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An overview of the treatment options used for the management of covid-19 in Pakistan: Retrospective observational study

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Background: Since the first reports of COVID-19 infection, the foremost requirement has been to identify a treatment regimen that not only fights the causative agent but also controls the associated complications of the infection. Due to the time-consuming process of drug discovery, physicians have used readily available drugs and therapies for treatment of infections to minimize the death toll.

Objective: The aim of this study is to provide a snapshot analysis of the major drugs used in a cohort of 1562 Pakistani patients during the period from May to July 2020, when the first wave of COVID-19 peaked in Pakistan.

Methods: A retrospective observational study was performed to provide an overview of the major drugs used in a cohort of 1562 patients with COVID-19 admitted to the four major tertiary-care hospitals in the Rawalpindi-Islamabad region of Pakistan during the peak of the first wave of COVID-19 in the country (May-July 2020).

Results: Antibiotics were the most common choice out of all the therapies employed, and they were used as first line of treatment for COVID-19. Azithromycin was the most prescribed drug for treatment. No monthly trend was observed in the choice of antibiotics, and these drugs appeared to be a random but favored choice throughout the months of the study. It was also noted that even antibiotics used for multidrug resistant infections were prescribed irrespective of the severity or progression of the infection. The results of the analysis are alarming, as this approach may lead to antibiotic resistance and complications in immunocompromised patients with COVID-19. A total of 1562 patients (1064 male, 68.1%, and 498 female, 31.9%) with a mean age of 47.35 years (SD 17.03) were included in the study. The highest frequency of patient hospitalizations occurred in June (846/1562, 54.2%).

Conclusions: Guidelines for a targeted treatment regime are needed to control related complications and to limit the misuse of antibiotics in the management of COVID-19.

Biography

Hashaam Akhtar is from Yusra Institute of Pharmaceutical Science, Yusra Medical and studied at Dental College, Islamabad, Pakistan and he is National Infectious Disease Specialist at Chemonics International, his from National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan.

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