

# COVID-19 Pandemic and Road Ahead

Dear Readers,

Greetings of the season!

It is evident that COVID-19 cases are raising constantly in the country and worldwide. As on October 30, 2020, there were over 45 million global cases of COVID-19. Over 33 million people had recovered from the disease and the recovery rate is found to be quite satisfactory, while there had been over 1.1 million deaths.

According to healthcare professionals/leaders, full recovery would need a month or two post COVID infection. People who recover from COVID-19 infection experience post-covid complications no matter how mild or severe the infection is. It is reported that patients have started showing health problems weeks/even months after recovering from COVID-19.

About 1 in 6 patients are showing complications, including some that are life-threatening. Many of these complications may be caused by a condition known as cytokine release syndrome. When an infection triggers the immune system, inflammatory proteins called cytokines are released which can kill tissue and damage the organs, including lungs, heart and kidneys.

Post-covid complications include loss of smell and taste, extreme fatigue, respiratory problems, anxiety and stress, renal failure, blood clots, loss of vision and hearing, heart problems, encephalitis, stammering, menstrual problems, nervous disorders, lung fibrosis, confusions, epileptic attacks, Gastrointestinal issues, breathlessness, chest pain, breathlessness and inflammation.

In some people, multi-inflammatory syndrome is observed where people return with high-grade fever three to four weeks after recovering from coronavirus. It causes high-grade fever and inflammation in blood vessels and can permanently damage coronary arteries. As COVID-19 can

significantly affect the vital organs, health monitoring is required for a long time. We need to understand that post-covid care is as important as covid care. After COVID-19 infection, in most people adequate antibodies are formed which prevents them from contracting the virus again. However, it's an unknown territory for the medical practitioners across the world, as to how long can that immunity lasts. Reinfection cases have also been documented.

Hence, post-COVID infection, safety precautions should never be taken lightly. The COVID-19 recovered patients should strictly follow certain instructions like wearing a mask, using sanitizers and practice social distancing. Exercise, having nutritional diet, keeping the mind active, gradually getting back to the normal routine, keep observing for any signs of fatigue or head ache or any kind of discomfort, taking adequate rest are most important for a COVID recovered patient. Staying hydrated and drinking plenty of fluids is very important. Drinking warm water with honey and other herbs can also help. Yoga, meditation and breathing exercises also should be included in the daily routine. Food which is well cooked and easy to digest for the body should be consumed. Ensuring plenty of rest and proper sleep helps the body to recover soon. Recovered patients should take the medications prescribed correctly. Patients who had severe infection or had breathing issues can keep a pulse oximeter at home to keep monitoring the vitals. Even blood pressure and blood sugar levels should also be monitored regularly, for the first few weeks after being declared COVID free.

In some hospitals, dedicated post-COVID recovery OPD has been started to deal with all clinical manifestations in patients. It is better that recovered patients are aware of the complications and be vigilant so that in case of any problems, they can immediately approach the hospital.

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