

COVID-19 and LIVER DISEASES: Pandemic, Epidemic and Endemic

The year of 2020 has been remarkable from various points, both aspiring and disappointing. On one hand, the entire world has been shattered by a pandemic of complex nature (Coronavirus diseases, COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Two members of this virus have caused devastating infectious diseases SARS and MERS at the onset of 21st century. The disease, COVID-19, has maintained its pandemic potentials for almost last one year and caused more than 60 million confirmed infections with about 1.5 million deaths. After employing several restrictions including complete or partial blockade of human nature, the COVID-19 pandemic remains to be eradicated, controlled or minimized. Among these atmospheres of gloomy pictures regarding public health emergencies, the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine of 2020 has been awarded jointly to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton and Charles M. Rice “for the discovery of Hepatitis C (HCV) virus.”

The journal, Euroasian Journal of Hepato-Gastroenterology (EJOHG), is a partner dedicated to work for containment of hepatitis viruses, especially hepatitis C virus and hepatitis B viruses (HBV). We naturally feel proud of scientific achievement of three scientists for accepting the Nobel Prize. However, we would not forget the works of several other scientists who worked for elucidation of all relevant facts about HCV those paved the way for the Nobel Prize for discovering HCV.

The emergence of COVID-19 has tremendously influenced the activities of the Program of Elimination of Hepatitis by 2030, a program of international “Sustainable Development Goal (SGD)”. This is the time when various disciplines of medical sciences should completely concentrate on searching of patients with chronic liver diseases and ensuring their treatment. Unfortunately, the management of patients with liver disease has tremendously been hampered due to the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19.

SARS-CoV-2 influences the course of hepatitis negatively and definitely would influence vaccination program for HBV and management of patients with chronic liver diseases. These facts indicate that all hepatologists should have a clear idea as what SARS-CoV-2 can do in patients with liver diseases and how that can be minimized. As this journal is dedicated to transmit information regarding gastroenterology and liver pathologies to scientific community of mostly developing and resource-constrained countries, we have accepted some articles about management of COVID-19 in this issue as done in the last issue. The major challenges regarding association of COVID-19 and Hepato-Gastroenterology would progress by elucidation of mechanisms of tropism of SARS-CoV-2 in the liver. Also, critical insights are required regarding the pros and cons of antiviral drugs those were developed for other microbes, but have been extensively used in COVID-19 patients without proper guidelines. Innovation of new, novel and evidence-based therapy against COVID-19 remains another challenge.

The present issue of EJOHG is the last issue of its decade long journey that started in 2011. From the next issue, we hope to make some new additions and alterations in the journal. However, the effect of COVID-19 may delay these approaches.

Publication of journal was a difficult task during COVID-19 era, but the spirit and euthanistic approaches of all related to journal made it possible to publish the journal on time. Especially, the publisher and their associates made excellent works even in India, a country having more than 9 million COVID-19 patients and 135,000 deaths. In fact, science must move faster and faster during pandemic and emergencies and we are committed to make it done even with all adversities.

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