



## COVID-19: Defeating the Pandemic

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As we usher in the new year, we reflect upon the catastrophe of the COVID-19 pandemic and how our modern society, with all its scientific advances designed to help mankind, feels inadequate in the face of such global disasters.

This pandemic is a truly global event, affecting the health and well-being of millions of people and sparing no nation in its wake.

An important lesson that the pandemic has made us realize yet again is that health and well-being are the foundation stones of any society. Even with all the advances in medical sciences, human life is fragile. As we have witnessed even the most advanced health systems around the world have been overwhelmed.

We knew that prevention is the best medicine but this pandemic has taught us that prevention is sometimes the only medicine.

This pandemic has affected all of us at a very personal level. It has forced us to change our lifestyle with the use of masks, following social distancing, sanitizing our homes & workspaces. We have all considered healthier food habits and newer physical exercise regimens. We have had to stay away from regular social interactions and loved ones for their safety and our own.

Globally, the role of health workers has been recognised and their contributions appreciated although many of these frontline warriors have suffered from this virus and even lost their lives.

There is finally an end in sight in this long, dark chapter as we optimistically await the arrival of vaccines. Never before have vac-

cines been developed and deployed so quickly and the contribution of the scientific community is immeasurable in achieving this feat.

Let us bring in the new year with the hope of overcoming this pandemic and continue with our healthy living. The vaccines have arrived but we must not let our guard down. Until mass inoculations have been conducted and the vaccines are available to the general public, we must continue all precautions as before.

COVID-19 was originally thought to be only a respiratory infection but as the pandemic progressed it is evident that this infection threatens all organs of the body including the heart, brain and kidney functions.

Initially it was believed that the effect was due to preexisting comorbid conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, obesity etc, but many young patients showed signs of myocardial injuries related to COVID-19.

We have realised that the post-COVID syndrome can also be debilitating with a wide range of symptoms like fatigue, palpitation, shortness of breath, dizziness and mental fog. Managing such patients requires careful medical follow-up, planning and rehabilitation with a focus on good nutrition and nursing & psychological care.

Detection of newer and possibly more fatal mutant strains of COVID-19 further reminds us to continue our vigilance as before.

In this new year beckoning the next decade, let us determine to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic and continue with the lessons learnt - develop healthy lifestyles, prioritise our well-being and take care of our loved ones.

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