

Adherence to “Mask Wearing” Behavior among Visitors of Corona OPD at First Designated COVID Hospital in Gujarat during First Wave: A Lesson for Future

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Abstract

Background: Coronavirus disease 2019 is an infectious disease caused by Severe Acute Respiratory CoronaVirus-2. Compared to severe/hospitalized patients, mild symptomatic patients and asymptomatic contacts are more dangerous to the community for spreading this disease. Hence it is very necessary to assess their mask wearing behavior to reduce the burden of disease on the health system. **Method:** This mobile based cross-sectional study was conducted among visitors of corona OPD at 1st designated covid-19 hospital, Gujarat, three months after their visit to corona OPD. The patients were asked if they were wearing masks and maintaining social distancing and washing their hands after returning home. Average 10% of visitors were selected by systematic random sampling method among the daily cases registered at Corona OPD during the first wave April-July 2020. **Results:** Adherence to social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing were 70.7%, 87.7% and 84.2% respectively in visitors. More asymptomatic than symptomatic visitors (90.3% v/s 87.5%) adhered to mask wearing. Among those who did not adhere to mask wearing, 22.4% had one or more co-morbid conditions and 15.4% reported similar symptoms in their family within one incubation period. **Conclusion:** Out of total patients 272(87.7%) of visitors adhered to “mask wearing” behavior. There is a need to convert this compelled covid appropriate behavior into habit and practice by periodic health education during a new wave of pandemic. This will reduce the burden of this disease in terms of morbidity, hospitalization and mortality in future.

Key words: adherence, COVID -1, mask wearing