

Letter to Editor

Significance of Forensic Medicine in the COVID-19 Pandemic

With great interest, I read the article *Influence and challenges of COVID-19 in forensic Identification* by the authors, Bin Cong and Xin Liu, published on August 5, 2020.^[1]

In the above-quoted article, they have explained the challenges faced by professionals in the field of forensic community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 is a serious challenge in this century with high infectivity, morbidity, and mortality rate. COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone's life.^[2] During the pandemic, there is severe hike in the number of deaths, out of which many, etiology of deaths remains unclear. The forensic community plays an important role in identifying the cause of deaths. The autopsies performed by the forensic experts give considerable results pertaining to COVID-19. The normal airway mucous is composed of epithelial goblet cells and seromucosal gland secretions, whereas the histopathological finding reveals that the lungs of COVID-19-affected individual exhibit inflammatory and compositional changes. Increase in production and secretion of mucous is seen. There are also increased levels of sulfation and glycosylation, which in turn increases acidic glycoprotein content. Therefore, the viscosity is higher and difficult to remove mucous from airway. Accumulation of mucous causes obstruction of the airway and is a good medium for bacterial growth.^[3]

COVID-19 is highly infectious. Forensic physicians have intimate contact while performing autopsies and are at high risk when the cause of death is unclear as the descended person can be a pathogenic carrier too.

Following precautions can be carried out to minimize the risk of transmission:

- To educate the forensic practitioners on risk factors, transmission, and prevention of COVID-19
- To perform the procedures with personal protection
- To strengthen the research field of forensic in risk factors of COVID-19 its prevention and management.

According to the above-mentioned article, it concludes that autopsies play a vital role in assessing unnatural deaths during this COVID-19 pandemic and also care needs to be taken to prevent the spread of infection among the forensic professionals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the Department of Oral Medicine, Radiology and Special Care Dentistry, Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, for giving me this opportunity.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP

Nil.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest.

MR. Visalachi

From the Department of Oral Medicine, Radiology and Special Care Dentistry, Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Received: 21 November, 2021.

Revised: 22 November, 2021.

Accepted: 29 November 2021.

Published: 24 December, 2021.

Address for correspondence:

Dr. MR. Visalachi,
E-mail: visalachi26@gmail.com

REFERENCES

1. Cong, Bin & Liu, Xin. Influence and challenge of COVID-19 in forensic identification. *Journal of Forensic Science and Medicine*. 2020;6:50. DOI: 10.4103/jfsm.jfsm_32_20.
2. Parekh U, Chariot P, Dang C, Stray-Pedersen A, Druid H, Sajantila A. A roadmap to the safe practice of forensic medicine in the COVID-19 pandemic. *J Forensic Leg Med* 2020;76:102036.
3. Stefania Z, Ginevra M, Elvira VS, Antonina A. COVID-19: A new challenge for forensic medicine. *Med Leg J* 2020;88:104-5.

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: www.ijfo.org
	DOI: 10.4103/ijfo.ijfo_25_21

How to cite this article: Visalachi MR. Significance of forensic medicine in the COVID-19 pandemic. *Int J Forensic Odontol* 2021;6:128.