COVID-19

CASES ARE RISING.
ACT NOW!

WEAR A MASK   STAY 6 FEET APART   AVOID CROWDS

COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced

Updated Dec. 23, 2020   Print

- In April 2020, CDC introduced the COVIDTracer tool, which allows users to explore the impact of up to 3 user-defined contact tracing strategies in their own jurisdictions and to assess the personnel and time that will be needed to effectively execute the strategies.
- **NEW!** In December 2020, CDC introduced the COVIDTracer Advanced tool, which extends this capability by allowing users to distinguish the impact of interventions by three age groups in terms of changes in the numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, as well as changes in direct medical costs.

COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced are spreadsheet-based tools that allow state- and local-level public health officials and policy makers to compare the effectiveness, and the resources needed, of three user defined contact tracing and monitoring strategies.

Both tools allow you to estimate the potential effectiveness of each of the three strategies, the average number of contacts per case, and the time needed for case interviews and contact tracing follow-up activities. Then, you can compare the potential effectiveness of each strategy to a baseline situation. A baseline situation includes ongoing non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as mask wearing and limiting public events.

To use COVIDTracer or COVIDTracer Advanced you must provide information for your local area, including

- Details about the population
- Number of cases to date
- Number of cases in the past 14 days
- Number of contacts per case
- Expected number of hours contact tracers will work per day

COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced Features

The Table below lists the features of COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced.

Both tools, as described earlier, allow you to estimate the potential effectiveness of each of three contact tracing strategies.

Additionally, COVIDTracer Advanced allows users to account for age-based differences in adherence to and effectiveness of community-based interventions as well as changes in the numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations by age group. COVIDTracer Advanced also allows a user to estimate age-stratified direct medical costs associated with COVID-19 hospitalizations, providing information on direct medical costs associated with interventions.

Table: COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced Features

	COVIDTracer	COVIDTracer Advanced
Intended audience	State and local public health officials	State and local public health officials
Features	- Compare impact of 3 contact tracing/monitoring strategies - Estimate resources needed for case interviews and contact follow-up	Same functions as COVIDTracer, PLUS the following new, additional functions: - Cases and hospitalizations broken down into 3 different age groups - Determine total number of hospitalizations averted - Calculate amount of direct medical costs saved

FAQ

Can COVIDTracer be used to accurately estimate the impact of COVID-19?

COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced numbers are NOT predictions of what will occur during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather, they are designed to aid public health officials in planning and preparing for contact tracing of COVID-19 cases.

Can users change the input variables?

Yes. When you download and open COVIDTracer or COVIDTracer Advanced, all inputs are pre-populated with numbers and estimates based on the best available data, wherever possible (for instance, peer-reviewed studies, expert opinion, and pre-print manuscripts).

You can change the values in the white cells in either tool, inputting values that best show the situation in your area. Further, we encourage you to change input values and explore the impact of various scenarios and assumptions (e.g., hours spent to initially interview a case). In both tools you can click the yellow information buttons on each page to see definitions and explanations. If you want to return to the default settings, click the "Reset to Default Values" button. Additional explanations are provided in the accompanying manuals, which can be downloaded using the links below.

Do you have to use all the new features of COVIDTracer Advanced?

No. You can select those additional features in COVIDTracer Advanced that you wish to use. For example, for a given set of intervention scenarios, you may wish to only examine the potential reduction in cases disaggregated into 3 different age groups, and the impact on the number of hospitalizations averted. You can ignore the inputs and outputs associated with the estimates of potentials savings of direct medical costs due to any reduction in hospitalizations.

System Requirements

Both COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced use the Windows[*] operating system (Microsoft Windows 2010 or higher) and Excel (Microsoft Office 2013 or higher). The full functionality of both COVIDTracer and COVIDTracer Advanced are supported in the desktop version of Microsoft Office® for Windows. Some functionality is not available in Microsoft Office for Macs or in the browser version of Office 365.

[*]Microsoft Windows and Office are copyrighted products produced by Microsoft Corporation, WA. The use of trade names and commercial sources is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Download the Files

You can select to download COVIDTracer or COVIDTracer Advanced using the links below. We recommend downloading and saving the downloaded spreadsheet tool (whichever you have chosen) to your computer, then opening the spreadsheet from your computer. This will allow the spreadsheet to open in Excel instead of in your web browser.

Links for downloading

COVIDTracer	COVIDTracer Advanced

COVIDTracer Spreadsheet CDC [Excel – 5.7 MB]

COVIDTracer Advanced Spreadsheet CDC [Excel – 6 MB]

COVIDTracer Manual CDC [PDF – 1 MB]

COVIDTracer Advanced Manual CDC [PDF – 1.6 MB]

COVIDTracer Advanced DRAFT Report Template [165 KB, 8 Pages]

Load, Start, and Navigation

- Open the COVIDTracer or the COVIDTracer Advanced spreadsheet (whichever you downloaded) and click the box at the top of the document that says, "Enable Macros," or "Enable Content" (depending on version of Excel being used).

- After enabling macros, click the "Start" button on the cover page to start navigating the tool.

- If you encounter any issues, contact HEMU@cdc.gov with a subject line [COVIDTracer/ COVIDTracer Advanced tool inquiry].

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