

## Clinical Spectrum and Atypical Presentation of COVID-19 in Hospitalized Children below 14 Years in a Tertiary Care Hospital: Prospective Observational Study

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Since December, 2019, an outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has spread globally. India is now 2<sup>nd</sup> worst affected country after USA. In central India, a very little is known about the clinical spectrum and severity of COVID-19 in children.

**Objectives:** To assess the clinical characteristics of hospitalized COVID-19 infected children below 14 years of age and to describe atypical presentations of COVID 19 in children.

**Design:** Prospective observational study.

**Setting:** Tertiary care centre and a dedicated covid hospital in central India.

**Participants:** All the children less than 14years admitted with the laboratory conformed diagnosis of COVID-19 between 14<sup>th</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were enrolled in this study.

**Results:** 45 children were admitted with COVID-19. The most common symptom were fever 17(37%), cough 8(17.7%), breathing difficulty 5 (11%), nausea and vomiting 4(8.8%) and seizure 4(8.8%). 10 (22.2%) children admitted in the hospital needed critical care. 23 (51%) children were asymptomatic, 8(17%) children were having mild symptoms, 4 (8.8%) had moderate disease and 10 children were admitted with severe/critical disease {Septic shock with respiratory failure 4(8.8%), Guillain barre syndrome 1(2%), Encephalitis 2(4%), Kawasaki disease 1(2%), ARDS 2(4%)}. 3 (6.6%) children died in the hospital of age group between 2-3 months and remaining 42(93.3%) children discharged successfully.

**Conclusion:** Our study shows that Pediatrics patients with COVID-19 have a simple transmission mode, either by close contact with infected adults or by exposure to epidemic areas. Early identification and management of severe disease as described in our case study can lead to significant change in their outcome (66.6% survival among critically ill children on mechanical ventilator).

**Keywords:** COVID 19, Children, Clinical features

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