

# Wearing shoes indoors might be linked to COVID-19 mortality rate

Soshi Iwasaki  
Kazunobu Takahashi  
Michiaki Yamakage

---

## Video Byte

**Keywords:** Sapporo Medical University, COVID-19, cultural practice of removing shoes indoors, mortality, SARS-CoV-2, public health, pandemic, two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test, coronavirus, world population, antibody, morbidity, aerosol, infection, PCR test, Japan, death toll, World Health organization, WHO, antigen test kit

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-37691/v1>

**License:**  This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

[Read Full License](#)

---

# Abstract

A new preprint reports one factor that might contribute to the deadliness of the COVID-19 pandemic: wearing shoes indoors. Researchers compared COVID-19 death rates between countries that follow the cultural practice of removing shoes indoors and those that do not and observed a distinct pattern. Those where removing shoes is customary showed a lower death rate on average. Interestingly, no significant differences were observed when countries were compared according to the number of COVID-19 cases. It could be that the lack of reliable, universal testing may obscure the true prevalence of the disease. More work is still needed to discount a number of confounding factors, such as differences in preventive measures enacted by different countries, but the correlation suggests that removing shoes indoors might help curb the devastation wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic.