

Social distancing policies to control coronavirus disease 2019 impose enormous social costs. This study evaluates the impact of reduced mobility induced by such policies on suicide using the Japanese government's suicide statistics. To address the endogeneity of mobility, we employ a shift-share instrumental variable approach, leveraging changes in mobility across localities under social distancing policies. We found increased suicide among females as mobility declined. The impact was mainly driven by females under 20, between 40 to 59 years, and females living alone. Our results suggest that social distancing policies intended to save lives from an infectious disease resulted in other forms of loss of life.