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## **Impacts of COVID-19 on Chronic Disease Management: A Mixed Methods Study**

The COVID-19 pandemic has elevated levels of stress, social isolation, and caused disruptions in healthcare, with potential for disproportionate impacts in chronic disease management. Using a survey of 1,971 adults, we qualitatively analyzed participants' reported healthcare experiences during the pandemic.

48.8% of respondents had at least one chronic physical health condition. Many were impacted by uncontrollable changes in healthcare access, such as closed offices or clinics (*"I had to stop going to weekly PT because PT is conducted in a large open treatment room with multiple patients and providers; my chronic pain is a little worse...I'm not getting as much exercise"*), rescheduled or cancelled procedures (*"A scheduled surgical procedure has been cancelled several times I have had to continue using chemical therapy longer than originally planned"*), and medication shortages (*"Currently in autoimmune flare due to drug not shipped in time"*). Others, driven by fear of the pandemic, made direct decisions in their disease management such as avoidance of visits (*"I put off going to the doctor for steroid injections in my affected joints"*) and changes in medication usage (*"Out [of] fear, I temporarily stopped my ACE-I. But resumed after BP increased."*)

Understanding the scope of disruptions and associated health effects for those with chronic conditions is critical as the healthcare system shifts back to normalcy and providers need to mitigate the pandemic's effects.