

COVID 19, the Unseen Battle: Are we Ready for it

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The world is witnessing an eminent condition which had never been encountered so far, since last century with the advent of the technology and advancement, it was barely rare to see such a pandemic. It has been a new, unique and challenging condition for the whole world including Science. China being the technology king and one of the developed countries, had combat it with grace and courage. The registered cases in China are 81,177 with 3,277 mortality rate is 4.03. Italy has been affected the second most country with registered cases of 63,927 with 6,077 mortality rate is 9.05. Spain being the third country with high mortality rate is 6.08 with registered cases 39,637 with 2,696 deaths. Iran has had a hard hit with deaths of 1,934 out of 24,811 confirmed cases and mortality rate is 7.79. The overall global count for the cases is 393,354 with 17,164 death tolls [1]. The overall mortality rate is 4.36 but all of these are developed and highly technologically advanced countries.

Pakistan being an underdeveloped country and lack of public health care facilities, the first case was reported in 26 February 2020 and it is increasing exponentially. Government has taken substantial measurements and Quarantine has been established in major emergency centers and the lessons from China has been taken seriously. Flight operations were banned since March 21, 2020. As per experience of the rest of the world the condition will become more serious in about 15 - 20 days. The rate of mortality till now is 7, however many are hospitalized.

Karachi is the largest and cosmopolitan city of Pakistan has registered total 147 cases until now with distribution of these cases as per district wise is shown in figure 2. However, the major affected areas are Saddar and Gulshan e Iqbal are well in socio economic condition than the other areas.

Zhao., *et al.* 2019 has conducted study on 1,775 COVID patient with respect to ABO blood group of 3694 normal people in Wuhan showed a distribution of 32.16%, 24.90%, 9.10% and 33.84% for A, B, AB and O, respectively, versus the distribution of 37.75%, 26.42%, 10.03% and 25.80% for A, B, AB and O, respectively from Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital [2]. The proportion of blood group A and

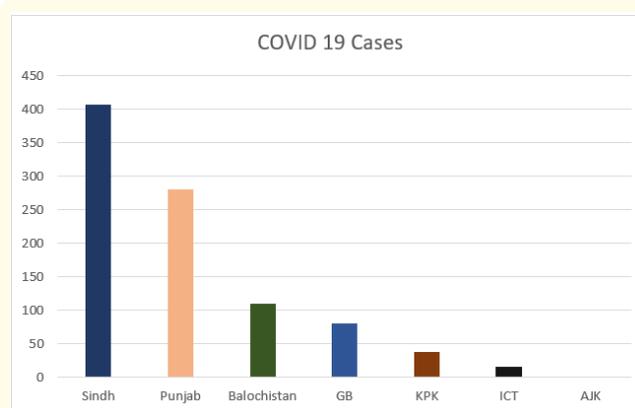


Figure 1: The number of confirmed COVID 19 cases as per 24 Mar, 2020 in Pakistan.

Figure 2

O in COVID-19 patients were significantly higher and lower, respectively, than that in normal people. It can be suggested that individuals with A group are more likely to get infection because the antigen at red blood cells are closer to the COVID 19 virus than other and as O group lack antigens, so it is less infected.

According to another study, Ahmed., *et al.* 2019 conducted a research on 3521 subjects from Karachi revealed that 1253 (35.6%) had blood group O, 1167 (33.1%) group B, 849 (24.1%) group A

and 252 (7.2%) had group AB. Also, 3209 (91.1%) were Rhesus-positive and 312 (8.9%) Rhesus-negative. Blood group O-positive was predominant in Balochi 381 (41%), Urdu speaking 197 (36%), Sindhi 147 (38%), Hindko 39 (44%) and Seraiki 14 (43.8%) groups, while B-positive was common among Pathan 207 (35%), Punjabi 116 (35%), Kacchi 123 (37%), Memon 79 (37%) and Bengali 20 (36%) groups. O positive was the most common and AB negative was the least common blood groups among different ethnic populations of Karachi [3]. These two studies can be concluded that if there is any relationship of COVID-19 susceptibility to ABO blood group than it is less likely to be less severe in Karachi population as 68.7% had O positive and B positive blood group. Apparently, this seem a good sign and positive situation for this disease. The government is also taking strong measurement to control the spread, contained the susceptible cases, establishing quarantines and providing other health care facility. The lockdown is assured in the whole country with proper implication. The new equipment, diagnostic kits and safety kits are imported from other countries, new ventilators are also in pipelines to get delivered.

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