

Precautions Necessary to Fight COVID-19: Knowledge and Practice among Urban Population

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Abstract: Corona virus is a disease with no known medications available. Precautions announced are mostly physical measures, to avert the disease. This study is planned to assess how much is understood and are following. Twenty multiple-choice questions were framed related to physical measures. One hundred twenty five people participated in the quiz. The answers were consolidated and presented as percentages. Participants who are aware of incubation period of the Corona Virus and social distancing are 95.2 and 76 percent respectively. The knowledge about the life of the virus on various surfaces like copper, cardboard, plastic and stainless steel was correctly answered by 31.2, 84.8, 39.2, and 51.2 percent respectively. Knowledge about the zones was 72.8 percent. Finally, self-discipline to fight Corona Virus and a nourishing diet to improve immunity was felt necessary by 63.2 and 68.8 percent respectively. Every participant is expected to know and follow all precautionary measures, but answers were otherwise, indicating the necessity to continue educating the people. Therefore, remedial measures were planned. Precautionary measures were recorded and were played for three days and after every lockdown in the colonies. Messages were telecasted through various TV channels and messages were sent to all those who participated in the quizzes. Masks were prepared and distributed to the workers working during the lockdown period; food was also distributed in several rounds.

Keywords: Lockdown, social distancing, masks, incubation period, immunity, self-discipline.

1. Introduction

The pandemic of Corona Virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) called the SARS –Co V2 poses an extra ordinary threat to the global public health.(1, 2) Many challenges are lack of safe and effective treatment, vaccines and Gaps in scientific knowledge regarding the pathogenicity, immunity, and transmission (3, 4). In humans respiratory infections known as SARS –Severe acute respiratory syndrome and MERS Middle East respiratory syndrome occur. Common symptoms are dry cough, fever tiredness, aches, pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhea, loss of taste, smell, rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes, some are severe and some are gradual. Most risky is for people with co-morbidities and aged (5, 6). The virus spreads through mouth, droplets, nose and when person coughs, sneezes or speaks. Social distancing is essential, virus can land on door knobs, tables, hands etc., people get infected through touching these objects and touching eyes, nose or mouth, hand, respiratory hygiene should be taken care (7, 8) Methods to be adopted are.

- 1) Ban on people from stepping out of their houses unnecessarily.
- 2) All services and shops closed except pharmacies, hospitals, banks, grocery shops and other essential services.
- 3) Closure of commercial and private establishments, only work from home allowed.
- 4) Suspension of all educational, training, research institutes.
- 5) Closure of all places of worship
- 6) Suspension of all essential and nonessential transport.
- 7) Prohibition of all social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural and religious activities.

Studies on statistics and about vaccines and medicines were done. Studies on the knowledge of precautionary measures

are not available. This study probably be first in the state of Telangana.

2. Methodology

Announcement of first lockdown brought jitters among public, government was propagating physical measures, while contradictory precautionary messages were being circulated.. For a few days, people were careful after some days people started dodging as they used to do during curfew times. In early April, the situation is, predicting problems people started panic buying exhausting all masks and medicines in the market, stores selling masks ran out of stock, municipal workers and other essential services people could not get masks, people are locked in their homes without household helpers, managing all household chores themselves. Under these circumstances, it was felt necessary to plan a project concentrating on two important issues- First to assess the knowledge among people on precautionary measures Secondly to help those in need. As part of the first objective an online quiz consisting of five rounds was planned. Each round having 20 multiple choice questions (Total 100 questions) :

Round I Sports

Round II knowledge and precautions to fight Corona virus
Round III Knowledge about diet for Immunity to fight Corona
Round IV Mythology Round V General Science.

Objectives of the quiz are

- 1) To get baseline information on awareness of people on Corona Virus COVID-19.
- 2) To study the attitude of people towards lockdowns.
- 3) To study the practice of precaution SR20708155744 s.
- 4) To help the needy.
- 5) To keep them busy during the lock down period.

Questionnaire (QUIZ) was prepared keeping in view the then social and physical measures necessary to tackle the virus. A pretest circular was sent one week prior to the date of competition, giving date, time (3-5pm) and portion covered for the quiz. Those interested were asked to register. Quiz was open to all. Registration free. The announcement was sent to more than 500 people. One hundred and twenty five people registered.

Quiz was conducted through WhatsApp from 20th April to 28th April 2020 and procured answers individually. Responses received on the knowledge of precautionary measures (Round II) are presented. They were tabulated and presented as percentages.

