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## **ABSTRACT**

Effect of mindfulness meditation on mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak

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The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of a single mindfulness meditation session on mental health during the early phase of the COVID-19 outbreak in Japan. A total of 128 individuals were assessed with a self-report instrument to measure stress reactions before and after a free mindfulness meditation session. Compared to pre-stress reactions, post-stress reactions were significantly decreased. Analysis of variance revealed that the interaction between stress reaction and living style was significant. More specifically, depression-anxiety among individuals who live alone or live with children under 15 was significantly decreased. The results in other phases of the pandemic or a longitudinal survey should be considered in future research.

**Key Words:** mindfulness meditation, stress reaction, COVID-19

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