

PRESS RELEASE

**PRADA SUPPORTS *PROTEGGIMI*,
A RESEARCH PROJECT INTO MALE SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CORONAVIRUS**

Clinical data suggest that COVID-19 affects men more seriously than women: San Raffaele Hospital in Milan, supported financially by the Prada Group, will investigate the role played by male sex hormones in this imbalance.

Milan, 27 April 2020 - The Prada Group's support for the *PROTEGGIMI* project is the latest example of its commitment to scientific research, with the aim of exploring the role science plays in contemporary society. Coming on the back of the "Human doctors, warrior patients" project, a partnership with the Gianni Bonadonna Foundation to develop innovative cancer treatment and research, the initiative not only coincides with a period of global health crisis – researching why the pandemic predominantly affects men – but also reflects Prada's forward-looking, original research, which seeks to foster dialogue between neuroscience and culture.

The *PROTEGGIMI* project, developed by the San Raffaele research hospital in Milan and coordinated by urologist and andrologist Prof. Andrea Salonia, director of the San Raffaele Urological Research Institute and a lecturer at Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, will seek to explain the disparity in the impact of COVID-19 on men and women and to assemble a European register of epidemiological data on COVID-19, broken down by sex. The project will also involve various research groups from Italy and across Europe.

According to the latest data, men account for 66% of deaths from COVID-19 in Italy – a percentage that rises as the age bracket gets younger – and they are also more likely to require treatment in intensive care, accounting for 82% of all admissions in the Lombardy region. Sex hormones, and testosterone in particular, could explain this disparity, at least in part.

"It is crucial to be able to examine separate data for men and women", Prof. Salonia explained, "if we are to understand whether testosterone levels are linked to the severity of the illness, and to assess any long-term impacts on the overall health of men who have recovered from the virus. We hope this research will produce its first results in the next few weeks".

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Prada Group

Prada S.p.A. is a global leader in the luxury goods industry. The Group, which owns the Prada, Miu Miu, Church's and Car Shoe brands, produces and distributes luxury leather goods, footwear and apparel benefitting from a supply chain which includes 22 company-owned industrial sites. It also operates in the food sector with Marchesi 1824 and in the eyewear and fragrance industries under licensing agreements. The Group employs nearly 14,000 people and its products are sold in 70 countries worldwide through 641 directly operated stores as of December 31, 2019 and in a selected network of multi-brand stores and department stores.

The Prada Group is synonymous with innovation, transformation and independence and it is committed to promote a business culture oriented towards sustainability. These principles offer its brands a shared vision in which they are able to express their essence.

The company is listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange as 1913.HK.

Ospedale San Raffaele (OSR) is a clinical-research-university hospital established in 1971 to provide international-level specialised care for the most complex and difficult health conditions. OSR is part of Gruppo San Donato, the leading hospital group in Italy. The hospital is a multi-specialty center with over 60 clinical specialties; it is accredited by the Italian National Health System to provide care to both public and private, national and international patients. Research at OSR focuses on integrating basic, translational and clinical activities to provide the most advanced care to our patients. The institute is recognized as a global authority in molecular medicine and gene therapy, and is at the forefront of research in many other fields. Ospedale San Raffaele is a first-class institute which treats many diseases and stands out for the deep interaction between clinical and scientific area. This makes the transfer of scientific results from the laboratories to the patient's bed easier. Its mission is to improve knowledge of diseases, identify new therapies and encourage young scientists and doctor to grow professionally.