

## An Orthopaedic Resident-Reporting LIVE from COVID-19 Battlefield; Lessons Learnt!!

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Submitted: 27 Aug 2020; Accepted: 07 Sept 2020; Published: 10 Sept 2020

In an Orthopaedic Resident's life - during his tenure of residency, moments of achievement Are-Thesis Acceptance and Result of Final Examinations. Year 2020 starting with thesis acceptance and beginning of Final PG exam preparations, little did we know what was in the store ahead.

As we were gearing up with our academic sessions, PG teachings and the Final "Last Punch" for the exams, somewhere in Wuhan, there was this "Birth of a positive sense single stranded RNA genome packet with a lipid bilayer" One fine day the announcement of "Nation-wide Lockdown" was declared and we were heading towards an unprecedented situation which was "novel" to everyone.

Daily new SOPs were drafted, new machinery was rolled out in hospitals, new protocols were implemented. It was like some mystery was unfolding. Our duties were "customised", fashioned in a way to preserve energy, resources, and manpower and "exposure" to this little monster from Wuhan.

Like we "follow" the West world, here we were actually "tracking" their health care situation on daily basis and bracing for the storm that was to be supposedly unleashed on us.

It took less than a week for us to realise that we are dealing with something which is "here to stay" and will have great repercussions on all aspects of our lives. We realised we are at WAR, a war for survival.

We being the "Enthusiastic buddies" amongst our team we decided to take a plunge in the situation by volunteering in the COVID-19 "duties" as a "Frontline Soldiers" We were commissioned at various "Action Posts" such as "Screening duties", "Home Collection swab duties on ambulance", "Flu Clinics" and Isolation Wards.

As a resident in orthopaedics who is well accustomed to managing resources at hand in terms of "mobilising the software, hardware, and managing the OTs and postop, here the need of hour was to acquire different skill sets.

We were given our "Gear"-the PPEs (personal protective equipment), we learnt the "Donning and Doffing of it as per the guidelines. The ICMR terminologies, MOHFW advisories and AIIMS protocols were rapidly memorised throughout as if we were expecting those as questions in our MS/DNB exams.

Triage of suspected COVID-19 patients involved following an algorithm proposed by AIIMS, as there were two sets of patients coming at our posts (asymptomatic but having contact with COVID -19 positive case and symptomatic patients who were wait for the COVID-19 tests to be done or awaiting results).

Quarantine facilities were being made simultaneously across the city. Swab Teams were formed, who were trained from microbiology department for adequate retrieval of sample, collection in culture media, storage in ice kits, and documentation of it in relevant forms which was useful for contact tracing if need be.

Counselling people was most important aspect to alleviate fear, and misconceptions regarding the situation (fear, anxiety also reduced immunity, making and individual susceptible for infection). Reinforcement of hand hygiene, social distancing measures were reiterated.

Usually the orthopaedic fraternity "Respects the Bacteria" for its devastating effects on our surgical results but here the situations are that we were made to bow in front of "Little Monster-the Virus".

As we know the most important Orthopaedics Preop Profile consists of "The Three Musketeers" – HIV/HBsAg/HCV, this novel bug is all set to become the "member of Fantastic Four"

Many Lessons were learnt such need to adapt to dynamic situations, anticipating the community perceptions of the scenario and being prepared for the worst.

Utmost protection of our team members, assistants, staff nurses, helpers is paramount when dealing with such evolving situation.

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To lead from the front with safety measures and not being a bravado is the essence.

Judicious usage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and biomedical waste management protocols should be meticulously followed.

Last but not the least, every crisis provides us with an opportunity – where the humans have evolved to a next level.

We still are in the process of turn around as, we have not yet arrived at a clear picture about how things are going to pan out, but as the first “ground report” from the battlefield, we wish to say that we need to acquire and get ourselves accustomed to New Era of Orthopaedics Post lockdown 3.0.

Signing off from the COVID – 19 out post, “Over and Out”!!

#### **Acknowledgements:**

**For Strengthening Our Morale:** Dr Vaibhav Bagaria, Dr Arjun Dhawale, Dr Kshitij Chaudhary, Dr Lokesh Naik.

**For Microbiological Technical tips:** Dr Rupashree Patkar

**Most Important: Our “better half”:** Dr Priyanka Kulkarni and Dr Sudha Tadepalli

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