

New Normal in Neurological Practice during Pandemic

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Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) which was first reported from Wuhan, China was declared as pandemic on the 11th March 2020 [1]. The infection still is continuing to frighten all healthcare professionals globally. In this time of pandemic, neurological care is also under stress due to demands of frontline care of neurological patients and also being infected with COVID-19. Those people suffering from the chronic neurological problem are compelled to balance their previous diseases with this rapidly increasing threat of COVID-19 infections [2,3]. Patients with neurological diseases like Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Neuromuscular Disorders, Migraine, Dementia, and Parkinson's disease have suffered economically as well as health treatment wise because of this pandemic. Even when the patients suffer from stroke and they are in need of emergency treatment yet they have to follow the protocol of COVID assigned by authorities which is time consuming [4].

People with neurological manifestation due to COVID-19 can be grouped into three major categories such as: (i) headache, dizziness, impaired consciousness [5], ataxia, seizures [6,7], vascular complications like stroke [5]; (ii) hypo-ageusia, hyposmia, neuralgia and (iii) symptoms of skeletal muscle damage [5,8,9].

The treatment and follow-ups for the preexisting neurological condition have been managed by different ways by the doctors. There are methods which includes online medicine (online consultations) for Out-Patients consultations, separation of COVID infected patients and not COVID infected patients in emergency departments and working across subspecialties should be applied [10]. The issues such as discontinuing previously prescribed medications out of fear, and frequently cancelling Out-Patients appointments, as well as the anxiety of the patients with chronic neurological diseases should be managed effectively. There are many organizations which deals with neurological subjects have also issued few guidelines for the treatment in time of pandemic, such as the Association of British Neurologists has released an outline of risks posed for neurological patients [11]. The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) has issued guidelines on online consultations for management of neurological patients at the time of pandemic [12]. Similarly, the American Headache Society recommended the use of online consultation system or telemedicine system where there will be possibility for COVID-19 symptoms screening and recommending the need for triage for the presentation to neurological clinics [13].

Neurologists and neurological centers should draw attention and analyze the impact of COVID-19 on various neurological conditions and act to provide the strategies and recommendations to improve patients management and reduce negative impact during the current time of pandemic, although there are many cases which have already been critically examined [14] however, there are lot more to be examined yet.

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