

# Editorial

## COVID – 19: Challenges for the Dermatologists.

It has been a difficult year, the Corona pandemic has absolutely changed the social, economic and overall global harmony and the crisis crippled all of us. Newer challenges have evolved and is more confronting the health personnel, dermatologists are not being escaped anyhow. On the changed situation, the first issue of Journal of Bangladesh Academy of Dermatology (JBAD) is going to be published. It has been about one year since the appearance of novel Corona virus, severe acute respiratory corona virus 2(SARS-COV-2) was identified and the pandemic of a respiratory disease named Corona virus disease or COVID – 19 attacked with its global storm.<sup>1</sup> Though its fatality is low but transmissibility is high comparing to SARS 2003.<sup>2</sup> Till today, (21-11-2020) globally 56,623,643 confirmed cases of COVID 19 have been identified including 1,355,963 deaths.<sup>3</sup> This virus is not dermatotropic and during the early part of its manifestation cutaneous involvement and its importance was not highlighted. It may be due to its high level of transmissibility and potential to fatality dermatological manifestations were relatively ignored. Overall the symptoms and signs of Covid-19 infection are bizarre and newer clinical features are being discovered. In a survey over 1099 patients with laboratory confirmed cases of corona from 552 hospitals in 30 provinces of China during December 2019 and January 2020 by Guan et al revealed only 0.2% had skin lesions.<sup>4</sup> The estimated prevalence of skin lesions in an Italian cross sectional study was 20.4%.<sup>5</sup> In different clinical studies many patterns of skin manifestations have been reported including maculopapular eruptions, urticarial lesions, pseudo – chilblain, vesicular eruption, livedo and necrosis.<sup>6</sup> In this situation it becomes the dermatologists responsibly to become well concerned about the cutaneous lesions which can give clue for early diagnosis in some cases and so help spread of infection. Another issue the dermatologists have already encountered is the appearance of certain rash or dermatitis associated with the use of gloves, face mask, and other personal protective equipment, soap, detergents and sanitizers. Dermatologists should have to even rethink

prescribing the immunosuppressive drugs and continue the previous ongoing immunosuppressive agents. COVID - 19 has opened newer dimensions of reality – online classes, teledermatology and webinar based conferences and meetings which can be practiced even after the corona is over to minimize traffic jams and curtail the cost. If the pandemic persists for an indefinite period, the dermatologists should have to be competent enough to diagnose and manage the early and uncomplicated COVID 19 positive cases.

Another challenge is the interruption in ongoing academic activities. Timely completion of different courses, intensive training programs and examinations become uncertain. The so called second wave threatens of making everything difficult. Hopefully several vaccines are on the way and we are expecting the best to come. Allocating more time and putting more endeavors may minimize the loss once pandemic situation is over or under control.

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