

**EP.WE.205**  
**Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Loop Ileostomy  
Formation**

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**Aim:** Uncertainty during the early phases of the Covid-19 pandemic regarding availability of critical care beds and peri-operative impact of

SARS-CoV-2 led to changing intercollegiate guidance in favour of increased stoma formation. This study assessed the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on loop ileostomy formation.

**Methods:** Data were reviewed from a prospectively collected database on the number of loop ileostomies formed over a 10-month period from 1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. Comparison was made with the same period in 2019. Details were confirmed using clinical letters.

**Results:** 114 loop ileostomies were formed in the 20-month period. There was a 10.0% reduction in loop ileostomy formation in 2020 compared with 2019. The median number of loop ileostomies formed per month over the two 10-month periods was 6. This peaked at 11 in April 2020 coinciding with the first wave of Covid-19, falling in subsequent months. All 11 of these loop ileostomies were formed in colorectal cancer patients undergoing anterior resection, after appropriate counselling.

**Conclusions:** There was a reduction in the number of ileostomies formed in 2020 compared with 2019 reflecting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both elective and emergency case load and presentations. These results show reactive change in surgical practice corresponding to guidance at a time of maximum uncertainty. Primary anastomosis still occurred but with an increased likelihood of a defunctioning stoma to minimise the consequences of an anastomotic leak. A subsequent reduction in stoma formation in the following months indicates that practice rapidly returned to normal.