

**Foods  
2021**

# The 2nd International Electronic Conference on Foods Future Foods and Food Technologies for a Sustainable World

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Universidade do Minho  
Escola de Psicologia

## The Impact of Covid-19 Hygienic Measures on Food Choice and Eating Behavior

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# Study background

**Behaviors towards foods are sensitive** to many factors;

Altering **food choices, preferences and even the flavor perception** (Spence, 2017).

With the **Covid-19 pandemic everyday life have been changing** (Bavel et al., 2020);

And **behavioral outcomes in eating, purchasing and preferences relate to food** were reported (Marty et al., 2021; Martinez-de-Quel, 2021; Poelman et al., 2021).

**Priming effects can provoke behavioral changes** (Dijksterhuis, 2016).



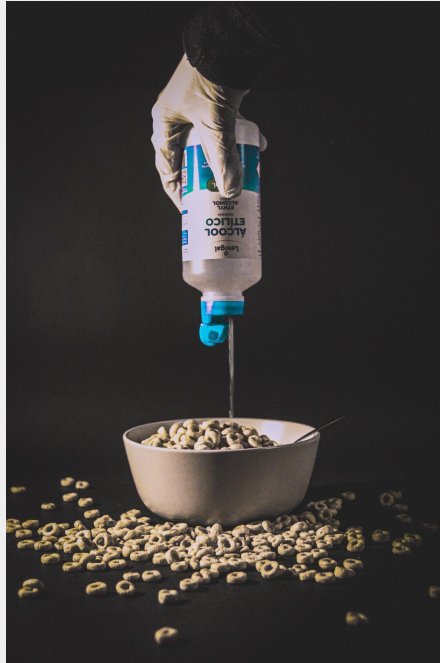
# Research question

**Does the hygienic measures adopted during Covid-19 pandemic can influence and modify food choice and food attractiveness?**



