



INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (HQs.)

(Registered under the Societies Act XXI of 1860)
Mutually Affiliated with the British & Nepal Medical Associations
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Press Release

10.03.2020
New Delhi

IMA appeals to halt the panic epidemic

INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION appeals to the nation to stop the panic reactions on corona epidemic. This epidemic by no means is a situation which has not been faced earlier. SARS 1, Swine flu, Nipah etc were on the same scale and considerable experience tells us that awareness, self precautions, contact tracing and self isolation are the Public Health measures required. Hand washing has emerged as the simple tool to fight the community spread. Easy and universal, the practice of thorough hand washing with soap and water is perhaps the only way to stop the corona epidemic. Masks for symptomless common people is not warranted. Healthcare workers and people with symptoms and possibility of droplet infection need to wear masks.

IMA appeals to the Government to classify the data of the epidemic and take appropriate action with clinical precision. Sharing of data on daily basis with the public who are clueless as to what is expected out of them, has created the panic across the country.

Doctors and Health care personnel have responded with diligence and responsibility. Hospitals are open and functioning. Doctors and hospitals remain a silver lining in otherwise clueless situation for the common man. IMA appeals to every doctor to function as a source of credible information in their locality and instil confidence and trust.

It cannot be denied that the high handed top down response in China is part of the reason for this global panic. The nuanced and balanced approach of the Indian Government is certainly better suited to handle the crisis in a country of 1.3 billion people. The Public Health systems in various states have withstood the pressure and have to remain alert. Contact tracing is the key public health function that will make a difference.

Protect the Single and Couple Doctors Setup

All communications intended for headquarters office should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary General



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Indian Press and visual media have a big role in de escalating the panic. Their restraint and objectivity will save the day. Unbridled social media is both an asset and liability. However the Central Government has adequate powers to curtail disinformation and should use the same judiciously.

1. Self Hygiene: wash your hands with soap and water as often as deemed necessary.
2. Self restraint: Do not post unconfirmed negative messages and pseudoscientific dogmas.
3. Self isolation: Self isolation was our survival strategy in yesteryears against waves of smallpox. If you are symptomatic with fever and cough isolate yourself at home.

IMA works in consonance with the Health authorities in all states. IMA has updated the doctors in all its branches across the country. IMA is in advanced state of preparations for a 24X7 Helpline for the public in Hindi and English. The details will be in public domain shortly.

IMA is organising a National Workshop (both live and in web)on Saturday 14.03.2020 at IMA Hqs, New Delhi for its members. IMA also request the Government to utilise COVID-19 opportunity to track cases of Tuberculosis and also to include hand hygiene in Swachh Bharat programme.

Let us work together as a nation to redeem our people. Let each one of us contribute to de escalate the panic across the country.

Dr Rajan Sharma
National President IMA

Dr R V Asokan
Hony Secretary General IMA

Dr K K Aggarwal
IMA Resource Person