

Covid-19 Pandemic leading to development of psychosis: a case report

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I. Introduction

The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak started in China in December 2019, and by March 2020 had spread across the globe. The COVID-19 outbreak may profoundly impact population mental health because of exposure to substantial psychosocial stress (Brown et al., 2020). It affected almost everybody and so many ways. Social distancing and other public health interventions to combat the spread of COVID-19 may have immediate and longer-term effects on people with, or who are at risk of psychosis.

The classical concept of reactive psychosis, also known as psychogenic psychosis, encompasses a set of acute onset and short-lived psychotic conditions triggered by psychological trauma. This nosological entity as well as other traditional descriptions, such as bouffée délirante, cycloid psychosis or atypical psychosis, have limited validity and do not constitute independent diagnostic categories in modern psychiatric classifications. However, reactive psychoses are subsumed in the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) under the category, “acute and transient psychotic disorders” (ATPD) with the specifier ‘with associated acute stress’ (F23.x1), and in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), under the category “brief psychotic disorder” (BPD; 298.8) with the specifier “with marked stressor(s)”.

II. Case Presentation

The patient is a 38 year old women, brought to the outpatient clinic in a psychiatric hospital by her family members with total duration of illness 1 month, characterized by excessive fearfulness that she might have Covid-19 infection because of others. She also having smelling bad odour, refused to go outside, hearing voice that people are repeatedly telling her that she has corona infection but not heard by others.

The patient was working in the tea garden, then one day she didn't want to go to the work. On asking she replied that, she might have corona infection and so if she would go, other people might get infected. Whenever, she would saw news of corona infection she got fearful and stop watching the Television. Thereafter, most of the time she would sit alone at home. Used to say, the bad smell is coming out from the nose and mouth. She has corona infection because of that the bad smell is coming out. Despite the explanation of typical symptoms of Covid-19 infection, she strongly believes it. Moreover, she says the peoples are talking about me about my illness. That's why I didn't went to tea garden. Informant also added that she even does not allow anyone to touch her body. For last 7 days she also saying some unknown voice disturbing her, talking about her illness, however the person is not visible to her.

Her biological functions impaired. Decreased the work function. Decreased food intake. We started tablet olanzapine 10mg on OPD basis as well as psychoeducation about the illness. It has shown a significant improvement after 2 weeks of treatment.

III. Discussion

There has been considerable media speculation about how COVID-19 will impact global mental health. The impact on those experiencing more severe and enduring mental illnesses, such as psychosis particularly vulnerable individuals being at the highest risk (Druss, 2020). Other authors have reported cases similar to ours, and it is likely that this could be a generalized phenomenon in countries severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic (Zulkifli et al., 2020). Imposed home confinement restricts the freedom, routines and rhythm of conventional life and involves forced separation from family and friends that causes an increase in uncertainty about the unknown, as well as an overall feeling of loss of control. The fear of stigmatization and financial loss may substantially enhance this emotional distress in the population. Moreover, in today's age of digital information and social networks, the proliferation of fake news and conspiracy would contribute even further to increasing worry and social alarm.

IV. Conclusion

We conclude that the current COVID- 19 pandemic, the mandatory nationwide quarantine, proliferation of fake news to control spread of the virus constitute a substantial psychological stress for the development of reactive psychoses among the vulnerable population.

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