

Delhi & Mumbai on Route to Recovery, Other Cities on Spurt: Says Dr K K Aggarwal

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Amidst the lengthening curve of COVID-19, which doesn't seem to flatten, home care and telemedicine turn out to be the solutions for its management



Amid the surge in COVID-19 cases in India, recently a decline in the number of cases in Mumbai followed by Delhi with a fall in mortality rate has been observed. However, the chain of spread is not broken, which seems to bring severity in other cities too as COVID is all set to stay in India. But how to live with the COVID conundrum as some people are getting sick and others are not; understanding the relationship between comorbidities and COVID 19; some countries are more affected than others – the reasons behind it; were some of the pressing issues addressed during the HEAL-Thy Samvaad Episode-2 organised on 2nd July 2020.

While addressing the HEAL-Thy Samvaad Episode-2 and deliberating on how to live with COVID-19, Dr KK Aggarwal, Padma Shri & Renowned Interventional Cardiologist said, “COVID-19 is not going away soon as India is a densely populated country. Although, there is a decline in the number of cases of Mumbai & Delhi, yet other cities may be on spurt as we can't siege it. It may stay for 2 years or more, but we needn't fear. So, we need to understand and learn how to live with it. For this, we need to be cautious, wear masks compulsorily, and maintain social distancing; avoid gathering in close spaces as the exposure will be less in open space.”

On the frontlines of this COVID-19 pandemic are healthcare workers with the substantial task of diagnosing and treating an exponentially growing number of acutely ill patients, often having to make critical decisions under physical and psychological pressure. Hence, they (doctors) are at high risk holding the highest mortality rate due to their repeated exposure to the virus.

Adding to this Dr KK Aggarwal said, “Obviously, doctors are at higher risk because of their repeated exposure to the virus, while the absence of isolation rooms in India is also one of the causes. To ease the burden upon the hospitals and to save the doctors, home quarantine is the solution. As more than 80% of COVID-19 cases have mild symptoms, so it can be managed at home with the help of telemedicine — this way, we will save the doctors. We can also try this at the community level rather than visiting the hospitals. We can fix a house for COVID-19, and put all positive patients of the community there with masking. Hence, home isolation seems to be the solution. More so, telemedicine and home isolation are the gifts of

COVID-19 to the medical fraternity.”

Deliberating on why some people are getting sick and some are not, Dr JC Suri, Chairman, JCS Institute of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine said, “Of the people getting infected with COVID-19 and falling sick, 80% are with mild symptoms, 15% with severity to be admitted to the hospitals and 5% with extreme conditions to be admitted in ICUs. When the virus enters our body, it is dealt with by body resistance. This resistance is of two types — the innate immunity and the acquired immunity. If one’s innate immunity is strong, one can fight back the virus, if not, it will move towards severity. There are so many factors that impact innate immunity — sleep is one of them, a sound sleep of 7-8hour works as a natural immune booster. If young are falling sick, there is a genetic factor. There are demographic factors also as we have seen the high mortality rate in Spain, Germany and the USA.”