
Corona - A Few Thoughts and Need for Correction in Guidelines

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As we move into 2021 from 2020 the year of Corona or covid 19 here are a few issues and a few unanswered questions

The disease was unknown and so also the details regarding it and it was left to ICMR to formulate guidelines.¹ However some of the guidelines were interpreted differently.

The main problem lay in the classification into high risk and low risk. By this guideline anybody wearing PPE was considered a low risk. The question is what exactly constitute PPE. Does it include only masks or does it include masks, faceshields, gloves, goggles and gowns. Since lockdown was enforced almost everyone has been wearing a mask so if that is the criteria there will be very few high risk persons who could be potential spreaders.

The second controversy is regarding testing.² RTPCR is the gold standard results are delayed for more than a day. Also it costs about 2700 in private sector. On the other hand rapid antigen test is cheaper and gives faster results but the problem is that there is a large percentage of false negatives. Rapid antigen tests are ideal for emergencies. But the question is how many rapid antigen tests are done vis a vis RTPCR. In many states while testing figure are high there is a majority of RAT Tests as compared to RTPCR thereby giving a false sense of assurance in some states RTPCR forms less than 25 percent of the test. This is indeed alarming.

Another controversy in the guideline is regarding reinfection it is suggested that tests need not be done again.^{3,4} This is because RTPCR can

remain after even 90 days, this was interpreted in some places to say that there is no need for a person to test again after he gets affected. This is very important particularly for health workers planning to rejoin after illness. In the absence of a test the health worker may be actually spreading the web of infection unknowingly rather than breaking the chain.

There are some more basic questions regarding Corona. Why is the infection not common among children if not common why keep schools closed.

Why have Asia and Africa done better than Europe and USA regarding control of Corona. Do spices have anything to do with improving immunity.⁵

Why has Bihar done exceptionally well in Corona control in spite of being a poor performing state in other indicators.

The answers for this are not known yet

References

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