COVID 19 PANDEMIC: A REALISTIC APPROACH THROUGH AYURVEDA

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Abstract

Pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan, China was first reported to the WHO Country Office in China on 31 December 2019. The outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. On 11 February 2020, WHO announced a name for the new coronavirus disease: COVID-19. The COVID-19 is affecting 212 countries and territories around the world. COVID-19 has now been reported on every continent except Antarctica. Known as SARS-CoV-2, the virus has resulted in more than 6.6 million infections and 391,000 deaths at the time of writing this article.

Ayurveda documented epidemics/pandemics under the context of Janapadodhvasa (conditions devastate the human settlements). Similarly, infectious diseases have been considered under Sankramika rogas.

The mortality rate of CoV-2 SARS infection is not so high in India (2.8%). When the country economy hampers, during that time instead of fear of COVID 19, we must aware about it. We must take precautions like personal hygiene, social distancing and taking of herbal medicines. By adopting the measures as described above, one can easily beat the fear of COVID 19 by boosting the natural defense i.e. immunity.

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INTRODUCTION

Pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan, China was first reported to the WHO Country Office in China on 31 December 2019. The outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. On 11 February 2020, WHO announced a name for the new coronavirus disease: COVID-19. The COVID-19 is affecting 212 countries and territories around the world. COVID-19 has now been reported on every continent except Antarctica. Known as SARS-CoV-2, the virus has resulted in more than 6.6 million infections and 391,000 deaths at the time of writing this article.

Ayurveda documented epidemics/pandemics under the context of Janapadodhvamsa (conditions devastate the human settlements). Similarly, infectious diseases have been considered under Sankramika rogas. Pollution of air, water, climate and environment is responsible for the spread of diseases on such a large scale resulting in Janapadodhvamsa. Causes of vitiation of air, water, climate and place also with their characteristics have been enumerated in classics. Improper disposal of waste, distribution of polluted water, air pollution, indulgence in unhealthy and unwholesome activities, failure of judgment and misunderstanding of situation etc. also result in reasonable damage to the health of the society; ultimately leading to Janapadodhwamsa. Such conditions will manifest in symptoms like cough, breathlessness, fever etc. In Ayurveda, initial phases of the manifestation can be comparable to Agantuja VataKaphaja Jwara. Uncontrolled conditions, further vitiate other Doshaas and other Rasa, Rakta, Mamsadi dusshyas thus entering into Sannipataj condition.

Material and Methods:
Ayurvedic literature, online databases, etc are critically reviewed.

Results and Discussion:
Clinical Presentation:
Incubation period
The incubation period for COVID-19 is thought to extend to 14 days, with a median time of 4-5 days from exposure to symptoms onset. As per studies reported, 97.5% of persons with COVID-19 who develop symptoms will do so within 11.5 days of SARS-CoV-2 infection.

The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 present at illness onset vary, but over the course of the disease, most persons with COVID-19 will experience the following:

- Fever (83–99%)
- Cough (59–82%)
- Fatigue (44–70%)
- Anorexia (40–84%)
- Shortness of breath (31–40%)
- Sputum production (28–33%)
- Myalgia (11–35%)

Illness Severity
The largest cohort of >44,000 persons with COVID-19 from China showed that illness severity can range from mild to critical:

- Mild to moderate (mild symptoms up to mild pneumonia): 81%
- Severe (dyspnea, hypoxia, or >50% lung involvement on imaging): 14%
- Critical (respiratory failure, shock, or multiorgan system dysfunction): 5%

Risk Factors for Severe Illness:
Age is a strong risk factor for severe illness, complications, and death. Among more than 44,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in China, the case fatality rate was highest among older persons: ≥80
years: 14.8%, 70–79 years: 8.0%, 60–69 years: 3.6%, 50–59 years: 1.3%, 40–49 years: 0.4%, <40 years: 0.2%.

Early U.S. epidemiologic data suggests that the case fatality was highest in persons aged ≥85 years (range 10%–27%), followed by 3%–11% for ages 65–84 years, 1%–3% for ages 55–64 years, and <1% for ages 0–54 years.

Mortality rate:

The highest mortality rate of COVID 19 is 15.3% in France. In India, it is 2.8%. It means Out of 100 cases only 2.8 cases have a chance of death.\(^6\)

In India, more than 70% of deaths occur due to co-morbidities.\(^7\)

Patients in China with no reported underlying medical conditions had an overall case fatality of 0.9%, but case fatality was higher for patients with comorbidities: 10.5% for those with cardiovascular disease, 7.3% for diabetes, and approximately 6% each for chronic respiratory disease, hypertension, and cancer. Heart disease, hypertension, prior stroke, diabetes, chronic lung disease, and chronic kidney disease have all been associated with increased illness severity and adverse outcomes.\(^8\)

