

Mucormycosis & Covid-19: Need of an hour to implement quaternary prevention

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INTRODUCTION:

We all are aware of the proverb “prevention is better than cure.” The present need of the time is to implement the same in our practice. Prevention is categorized into five groups includes Primordial, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary & Quaternary prevention. The quaternary prevention is comparatively a new concept introduced to the world in the year 1995 by Jamouille M, Roland M in a Paper presented at the Hong-Kong Meeting of the Wonca Classification Committee.¹ The meaning of quaternary prevention is “action is taken to identify patient at risk of over-medicalization, to protect him from new medical invasion, and to suggest him interventions ethically acceptable.”²

In the present ongoing pandemic of the Covid-19, a rare mould infection is spreading rapidly amongst the patients suffering from the Covid-19, specifically the one with the co-morbidity such as diabetes mellitus. The other factors which may be responsible for its spread are overzealous use of steroids, prolong hospitalization & compromised immunity, etc.³ The prevalence of mucormycosis in India is about 80 times the prevalence in developed countries, being approximately 0.14 cases per 1000 population.⁴ The mucorals are ubiquitous moulds found in the hospital air due to predominantly hot & humid conditions. An important virulence trait of Mucorales is the ability to acquire iron from the host, which is an essential element for its growth; in addition to this, corticosteroids can amplify the situation by causing hyperglycemia and by the immune suppressant effect.⁵ The exact reasons are sufficient to

make the host susceptible to mucormycosis. The incidences of such cases are increasing during the second wave of Covid-19 in several parts of the countries.^{6,7}

The reason above is the demand of time to look after the quaternary prevention in the present fight with the ongoing pandemic and protect the patients from the life-threatening diseases arising from over medicalization.

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