

Editorial

Nutrient Profiling: Equipping consumers with information

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Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, a member of a family of viruses that usually cause respiratory illness. It was unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. ¹ The outbreak was linked epidemiologically to the Hua Nan seafood and wet animal wholesale market in Wuhan, and the market was subsequently closed on 1 January 2020. ² The virus rapidly spread to all provinces in China, as well as a number of countries overseas, and was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the Director- General of the World Health Organization on 30 January 2020.² On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-18 a pandemic.³

However, we also humbly and gratefully request that those who have symptoms, even if it's unconfirmed they are caused by the novel coronavirus, to treat themselves like a possible vector for the disease and self-quarantine for the good of the community. It's critical that we prevent the overload of our health systems if we are going to avoid widespread devastation.¹

A global health crisis is now triggering a global economic crisis. As COVID-19 has swept across the world, governments have reacted piecemeal and in starkly different ways. Rampant spread of COVID-19 across these continents is now illuminating how serious this threat is to life and livelihoods. The scientific community has been quick to collaborate across borders to try to understand the virus and develop ways to combat it. Now governments must come together and coordinate broader global action to address the pandemic, to reinforce the impact of economic and

financial measures being taken at a national level, and to plot the way forward out of this crisis and beyond to forestall the next one.²

It needs to work together to tackle the crisis by exchanging information, scientific knowledge, and the best practices and by applying the guidelines recommended by the WHO. and how we are attempting to live as we navigate through these uncertain times, paying utmost attention to restrictions and distancing guidelines intended for the health and safety of ourselves, our loved ones, friends, neighbours, etc.[9]

Human-to-human transmission of SARS-CoV-2 has been widely shown in health care, community and family settings.³ Primarily, it spreads from person to person by close contact through small droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose, when an infected person coughs sneezes or exhales. The respiratory droplets from the infected person fall on the ground or objects or surfaces around the person. Other people then infected by touching these objects or surfaces, that the virus on it, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.⁴ Based on the epidemiological investigations, the incubation period of the SARS-CoV-2 is between 1-14 days and the virus has been found to be contagious in the asymptomatic patients. ⁵

Based on the study findings, it may be concluded that adequate knowledge and positive attitudes among the study population towards COVID-19, could be used to enhance appropriate practices for prevention and control of the epidemic.

As deficit of knowledge prevails particularly regarding the nature of the disease which leads to stigma needs to be eliminated from the society where the COVID-19 patients and the frontline fighters live. Furthermore, inadequate knowledge

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regarding the symptoms of the disease may mislead them for VOVID-19 test or to avail services at the health facilities, causing wastage resources in a developing country like Bangladesh.

Public awareness campaign should be enhanced critically focusing the target audience to cover the knowledge gaps, motivation for appropriate practices and further improvement of attitudes towards prevention and control of the COVID-19 in the country are thus suggested. Moreover, further studies are suggested to assess the KAP towards the COVID-19 among the rural population, as limitations in representativeness of the rural sample.

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