

Coronavirus – Facts and Myths

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Coronavirus was originally discovered in WUHAN city of China and it has spread to most of countries in all the Continents. Coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) is inciting panic in its world. It's a new virus meaning no one has immunity and currently there is no vaccine available. It is likely that Coronavirus originated in an animal species and then spread to humans.

As of now scientists don't really have enough knowledge about the disease and its behavior. All earlier claims have been refuted. It can affect any age group. People with compromised immunity are at a higher risk of contracting the disease. Earlier claims regarding hydroxy chloroquine have been refuted. Galidesivir in the new antiviral drug considered to be effective against this virus.¹

Upper respiratory tract symptoms of runny nose, sore throat and cough are the earlier symptoms. Now it has been isolated in its peritoneal fluid and semen. Can it be sexually transmitted remains to be seen. At the moment the only thing which works is the precautionary measures.

Behavior of this virus has been different in different countries. Europe and America have been the worst hit countries. Severity of the disease is far less in Indian subcontinent and Far East countries.² It has been seen in its mildest form in Australasian continent. In Pakistan, the disease burden has been less than expected. It might be a different strain of virus or the local Immunity of

our people is different. BCG vaccination is also said to be a contributory factor.

We have hardly taken any precautionary measures. Lockdown has been partial and only in big cities. To one it seems that decision makers do not solicit the opinion of technocrats in making the policies. Economic factors do matter but real effective lockdown after the cases detected at Iranian border would have made a lot of difference. Professionals have been at the forefront in this debacle. It's a sad fact that the health care workers who contracted the disease is highest in the world. Supply of personal protective gear has been a persistent problem. Authorities have to realize that this pandemic is not an administrative problem. Decisions at district level are being taken by the local administration and not the technocrats.

Since the lockdown has been done away with, one can only hope that herd immunity may come to our rescue. The casual national attitude of people may lead to an unimaginable disaster. Our health care facility is less than ideal. Countries with advanced health services like, Britain, Europe, New Zealand, Canada and America are struggling with their inadequacies.³ Our facilities which are substandard have been choked to the hilt. We in Pakistan are in no position to cater for huge number of patients. There have already been tragic stories of whole families having the disease. To-date protective equipment is deficient in most of the Institutions. Unfortunately point scoring malady rather than real core hard work is the order of the day. We have a fight at hand need to learn lot of new things about Corona.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None to declare.

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None to disclose.

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