

**Investigation of Epidemiological Characteristics
of < 18-Year-Old Patients with Covid-19 in a City**

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Background:

After the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) became a pandemic, the World Health Organization declared it to be a

public health emergency. The population aged >of 18 years in Bingol province is 72766 and constitutes 25.8% of the entire population. This study aimed to examine the epidemiological characteristics of <18-year-old patients with COVID-19 in Bingol Province.

Methods:

In this study 1431 people aged <18 who tested positive on reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 in Bingol province between March and December 2020 were studied. The necessary institutional permission and ethics committee approval were obtained to conduct the study. The independent variables of the study were age, gender and place of residence, whereas the dependent variable was the development of pneumonia. Descriptive data were expressed as numbers and percentages, and Chi-Square test was used for statistical analysis. $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results:

The median age of the study patients was 14 (0-17) years. Of the patients, 99.8% did not have any comorbidity and 96% presented with a good clinical condition. Of the patients, 91.1% were home-isolated and 6.9% developed pneumonia. Pneumonia developed at significantly higher rate in the age groups of 0-4 and 5-9 years compared with other age groups ($p = 0.004$). There was no significant difference in the development of pneumonia according to gender and comorbidity ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusions:

The rate of pneumonia development was low in the study group. The clinical condition of most of the patients was good, and they isolated at home. Pneumonia developed at a higher rate in younger patients.

Key messages:

- COVID-19 has a milder prognosis in patients aged <18 years.
- Among the patients aged <18 years, pneumonia develops at a higher rate in younger patients.