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Letter to Editor

Why is COVID-19 rising in summer?

Dear Editor,

Good afternoon.

I was thinking about why there is a surge in the number of Covid-19 cases with the summer. I am presenting my hypothesis here.

When the epidemic started gaining steam in India last year around March, it was thought that with rising temperatures the epidemic is going to be naturally controlled. The virus may not be able to sustain the high tropical temperatures and transmission will be averted. Later on, it was also contemplated and vehemently endorsed by public health and other media favorite authorities that the epidemic will escalate during the rainy season and worsen in the winters. What we saw was exactly opposite of what was considered logical. Why did this happen?

I feel the heat factor and the dry air are responsible for the acceleration during the summer. It has been understood that the virus spreads in droplets. If you protect yourself from the droplets by wearing masks, especially the N-95 etc. you have excellent chances of remaining infection free. The droplets are not supposed to be crossing 2 m and safe distancing was an additional protective measure. Now with the rising temperature and no rains the air is not humid. The droplets suspended in the air are drying up quickly, losing weight, becoming smaller and able to keep floating in the air for a longer time. Because of drying up in the hot and less humid air their size become smaller and they are now able to cross the barrier of commonly used masks [1,2]. In fact, the scenario is appalling. The masks are very wrongly used by people belonging to all classes including the highly educated segment. This certainly is providing

a merry time to the virus. The virus is jumping from person to person, far more easily, compared to the humid or cold season. **Has the infection become airborne from a droplet infection?**

What we are seeing this time is that a number of family members or neighbors in the apartments are catching the infection. Several apartments have a very large number of COVID-19 cases – may be sharing closed spaces like lifts could be the factor. We need to go back to the “**Old Normal**” now. Strict mask etiquettes, frequent hand washing, use of soap and sanitizers, avoiding public contact, no public gatherings, no ceremonies, no political rallies, no religious aggregations etc.

May the commonsense prevail ... !



References

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