

COVID-19: Words of the Year

Every year, Merriam-Webster adds new words to the dictionary and selects a **Word of the Year**. In previous years, these have been things like blog, YOLO, google (as a verb), or jockumentary.

If there is one thing that COVID has accomplished, it has increased our vocabulary! We are all now pretty familiar with terms like social distancing, PPE, flattening the curve, quarantine, and pandemic, but what about the rest?



2020 COVID WORD OF THE YEAR CONTENDERS!

Doom-scrolling: constantly refreshing your feeds for the latest on the pandemic. Give yourself a mental health break and limit your news updates to once per day.

Coronasomnia: insomnia affecting 20-30% of us during the pandemic. Heightened stress and upset routines have led to less or poorer sleep that can impact productivity, affect tempers, and increase the risk of hypertension or depression.

Quarantini: the beverage of choice for those at home during or because of the coronavirus. See also: coronarita, virtual happy hour, walktail.

COVID-10: the extra weight you may have acquired during the pandemic due to less movement, more snacking, and closed gyms. Warning: may not be limited to 10 pounds.

Hamstering: the hoarding of pandemic supplies (e.g. toilet paper, disinfectant) much like a hamster stuffs its cheeks.

Othering: Stigmatizing people who have contracted COVID-19 or for actions individuals are or are not taking to stay healthy. This may take the form of “good natured joking” with your coworkers about their “COVID vacation,” their daily disinfection routine, or that they don’t believe in the virus. Your coworkers may not

find it funny at all. See also: covidiot, moronavirus, coronacation, sheeple, coronaphobia.

Quaranteam: the group of people you live with. See also: bubble, germ pod.

Co-bubbling: the mixing of your quaranteam/bubble with another that has similar behavioral patterns for COVID avoidance.

Long haulers: Individuals who suffer from symptoms of COVID-19 weeks to months following infection; many are very sick, but not sick enough to be hospitalized.

Infodemic: the widespread misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic including unsubstantiated claims, conspiracy theories, or disinformation aimed at undermining trust in health experts and institutions. Get your COVID-19 news and information from trusted sources.

Zoomiform: the carefully selected outfit you wear for the camera to give the impression you are a productive, professional member of the team that has showered in the last 24 hours. Gym shorts and a collared shirt/tie = zoomiform.

Maskne: skin irritation or acne caused by heat, friction, and sweat from prolonged wear of your face covering. Wash your face and mask regularly, and avoid makeup.

Revenge travel: Travelers disgruntled by canceled and postponed trips who are planning bigger trips for 2021. This pent-up demand = revenge travel.

[Originally published by the United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) Surgeon]