**Immunity Enhancers - Single Drugs:**\(^4\)

- **Guduchi** Consuming 500 to 1000 mg of aqueous extract of Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia (Thunb.Miers)
- **Amla** Consumption of fresh Amla fruit (Indian gooseberry – Emblica officinalis L/ Phyllanthus emblica L) or Amla candy is also advisable.
- **Haridra** Gargling with warm water added with turmeric powder (Curcuma longa L) and a pinch of salt or Turmeric (Curcuma longa L)
- **Tulasi** Frequent sipping of water processed with Tulsi (basil leaves – Ocimum tenuiflorum L Merr (synonym Ocimum sanctum L) is advised.
- **Ashwagandha** root powder 3-5gm twice a day with warm milk or water/ ashwagandha extract 500mg twice a day with warm water

**Immunity Enhancers - Formulations:**\(^4\)

- **Chyawanprash Avaleha** - 10 - 12 gm / per day
- **Draksha Avaleha** - 10 - 12 gm / per day
- **Indukantam Grutham** - 10 - 12 gm twice daily before food, when hungry
- **Aaravindasava** - 15 - 20 ml with equal quantity of warm water after food
- **Balachaturbhadra Churna** - 1 - 2 gm with honey
- **Haridra Khanda** - 3 - 5 gm intermittently with honey/ warm water

**Lifestyle Tips (Dinacharya) For Boosting Immunity:**\(^4\)

Early Morning Regime (4.30am to 8.30am):

- Wake up between 4:30 - 5:00 in the morning or 45 minutes before sunrise.
- Drink 1-3 glasses of warm water
- **Gandusha / Kavala** (Oil Pulling) 1 tablespoon of sesame or coconut oil for Kavala followed by warm water rinse.
- Gargle with warm water added with a pinch of turmeric and salt, *Triphala*, and *Yashtimadhu*. *ShuddhaTankana* (2% aqueous solution), *Madhoodaka* (5% aqueous solution) also can be used for Kavala graha.
- Nasal Health – *Pratimarsha Nasya* (2 drops of sesame / coconut oil each nostril).
- Daily practice of *Yogasana, Pranayama* and meditation: The following *Yoga-Asanas* can be practised for 15 to 20 minutes to improves flexibility of the body and relieve mental stress
  - *Sukshmavyayama* (warm up) loosening exercises for all joints
  - Sitting postures like *padmasana, sukhasana, vajrasana, paschimottanasana*
  - *Yogasana* in supine position: *pawanmuktasana, halasana, matsyasana*
  - *Yogasana* in Prone position: *bhujangasana, shalabhasana*
  - Relaxing postures: *Shavasana, Makarasana*
  - *Pranayama*: Deep Breathing, *Nadishodhana pranayama, Bhramari Pranayama* 10 repetitions each
  - Meditation – 10 minutes

- Warm water bath

### After Noon Regimen
- Don't sleep during the daytime
- Involve in Work from Home/Indoor recreational activities like Studies, Reading, Painting, Gardening, Playing-listening Music, Social Media etc.

### Evening Regimen
- Meditation / Pranayama – 30 minutes
- Indoor Recreational Activities

### Dietetic Rules
- Chew a piece of ginger with a pinch of rock salt (*Lavanadrak*) 15 to 20 minutes before food improves the appetite.
- Eat only when hungry, in the appropriate amount according to the digestive power (Neither too less nor more).
- Always take a fresh & warm diet.
- Eat easily digestible foods.
- Spices like jeera (cumin seeds), black pepper, garlic, coriander, ginger, Ajwain should be used in cooking.
- Eat a night meal 3 hours after sunset or till 8 pm.
- Liquids – Instead of Tea, either of the following are advised.
  - Herbal tea prepared from ½ inch ginger + 2 Black pepper + ¼ cinnamon or lemon grass, *tulsi* leaves in 2 cups boiled water reduce it to 1 Cup & add honey 1 teaspoon
  - 1 cup hot cow's milk + dry Ginger powder/ *Haridra* ½ teaspoon
- Sleep at least 2-3 hours after dinner. Adequate sleep is very important for health
Cope up with stress.­

- It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during the lockdown period. Talking to people will help to cope with stress. Contact with friends and family as frequently as possible.
- Encourage to maintaining a healthy lifestyle including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones at home and by email and phone with other family and friends.
- Don’t use smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs to deal with stress. Consultations with a health worker or counsellor can be provided, if physical and mental health needs are required.
- Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time spend watching or listening to media coverage that are upsetting.

Conclusion:

The mortality rate of Cov-2 SARS infection is not so high. When the country economy hampers, during that time instead of fear of COVID 19, we must aware about it. We must take precautions like personal hygiene, social distancing and taking of herbal medicines. By adopting the measures as described above, one can easily beat the fear of COVID 19 by boosting the natural defense i.e Immunity.

REFERENCES