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321P Impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on adherence to treatment schedule among cancer patients

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Background: The COVID-19 pandemic, detected first in December 2019, has led to four lakh deaths and close to 12 million being infected. It has led to disruption in mobility and access to healthcare due to measures such as social distancing and lockdown. Due to the infection, patients had difficulty to access transport facilities, interstate travel and obtaining permissions from authorities. All these factors led them not to adhere to their fixed appointments leading to an impact on outcome. Hence, with a collaborative effort from Oncologists and nursing staff, we explored the impact of COVID-19 and the lockdown on adherence to treatment among Cancer patients.

Methods: From April 1 to June 30, 2020, patient information was collected at the Day Care Unit, in the Department of Medical Oncology and Haematology at the American Oncology Institute, Serilingampally, Hyderabad, India. Patients with delay in treatment for more than 7 days were identified and followed up. Length of delay of treatment was recorded. All patients gave their informed consent for the study.

Results: A total of 737 patients underwent treatment. Number of patients who received treatment as per schedule were 656 (89%). Eighty-one patients out of a total of 737 (11%) during the 3-month COVID-19 period had treatment delays. Of these most treatment delays were due to fear of COVID infection (50.6%), followed by medical delays (26%) and transport and travel issues (23.4%). Impact of COVID per se on treatment delays was as low as 8%. A delay of 3-7 days is usually acceptable for re-initiating chemotherapy, to allow clinical and count recovery. Any delay beyond 7 days was considered nonadherence to treatment schedule. Most delays were shorter, less than 14 days (68%). Most of the delays were in the elderly age group (more than 50 years). Among patients missing their schedule, those more than 50 years and less than 50 years were 75 and 6 patients respectively. This was assessed in view of the increased mortality due to COVID in elderly patients.

Conclusions: Despite the pandemic and subsequent nationwide lockdown, treatment nonadherence due to COVID-19 was low, short and mostly seen in the elderly group. Cancer patients tend to continue treatment despite the COVID crises, and this requires validation in a longitudinal cohort.

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322P Challenged faced by cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has affected more than ten million people worldwide with nearly four lakh deaths. Cancer patients requiring continuum of care are facing difficulty accessing healthcare. Due to the risk of infection with COVID-19, their treatments have been rescheduled, elective procedures postponed, intravenous chemotherapies transitioned to oral medications, where possible, maintenance therapies deferred, and supportive care administered at home. Hence, we conducted a survey from the hospital patient registry to provide critical, up-to-date information about the impact of COVID-19 on cancer patients.

Methods: Patients taking treatment in the Department of Medical Oncology and Haematology at the American Oncology Institute, Hyderabad were given an online questionnaire upon consent. Details included age, cancer type, disease stage, treatment phase, delay in hospital appointment, procuring essential drugs including pain medicine, investigations, average time delay, impact on mental health, interpersonal relationship, deferring treatment due to personal reasons, and concern of Nearest other questions. Survey is also available in the local language besides English.

Results: A total of 200 participants participated in the survey with majority in the age group of 26-75 years (95.5%), 60% being female and the commonest cancers being breast (22%) and lung (16.5%) respectively. Most of the patients receiving chemotherapy and immunotherapy were 58% and 3.9% with most being stage 3 (29%) and 4 (48.5%). Treatment delays were faced by 32% for various reasons while mental health impact in 67% patients. Majority of the patients expressing being at higher risk from COVID-19, with 35.8% agreeing upon continuation of chemotherapy and 66% preferring transition from injectable to oral medication. Forty-five percent were aware of COVID-19 prophylaxis, while 85% discussed continuation or deferring treatment with their respective care giver.

Conclusions: This survey was a cooperative effort across many physicians, nurses and patients to provide critical, up-to-date information about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cancer patients. Completing this short 10-minute survey or questionnaire will help health care to identify COVID-19 related issues in the community.

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323P Oncology care in the Republic of Kazakhstan during COVID-19

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Background: The new pandemic SARS-CoV-19 requires a new strategy in the oncology care in all over the world. Kazakhstan, with a population of 18.2 million, is a first country that re-introduced restrictions due to an increased level of the infected population. According to new rules, all admissions to the oncology hospitals and special care are based on negative RT-PCR tests and with no radiological evidence of pneumonia.

Methods: Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection with clinical symptoms are treated in accordance with the National Guidelines of the COVID-19 management by Joint Commission on Quality of Health Services, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan. For these patients, special oncology treatment should be postponed. Special care of the SARS-CoV-2 patients is provided in infectious hospitals. As for July 21, there are 71,838 of the COVID-19 cases registered in Kazakhstan, put of which 3,585 are mortal ones. According to the National Cancer Register, there are 187,856 cancer patients in Kazakhstan. In order to evaluate the number of the oncological patients with COVID-19, we received data from the National Electronic Database in the period from March 2020 to July 2020.

Results: The total number of the infected cancer patients is 178 and it varies in different regions. The majority of the cases are registered in the Karaganda region with 43 cancer patients (24%), Nur-Sultan city - 19 cases (10.6%), and the Kostanay region - 16 cases (9%) with the total numbers of the COVID-19 infected population in these regions of 7,401; 8,832 and 2,071 cases respectively. Overall in Kazakhstan, the total number of the deceased from COVID-19 patients with cancer registered is 14. In the Karaganda region there are 6 deceased patients, 2 - in Kostanay, 2 - in Kyzyl-Orda, and 2 - in the North-Kazakhstan regions.

Conclusions: We consider all the cancer patients as a risk group, due to the COVID-19 infection, however, we stratified patients with cancer into three following categories: patients who require immediate special treatment; patients, to whom special...