

Dear Friends in Manila and Philippines,

Greetings from India.

Our Planet is facing a unique and unprecedented medical crisis like we have never faced before in our entire lifetime. The last time the planet faced a pandemic involving all borders was about 100 years back and it had devastating complications (The Spanish Flu in 1917-18). We have moved on since then and we made a lot of scientific progress in the field of medicine and communications. We have to tackle this pandemic with a combination of science and faith.

I am not an expert in infectious diseases, global health or Obstetrics and I don't have much personal experience in handling the COVID crisis. However, as a healthcare professional following this pandemic and the scientific data emerging I can suggest 3 approaches we can all follow in our hospital based practice to ensure safety of everyone.

1. **Patient care:** It's important to screen all incoming patients for all high-risk features like travel history, symptoms of flu and possible contact. If so, such patients need to be evaluated separately according to the guidelines for testing for COVID 19. In some places, hospitals have been designated as COVID and NON-COVID; if that's not feasible, within the same hospital separate locations for evaluating COVID suspect cases may be considered.
2. **Personnel protection:** Healthcare professionals are at the highest risk for getting infected and hence we need to consciously follow the guidelines for our personnel protection. We should familiarize ourselves with various types of PPEs and check availability of these in our hospitals. In many hospitals, healthcare workers and medical personnel have started working in shifts in order to reduce simultaneous exposure of all personnel. We should also ensure safety of our beloved ones at home by following all the recommended precautions before we go back to our homes.
3. **Review of the scientific data and using technology for novel benefits:** This is where our generation may have an advantage over the last pandemic 100 years back. A lot of new information about COVID 19 are being constantly updated in the web including guidelines for each specialty. A team amongst you constantly review this and you should formulate your own

guidelines and SOPs. Modern technology may also be using to create PPEs using locally available material in large numbers.

I wish you all a very safe existence in these difficult times. It's a time when we need to combine both Science and faith in order to save humanity from the danger we all are facing. Let's all support each other and fight this together. God Bless all of you.

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