency department or urgent care. <https://www.choa.org/COVID19>


**COVID-19** (novel coronavirus)  
 • Fever  
 • Cough  
 • Shortness of breath  
 Learn more: [choa.org/COVID19](https://www.choa.org/COVID19)


**FLU**  
 • Fever  
 • Cough  
 • Muscle aches and fatigue  
 • Sore throat  
 • Nausea and vomiting  
 • Diarrhea (sometimes in children)  
 Learn more: [choa.org/flu](https://www.choa.org/flu)


**COMMON COLD** (non-novel coronavirus)  
 • Cough  
 • Sore throat  
 • Aches and pains  
 • Runny or stuffy nose  
 • Watery eyes  
 • Sneezing












**ALLERGIES**  
 • Runny nose  
 • Sniffling  
 • Sneezing  
 • Itchy, watery eyes


**Methodist Dallas Medical Center**  
 March 12 at 11:00 AM · 🌐


Accurate health information has never been more important than right now, and Methodist Health System is committed to providing it. Coronavirus shares a lot of symptoms with the flu and the common cold.

One of the best ways to keep you and your family safe is to wash your hands properly. It's harder than you think. Details at Shine Online: <https://www.shineonlinehealth.com/ward-off-viruses-washing.../>

**What are COVID-19 symptoms?**  
 Here's a list comparing the virus to other common illnesses.

Symptoms	Coronavirus Symptoms range from mild to severe	Cold Gradual onset of symptoms	Flu Abrupt onset of symptoms
 Fever	Common	Rare	Common
 Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
 Cough	Common*	Mild	Common*
 Sneezing	No	Common	No
 Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
 Runny or Stuffy Nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes
 Sore Throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 Diarrhea	Rare	No	Sometimes†
 Headaches	Sometimes	Rare	Common
 Shortness of Breath	Sometimes	No	No

\* Usually dry cough † For children  
Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and prevention



**AdventHealth**  
 March 16 at 7:07 PM · 🌐
 


If You're Sick,  
Know Where to Go

Avoid ER unless it's an emergency

Call or video visit your doctor

Read CDC guidance on isolation

Stay home if your doctor says so

Stay Informed: **Coronavirus**





LISTENFIRST

### QUESTIONS?

Contact Us. We're here to help.

[contact@listenfirstmedia.com](mailto:contact@listenfirstmedia.com)

### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Let us show you how we can solve your social challenges and make your life easier.

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