**Fighting Covid-19 against all odds**

[Haya Fatima Sehgal](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/haya-fatima-sehgal/)

November 15, 2020

Getting a Covid-19 positive result initially astounds you for a few seconds. Even if we know that the entire world that has suffered for months and we read about it daily, it still gives you a jolt. Although we knew people who had passed away of it, until it hits your own home, it is very difficult to actually understand the horror of it all. It’s a sinking feeling and nothing that people can say or do can make you feel better. When it is a loved one, that feeling is even worse.

When I asked my mother who had told us to take an antibiotics course in our loved one’s case, she said simply that everybody was recommending it. I wanted to understand a little more because the answer “everybody was recommending it” was not enough for me. I tried to get as much information as possible through a doctor especially somebody who had dealt with Covid-19 patients. He patiently explained the rapidity of how the virus works and the onset of complications that arise. Of course, the precautions taken here were mainly for the signs of infection. Most patients are quarantined in a hospital so they could be monitored closely. Plus, there is the question of isolation. However, our relative was allowed to quarantine at home officially as initially there were no symptoms that were bad- at first.

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As the fever refused to subside for days on end, going past the set amount of time which was considered normal, there was certainly some worry. The crux of the matter once solved was that the patient had over-exerted his body by trying to proceed as was their regular routine. He decided to “beat Covid” by continuing working. All isolated, away from people and in an empty room, true enough, but the mere act of trying to work; getting up, getting dressed, trying to act normal in the state of being diagnosed with something the world couldn’t beat, was really pushing the limits. The exertion of it all suddenly accelerated the symptoms. It not only prolonged things but also complicated matters. This routine was missed initially by both the head of the Covid-19 unit at a prestigious hospital as well as the head of infectious diseases. Nobody thought a patient diagnosed positive would try to proceed with keeping routine instead of immediate bed rest. When I called up the doctor, they told me that was possibly why the symptoms were going haywire. The rest and the monitoring of the vitals was key to the process of healing especially in this case. If there is a need to hospitalize then hospitalize. I am glad that the doctors and medical teams here seem to very knowledgeable and are ready with advice and assistance.

He also said a few words that got me out of a stupor; that Covid-19 was not to be treated like a regular flu. As people, we know that data on the novel coronavirus is everywhere in terms of articles and updates. We even write or talk about it quite often but what we as humans miss out on is the need to understand the gravity of the situation and how serious this gets.

There is a second wave which is already here. And to keep safe we must use our intelligence especially in times like these. Not just for the general public but it is also important for the caregivers and family of anybody diagnosed with the disease to understand this. The patient is usually at a point of being helpless due to a weakened state but we must make sound decisions that could possibly save their lives. For those around, the key is to remain vigilant day and night watching for the symptoms to go up or down. It is called the silent killer or the invisible enemy for a reason. Patients have been known from being diagnosed and gone within 24 hours. Yes, we have a lot more information on it than before, but we do not know what turn it will suddenly take from person to person.

We are hopeful the vaccine will come out soon. This week Pfizer announces one with a success rate of 90% – tomorrow it maybe another. By the time the article is published, we pray that we get even better news. Each day is a new day to battle in a Covid-19 ridden world.

For whoever who is reading this; Covid-19 is not a routine flu which you can conquer. For those diagnosed, each time you think you feel better and go walking around even if it is within your home, you will fail under the assumption. The days in isolation and quarantine are very important. These are those crucial moments to take care. One thing is sure that when it attacks and overpowers, it does so with stealth. As the doctor I spoke to said, the cure is in letting the body rest; to heal, to let the virus run its course yes. However, by always carefully looking over the test results, checking vitals every few hours and by monitoring the symptoms.

As we wait, I have no idea what the future will bring for our family. I’m afraid of the next few weeks as I understand that the symptoms of our loved one are at a crucial stage right now. But I would implore others that until the vaccine is here to please take precautions. These are not just mere words we have been tuned in to hear, now making them seem redundant. Avoid the crowds, the weddings, the meetups and the dinners. Even that travel if it is not essential. At least until we get the vaccine. We must be careful, for us and for others. One cannot stop what is inevitable. I understand that. But that is not faith. Faith is being careful about things especially considering the gift of life. It is like the old saying we keep hearing to “tie up your camel”. It means that lock your doors then walk away having faith that things will be alright. Therefore, one needs to take all the precautions one can. Even after you get the novel coronavirus, one is not scot free. We have heard of people reporting getting it twice. Many who have had the virus have known how it weakens the body causing other complications. Everyday data on this is developing and updating itself. I hope the vaccine will be distributed soon and is affordable and accessible to the entire world. Faith must go side by side with intelligence in our will to survive. But the one thing which we cannot do is fight the novel coronavirus as if it is a routine illness against the odds we are facing.

*The writer is known for her articles covering socio-cultural impact*