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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
6551	25.01.2022	31.01.2022	Mumbai Maharashtra	www.freepressjournal.in/English https://www.freepressjournal.in/mumbai/mumbai-patients-recovered-with-omicron-suffering-from-gastroesophageal-diseases
Title:	Patients recovered with Omicron suffering from gastroesophageal diseases in district Mumbai, Maharashtra			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Mumbai, SSU- Maharashtra			

City doctors have now witnessed a surge in the covid induced piles and gastroesophageal reflux diseases (GERD) cases in the Omicron variant recovered patients during the third wave. Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) occurs when stomach acid frequently flows back into the tube connecting your mouth and stomach (oesophagus). This backwash (acid reflux) can irritate the lining of the oesophagus. Doctors have attributed this surge to multiple use of combination drugs during the treatment of COVID 19 like steroids, antivirals, anti-fungal, antibiotics etc which have a serious effect on the gastrointestinal system during the recovery phase. Meanwhile the doctors are seeing three to four cases a day.

Dr Roy Pantankar, Consultant Gastroenterologist, Zen Super Speciality Hospital said during covid-19 pandemic there has been surge in GERD in patients which caused gastrointestinal issues leading to vomiting, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhoea, and pain in the abdomen. However there were less cases in the first two waves but this time they are seeing at least three to four cases daily.

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

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Dr Roy Pantankar, Consultant Gastroenterologist, Zen Super Speciality Hospital said during covid-19 pandemic there has been surge in GERD in patients which caused gastrointestinal issues leading to vomiting, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhoea, and pain in the abdomen. However there were less cases in the first two waves but this time they are seeing at least three to four cases daily.

“There must be several factors due to which GERD has increased in third wave and the major reasons behind this can be a sedentary lifestyle, eating oily and adulterated food, lack of exercise, increase in the number of self-medications during the lockdown in the fear of visiting the hospital or clinic,” he said.

While explaining about GERD, Dr Purshottam Vashistha, Senior Consultant, Gastroenterology, Nanavati Max Super Speciality Hospital said it is frequent acid reflux incidences, where the stomach acids flow back to the food pipe, impacting the lining of the oesophagus.

“Excessive consumption of multiple drugs, herbal and non herbal, during or post-COVID infections has given rise to various gastrointestinal issues—one of which is GERD. We have witnessed a significant rise in digestive issues such as acid reflux, during the pandemic in patients with active or post-recovery of COVID infection,” he said.

Dr Honey Savla, Consultant Internal Medicine, Wockhardt Hospital said over the week she has been treating 8-10 patients suffering from reflux acidity issues. Moreover as the pandemic goes they have understood that covid not only impacts lungs but it leads to different types of diseases.

“There have been complaints of stomatitis to gastritis to gastroenteritis. Patients are on multiple medications including antivirals, steroids, anti-fungal and even zinc medications that lead to gastritis due to multiple combinations of drugs. Hence we

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are looking forward to wiser use of drugs,” she said. However self medication during covid times has led to several health related issues and unhealthy lifestyle due to which patients have complained about GERD, IBS, reflux acidity.

Dr Neeraj Tulara - Infectious Disease Specialist at LH Hiranandani Hospital, Powai however said acute gastritis and acute gastroenteritis are some of the very common symptoms of Covid which people usually miss. “Many of the time it is just simple gastric symptoms even sometimes without fever and it ultimately turns out to be Covid. Even persistent hiccups have also been one of the very important symptoms of Covid which is missed most of the time. GERD can be a presenting symptom which should not be ignored and patients should be investigated for Covid if it is new onset without any precipitating factor or reason and not settling on its own,” he added.

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