

Preventive Measures in Post Pandemic Era

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By the grace of ALLAH Almighty, the world is nearing the end of this deadly and distressing pandemic that has paralyzed life on earth for more than two years now. The preventive measures which have been proved effective in controlling/curtailing the spread of this disease were covering the nose and mouth both by the patient and general public, hand hygiene (washing/sanitizing), and social distancing at all levels (personal, family, cities & countries).¹ Due to aggressive advocacy for the adoption of these measures by health authorities and communication widely in social, print, and electronic media, there is a risk of developing an understanding that these are covid specific measures. Once the pandemic is over, people may abandon all those. It must be realized that these measures are very helpful not only in the prevention of diseases but also in the promotion of healthy life. Evidence of which should be communicated to masses and all the concerned, that these measures should be carried on during post-pandemic period as well.

Evidence in support of hand hygiene is available in the literature. Handwashing with soap and water can effectively reduce (50% reduction)² diarrheal diseases and foodborne illness and infections.³ It can reduce the risk of respiratory infections in the general population by 16-21%.⁴ Studies have shown that an organized education in the general population has significantly reduced diarrheal disease (up to 58%) in the general population. Similarly, hand washing education reduced the proration of children missing their schools due to gastrointestinal infection by 29.57%.⁵ It is estimated that over a million deaths can be prevented every year if hand washing is universally adopted.⁶ It is an established fact that the majority of respiratory infections including viral ones are airborne. Cough and sneezes produce droplets which are responsible for the spread of these diseases.⁷ During this pandemic, it is widely approved that covering the mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing can effectively prevent the spread of Covid-19. This is equally true for all other respiratory infections as well. It is well known to the general public that if one member had flue, in due course of time, all other members are bond to get it. By proper education of covering every cough and sneeze, we can effectively reduce respiratory infections in the community.

Lastly, I want to draw attention to the role of social distancing in post Covid era. Every community experience small outbreaks of respiratory tract infections, especially in the winter and spring season, of course, we do not require lockdowns for this situation but anybody who suffer from an infectious disease like flue, must isolate him at home in a room for 5-7 days, the other family members, the school mats and the families of school-going children and work colleagues of adults can be saved. Keeping in mind the expected benefits of these measures, campaigns should be planned and executed at schools, working places, and community levels to educate all to adopt these precautions, rather make them a lifestyle to prevent diseases and promote health in communities and nations.

Reference

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