

The COVID-19 forced older adults to take action to prevent infection. WHO, governments, and medical professionals advocated taking preventive behavior as older adults have higher infection and severity rates. It is necessary to examine what factor related to take preventive behavior. Though preventive behaviors would bring positive effects, they could cause negative consequences on older adults as social distancing, one of preventive behaviors may bring isolation and loneliness and negative effects on their health. In this symposium, we will delineate and examine the differences among three Asian countries, Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. The first speaker will map the outline of risk perception studies not only COVID-19 pandemic but also other risk factors such as environmental destruction, smoking, nuclear power plant. Second speakers will report the roles of perceived risk, perceived vulnerability, and information channels on older adults' preventive behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic in Hong Kong. They found excessive fear of COVID-19, including perceived risks and perceived vulnerability, as well as excessive information retrieval through television and online news, resulting in reduced practices in two preventive behaviors: hand washing and disinfectants using. Correct and accurate COVID-19 related information should be promulgated to older adults to help them evaluate perceived risk and perceived vulnerability. There is also a need for the government and non-governmental organizations to provide interventions to older adults to distinguish correct health information regarding COVID-19. Third speaker will report the factors pertaining to promotion of three risk preventive behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely social distancing, proactive coping, and hygiene. They found factors differed according to three preventive behaviors. The fear of COVID-19 was the most influential factor. Mass media and public information resource were not important but internet and personal information resources were utilized and related to older adults' preventive behaviors. The fourth speakers will report the complex associations among coronavirus disease 2019 risk perception, social distancing, social connectedness, and loneliness, as well as the mediating effects of social distancing and social connectedness in these associations in younger, middle-aged, and older Korean adults. The younger group showed significant associations among all major variables in the structural equation model, while their older counterparts demonstrated a significant association between COVID-19 risk perception and loneliness. Social distancing and social connectedness mediated the effect of COVID-19 risk perception on loneliness only for the younger group. In addition, we found significant mediating effects of social connectedness on the association between COVID-19 risk perception and loneliness in the middle-aged and older groups. The younger group showed significant associations among all major variables in the structural equation model, while their older counterparts demonstrated a significant association between COVID-19 risk perception and loneliness. Finally, we summarize the results and discuss how to promote preventive behaviors not to disconnect people by social distancing, focusing on what is common to each country and what differs from country to country.