



COVID 19 : AN ENIGMA BEYOND DOUBTS!

Medicine

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ABSTRACT

COVID 19 has been the hot topic for discussion since the past few months. Little do we realize the impact of COVID 19 on our daily lives. It has been affecting all segments of the population and is particularly detrimental to members of those social groups in the most vulnerable situations, including people living in poverty situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, and indigenous peoples.

Apart from the worse economic implications, ironically, the very meaning of life has come to existence with the evolving pandemic. We had almost entered an era wherein members of the same family would communicate on Whatsapp when they are seated just across the hall. This pandemic has put us one step back in time, thus, making us realize the essence of social interaction and more importantly, preparing us to fight for the future. This article, puts forth these social implications and also ponders upon the preparedness with which we plan to face the enigma!

KEYWORDS

The SARS CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic is a significant stressor not only on health but also on every facet of an individual life. Having crossed nearly 5 months since the outbreak, one expects to access a comprehensive literature on the same, with masterminds working on it, globally. However, the varying presentations and outcome of SARS CoV-2 challenges all the studies done so far, over the past few months.

A 45 year old male presented to the Emergency with complaints of 8-10 episodes of diarrhoea and 3-4 episodes of vomiting since 3 days. He was severely dehydrated. After 2 days of admission in the hospital, he complained of breathlessness too. The Chest X-ray was suggestive of diffuse bilateral haziness, pointing towards pulmonary edema, probably due to excessive hydration. However, due to the global pandemic, any patient with diffuse bilateral shadows on Chest X-ray was advised COVID 19 testing. Hence, the patient was referred to the government hospital located in that area. To our surprise, the patient turned out to be COVID 19 positive! Recently, at a government hospital, it was reported that patients with negative test reports turned out to be positive on the 4th swab collection [1].

We have been living in a century wherein guidelines and protocols are the essence towards diagnosis of a particular illness. With SARS CoV-2 on the upfront, no guideline or protocol has been able to diagnose the cases below the iceberg. Despite all precautionary measures, each and every citizen is exposed to this catastrophe and may develop any symptoms that they may not recognize. Not only has the diagnosis been an enigma, but also the outcome of this virus, definitely has a plan to transform the world.

With the continuing lockdown, most people presenting with psychological disturbances are overwhelmed by an extraordinary stressor. As there is no finish line to this lockdown, it continues to create impending fear about future for everyone. These are significant psychological stressors for the population, and social isolation resulting from loss of structured educational and work activities to worsen public mental health [3]. For front-line personnel, regular exposure to the illness, protective equipment shortages, and adaptation to rapidly evolving and high-stress work environments are further sources of distress [4]. This pandemic is a potential source of direct and vicarious traumatization for everyone [5], which is only further emphasized by unsettling case reports of suicide deaths related to fears of contracting or spreading COVID-19 [6].

Human race has faced many such atrocities in the past but this is the very first in this digital era, a period where people were more connected virtually than in person. With the continuing lockdown, the socializing symbol of a basic handshake or warm greetings with hugs and kisses are now regaining its value. People who craved for medical leaves from routine office jobs have started realizing the extreme sort of boredom in this lockdown. Beaches and walk-in places, that once in a year embarked on a journey of self-clean up,

today, appear to be tourist attractions, with ecstatic beauty!

But adaptation is one of the finest human qualities. Amidst this crisis, we always have alternatives in life. Change is the only constant in our life. The repercussion of the disaster does not seem to end with an antiviral or vaccine or ending the lockdown but it may probably continue to impact the human race for the years to come. Overall, it can be seen that Indians have taken the fight against COVID19 positively and majority are in agreement with the government for announcing the lockdown to flatten the curve. It was evident from the many tweets posted online that many were disappointed with the fact that the lockdown came in later than expected [8]. Although, the country received a positive response, there are always certain outliers that exist.

At 45th day of social isolation, with educational institutes closed, social celebrations cancelled, parks, beaches and walk-in places not accessible, places of worship made online, boundaries inside general stores to keep people apart, toilet paper, hand sanitizer, antimicrobial wipes in short supply, cities divided into small areas, shortage of masks and gloves in hospitals and people making their own masks for sale and distribution to medical facilities, we stand where we are with what we have! It is important to realize this fact that can enable us to make better use of the resources in hand.

So, let us be grateful and work towards solving the mystery behind COVID 19!

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