

Life years lost due to COVID-19 mortality

“Substantial number of life years lost but impact on long-term life expectancy limited”

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This study sought to provide more clarity about the number of life years lost due to COVID-19 mortality and its effect on future life expectancy. That is difficult to measure because it depends on the still uncertain relation between Covid-19 mortality and other health problems. We therefore developed three scenarios: (1) the age-specific Covid mortality is independent of health, (2) Covid mortality is related to an underlying condition (COPD, diabetes or chronic heart failure), and (3) selective mortality in nursing homes.

Principal Findings

- Covid-19 mortality in 2020 is concentrated around people with poor health and relatively low remaining life expectancy.
- Taking into account selective mortality substantially lowers the estimated loss in life years due to Covid-19.
- In the most selective scenario, almost 90,000 life years have been lost due to Covid-19 mortality in 2020. An average of 5.5 years per death.
- The selective mortality among the unhealthy has a small positive effect on the life expectancy of the remaining population in coming years.
- This effect might be outweighed by increased mortality among COVID-19 survivors and negative health effects of postponed health care.

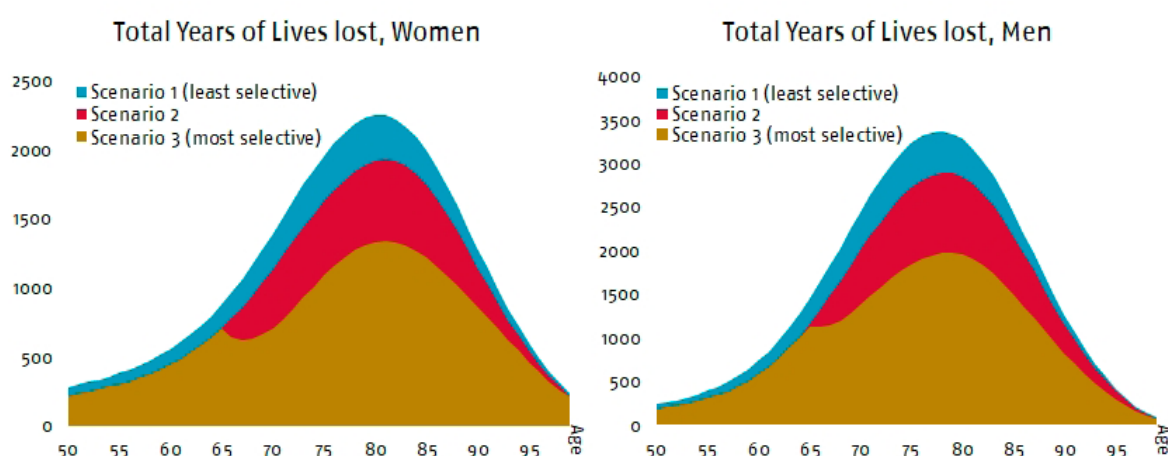


Figure: Years of life lost due to Covid-19 mortality in 2020 under three scenarios of underlying comorbidity

Key Takeaways for the Industry

- The positive impact of selective COVID-19 mortality on future life expectancy seems to be limited.
- The long-term detrimental health effects of COVID-19 infection on future life expectancy remain to be seen.



Want to know more?

Read the paper **‘Life years lost due to COVID-19 mortality’** (Dutch only)