

LETTER TO EDITOR

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ROLE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY IN COVID-19 PATIENTS

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ABSTRACT:

Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by SARS-CoV-2 is a new corona virus that was first identified in Wuhan city of China in December 2019. In the wake of COVID 19 affecting India, the worst affected is the state of Maharashtra accounting for one third of all cases in the country. Physiotherapy is beneficial in the treatment and physical rehabilitation of patients with COVID-19. Patient presenting with productive cough and with underlying respiratory conditions benefit from the Physiotherapy. "Expert consensus and recommendation for Physiotherapy management for COVID 19 in Indian set up" guidelines approved by Maharashtra State Council for Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, Mumbai will help physiotherapists in decision making and treatment planning.

Key words: COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, Corona, Physiotherapy

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To,
The Chief Editor,
VIMS Journal of Physical Therapy.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by SARS-CoV-2 is a new coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan city of China in December 2019. In the wake of COVID 19 affecting India, the worst affected is the Maharashtra state, accounting for one-third of all cases in the country. ^(1,2)

The clinical presentation is quite variable. People with co-morbidities have found to have a more severe presentation and increased mortality. Studies have found that most people with COVID-19 develop only mild (40%) or moderate (40%) disease, approximately 15% develop a severe condition that requires oxygen support, and 5% have a critical illness with complications such as respiratory failure, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), sepsis and septic shock, thrombo-embolism, and/or multi-organ failure, including acute kidney injury and cardiac injury⁽³⁾

Physiotherapists have a vital role in the management of patients admitted to the ICU. Cardio-respiratory physiotherapy is useful in treating acute and chronic respiratory conditions that improve the quality of life following acute illness and decrease the ICU stay, thus reducing the rate of morbidity and mortality⁽³⁾. Physiotherapy is beneficial in the treatment and physical rehabilitation of patients with COVID-19. These patients present with variable symptoms, including either with dry or productive cough.⁽⁴⁾ Patients presenting with productive cough and with underlying respiratory conditions or other co-morbidities associated with hyper-secretion and ineffective cough (e.g., neuromuscular disease, respiratory disease, obesity, etc.) may benefit from the same. There is sufficient evidence to suggest the development of ICU acquired weakness in patients admitted in the ICU for a prolonged period. ⁽⁵⁾

Recently a group of experts in the field of Cardiovascular and Respiratory physiotherapy came up with "Expert consensus and recommendation for Physiotherapy management for COVID 19 in Indian setup". This guideline shall definitely act as guiding light to all the physiotherapist across the country and help in decision making for budding physiotherapists in this pandemic situation.⁽⁶⁾

Author Dr. Abhijit D. Diwate (Ph.D.), was member of Expert committee for consensus and recommendation for Physiotherapy management for COVID 19 in Indian setup.

CONFLICT OF INTREST: None

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