

Health/Epidemiology

New study backs up claims that temperature plays a significant role in spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 study hints that the virus may become seasonal after the initial pandemic dies down.

COVID-19 has drastically changed life in every country on the globe. However, why have some countries largely returned to normal, while others are still fighting the disease? A climate study conducted by a group including computer scientist Prakruthi Burra at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign shows a link between a country's COVID-19 transmission rate and its geographic location.

Burra's group collected data on virus transmission, individual country statistics (such as population), and temperature. They found a correlation between higher latitude (moving towards the poles) and higher COVID-19 transmission rates, but found no correlation between longitude (moving alongside the equator) and COVID-19 transmission rates. This implies that hotter countries are more resistant to the virus.

The researchers suspect that after the original pandemic ends we will see COVID-19 restricted to colder climates.

Burra, P., Caetano-Anolles, G., Chalen, I., Gonzalez-Ricon, R., Istanto, D., Soto-Diaz, K. "Temperature and Latitude Correlate with SARS-CoV-2 Epidemiological Variables but not with Genomic Change Worldwide". *Sage Journals*, 26 January 2021. <
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1176934321989695>>

