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Letter to the Editor

Face masks are new normal after COVID-19 pandemic∗

ABSTRACT

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that may cause illness in humans as well as in animals. In humans, coronaviruses cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). To combat this disease; various Nations have adopted many strategies across the globe. The present paper discuss the role and status of various countries related to wearing of masks by the public, as a crucial measure to minimize the spared of virus. Almost all the countries across the globe have favor the use of masks in public with several other measures. Thus, the use of masks in public is an important health measure and new normal after COVID-19 pandemic.

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Dear Editor,

COVID-19 continues to spread and now affecting more than 200 countries and territories across the globe. The scientific communities worldwide have searched for solutions to minimize the spread of the disease with a big push for vaccine and associated medical research using modern technologies [1–5]. Different researchers/technologists/scientists have carried out various studies on the use of masks to minimize disease spread. One such study is known as the Light-scattering experiment that has been carried out by the researchers from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In this experiment, researchers have used lasers to illuminate the droplets and counted them. They further identified numbers of saliva droplets flung into the air by a person with and without a face mask [6]. This study depicts that droplets spread this virus. We can see directly that a piece of cloth blocks those droplets. People without symptoms who do not even know they are sick are responsible for around half of the transmission of the COVID-19. This research suggests that transmission of COVID-19 by asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals. These studies emphasize that people can spread the virus before realizing that they are sick and that wearing a public mask could help keep the infected person from spreading infectious droplets.

Several types of face masks emphasizing commonly available medical or homemade masks for general public use and N95 masks for health care professionals are suggested by WHO as prevention measures towards the virus’s spread. N95 masks have the ability to filter 95% or more of tiny 0.3-μm particles. Cloth masks filtered viral particles during coughing at about 50–100% of the filtration efficiency of surgical masks [7,8]. With the connection of virus spread prevention, Venezuela was among the first countries to impose the mandatory use of face masks in public. More than 100 countries, including India, require people to cover their faces when they leave home as preventive action against COVID-19.

Countries have already announced the instructions/guidelines/advice regarding the use of masks. They are legally implementing the wearing of masks in a public place for their people to minimize the spread of the virus. Thus, mask-wearing in a public place seems one of the most effective ways to stop the spread of the virus when compliance is high. Such prevention activity can help to minimize the spread of the disease in a large population. Table 1 relates to various guidelines, but it is not comprehensive. Thus, we have provided a short description to help the readers understand the importance of wearing masks as a new normal afterwards, the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government guidelines and various strategies are supporting the wearing of masks by the public, as well as other measures are well extremely crucial to minimize the spared of the virus. Several countries in Asia, like Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, etc. adopted mandatory usage of masks during the early phase of the outbreak, leading to a low mortality rate. Thus, the use of masks in public is an important health measure and can become a new normal after COVID-19 pandemic.

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Google Scholar link: https://scholar.google.co.in/citations?user=rfjiwvAAAAAA&hl=en.
Declarations of competing interest

None.

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