# Our hypothesis

Is that the **hygienic protocols decrease the attractiveness of food.**



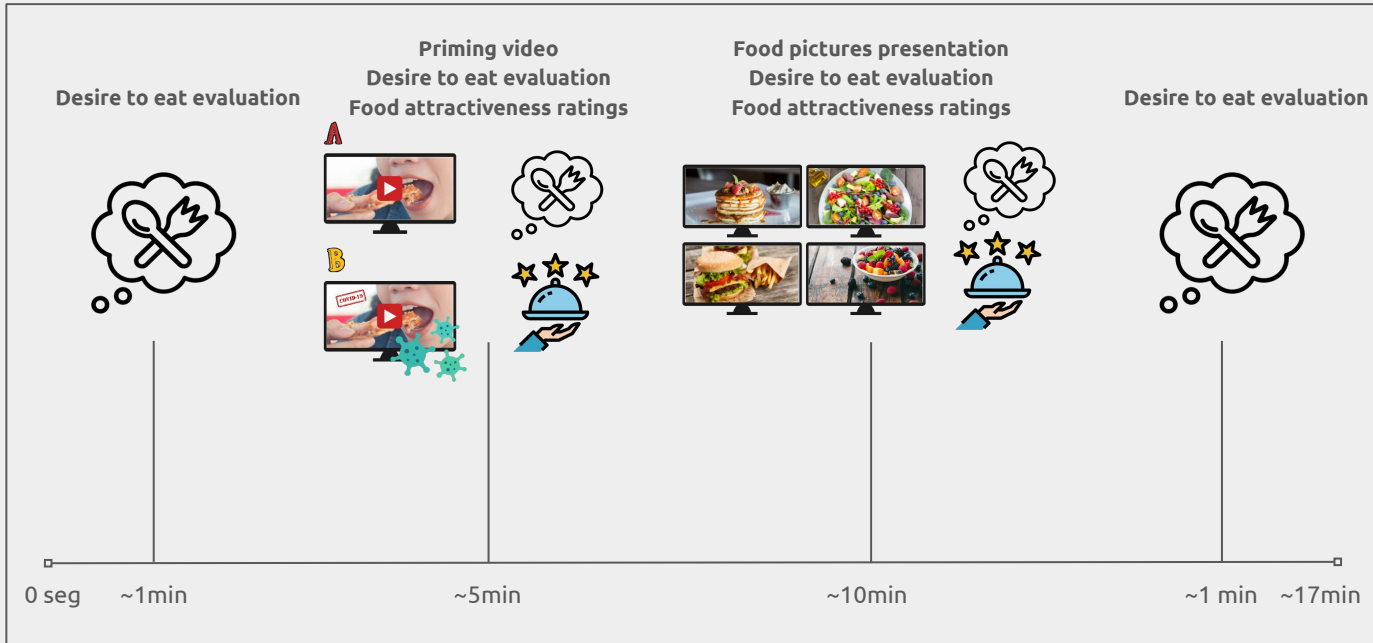
# Task design

Men and women between 18 and 59 years old

Self-report scales: PHQ-9, GAD-7, LOCES

Demographic data

Covid-19 and eating behavior informations



# Methodology and sample characterization

(CEICVS 129/2020)

N=85

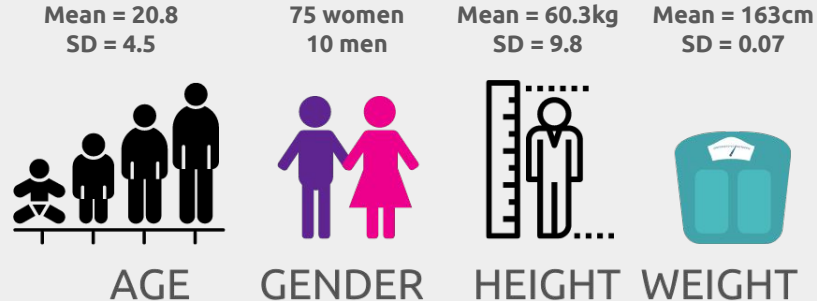
Experimental protocol was **build and applied through an online platform.**

Data collection - **February and April.**

Data analysis using **Jamovi** software - **April and June.**

**Psychologically**, our sample has **heterogeneous markers** for **anxiety and depression** symptomatology.

**LOCES** mean score is **1.8 (SD=0.56)**



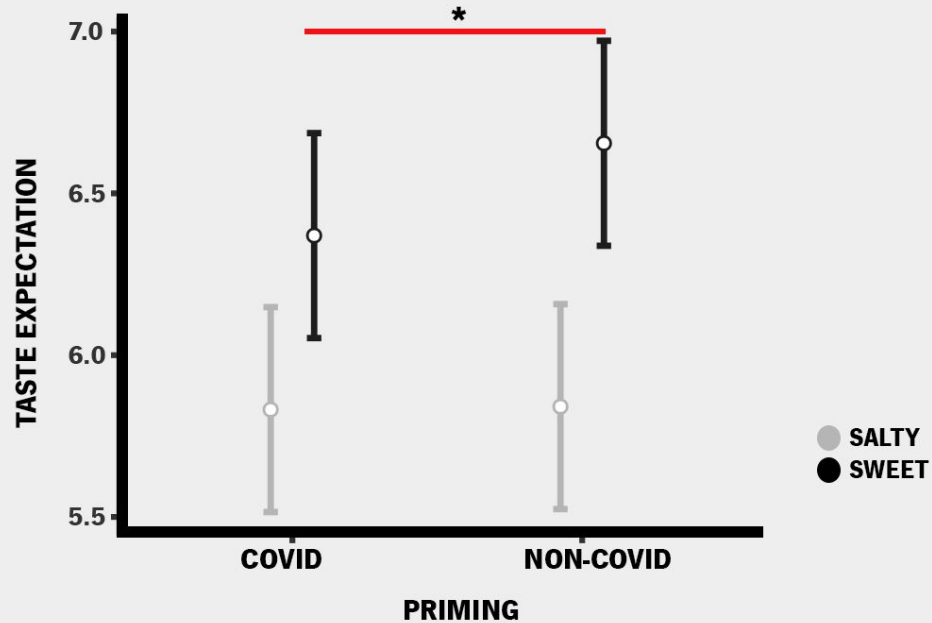
# Results / images

**Saliency in Sweet foods over salty foods and High calories food over low calories food ratings in all evaluated dimensions.**



# Results / priming

A priming effect was observed on sweet testant comparing Covid and Non Covid conditions.

