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To act or not to act. Predictability of intervention and nonintervention in health and environment

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought forth the question of the need for draconian interventions before concrete evidence for their need and efficacy is presented. Such interventions could be critical if necessary for avoiding threats, or a threat in themselves if harms caused by the intervention are significant.

The interdisciplinary nature of such issues as well as the unpredictability of various local responses considering their potential for global impact further complicate the question.

The study aims to review the available evidence and discuss the problem of weighting the predictability of interventions vis-à-vis their intended results against the limits of knowability regarding complex non-linear systems and thus the predictability in non-interventionist approaches.