3. Results and Discussion

“Corona virus is a disease with no known medication available”. Precautions being followed are physical measures like wearing masks, avoiding crowds, washing hands, personal hygiene, social distancing etc. These physical measures are necessary but have not reached properly. This study gives baseline information about the knowledge people have on precautionary measures.

The participants were from all walks of life; software professionals, bank officers, college and university students, Indian Women Scientists Association members, teachers, dieticians, and house wives. They are from Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Mumbai, Tamilnadu and Telangana, in India and from USA, Germany and Muscat.

Responses given by people is presented in Table 1. Date of announcement of corona virus was correctly given by 64 percent. Those who answered that corona virus is known as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) are 89.6 percent. The remaining 10.4 have said as a renal problem. The answer to the question how corona virus spreads, only 74.4 percent (93 people) could say it is through droplet infection, therefore chances of spreading of corona virus will be more. Meaning of Pandemic was understood by 65.6 percent and organization declaring as pandemic is correctly given as WHO by 85.6 percent. Knowledge about incubation period of virus got widespread circulation as 95.2 percent haven given the correct answer. Social distancing of 2m required is answered by 76 percent. Even today we find people gathering in clusters at vegetable markets, shops, fair shops, banks where money distribution is allotted.

With respect to the percentage of people giving correct answer on the period that the virus will be alive on surfaces of copper, as 4 hours is given by 31.2, cardboard (24 hours) by 84.8, Plastic and stainless steel (for 3days) by 39.2 and 51.2. Pool testing is being done where number of samples are pooled together to test, only 46.4percent answered correctly. The meaning of containment zone, red zone and orange zone is understood by only 72.8, 72.8 and 65.6 percent respectively. Only 48 percent know that Hyderabad is declared a red zone by Government of India. Finally consolidating the whole situation, last two questions pertain to personal care. For the questions on how do you protect

yourself 63.2 percent said that self-discipline is required if we want to drive corona away and 68.8 percent feel immunity is necessary to protect the body and that can be achieved through a nourishing diet.

Remedial measures undertaken

After consolidation and examination of all answers, important aspects that required immediate attention were delineated. They are 1. knowledge about mode of spread of corona virus, social distancing, handling of surfaces like paper, copper, plastics and stainless steel vessels, wearing of masks, self-discipline and nourishing diet to improve immunity, for all these aspects the correct answers were around 30 to 70 percent only. For all these questions 100 percent awareness is necessary. Therefore answers to all these questions were made in a manner that can be easily understood, recorded on a tape and was played within the colony every day for three days and after every extension of the lockdown. The messages were repeatedly telecasted by various TV channels to reach outsiders, for all those who are not accessible through these methods, what supmessages were sent through the same mode as answers received for the quizzes. Masks were prepared from the cloth pooled from members of the colony, three of us (women) formed a group stitched nearly 300 masks which are being distributed to municipal, sanitary other daily wage workers and garbage collectors who are working through out lockdown period, Dettol soap and food grains (contribution from colony residents) were given in three rounds.

4. Conclusion

Inspire of all efforts it did not get ingrained in the minds of people to maintain social distancing and other attention are precautionary measures. Education measures and or penalties may have to be initiated if 100 percent have to follow the safety measures.

References

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Table 1: Knowledge and Practice of Corona Virus Precautions

	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Correct answer</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No(125)</i>
1	COVID outbreak announcement date	Dec 2019	64	80
2	COVID19- is	SARS	89.6	112
3	Type of infection	droplet infection	74.4	93
4	Meaning of Pandemic	World wide	65.6	82
5	Organization that declared Pandemic	World Health Organization	85.6	107
6	Incubation period of COVID-19-	14 days	95.2	119
7	Social distancing required	3 feet	76	95
8	Life of COVID -19 on Copper	6 hours	31.2	39
9	Life of COVID -19 on cardboard	24 hours	84.8	106
10	Life of COVID -19 on Plastic	3 days	39.2	49
11	Life of COVID -19 on steel vessels	3 days	51.2	64
12	Meaning of Pool Testing	Pooling samples	46.4	58
13	Containment zone	Presence of positive cases	72.8	91
14	Red Zone	80% cases + doubling rate	72.8	91
15	Orange Zone	Limited cases + no new cases	65.6	82
16	Quarantine period	14 days	56	70
17	Red to green zone	No fresh cases in 14 days	48	60
18	Hyderabad is classified under	Red Zone	48	60
19	How to be away from Corona Virus	Self-discipline	63.2	79
20	How to get Immunity	Nutritious diet.	68.8	86