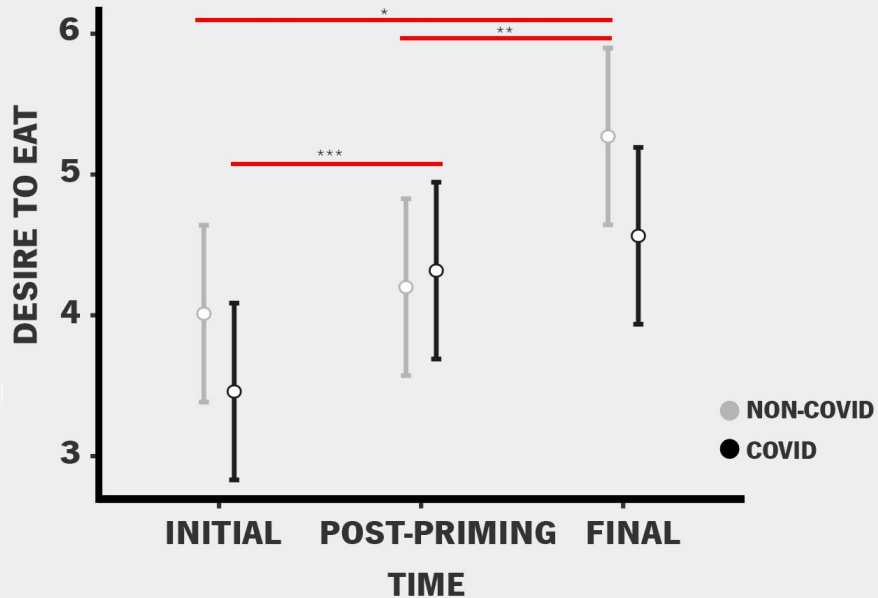




# Results / videos

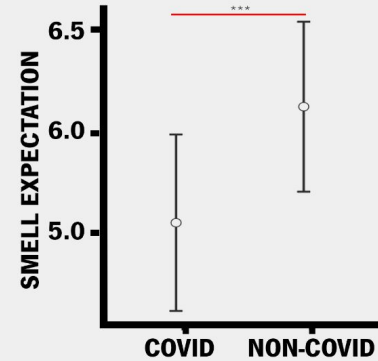
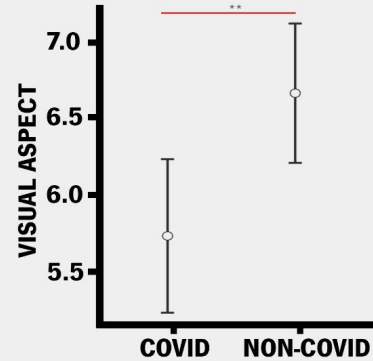
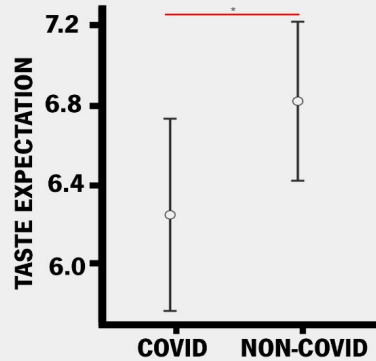
Significant increased in ratings in final desire to eat in both conditions.

Ratings increase on initial and post-priming evaluations for Non Covid condition.



# Results / videos

Greater evaluations in Non-Covid condition evaluations, in all dimensions.



Negative correlations between the smell evaluation and PHQ-9 only at the Covid condition.



# Conclusions

Our study supported previous findings

**Greater evaluations to sweet and high-calorie foods compared to salty and low-calorie ones**

(Ohla et al., 2012; Buckland et al., 2021)

**Increased desire to eat after food exposure**

(Sun & Kober, 2020)



And also provided new insights

**Hygienic measures of Covid-19 may elicit lower smell assessment and desire to eat**

**Priming effect was observed for sweet food pictures evaluation, but not other food categories**





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**Thank you**

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