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Over-reaction - thy name is Media

Omicron, a novel coronavirus subtype first discovered in South Africa, has sparked worldwide worry. It sent stock markets throughout the world on a roller-coaster trip, prompted fresh air travel bans, and raised other issues. 1/n [@ShefVaidya](#)

However, when we go through all of these procedures, we begin to worry that we are "over-reacting" rather than responding to the circumstance. 2/n [@UshaNirmala](#)

Let us begin by reading what the WHO has to say about this new variety. The first heading was "Transmissibility." "Whether Omicron is more transmissible," it explained, "is not yet evident." 3/n

It went on to say, "Disease severity." "Effectiveness of vaccines: WHO is working with technical partners to evaluate the possible impact of this variation on our existing countermeasures," said the WHO. In other words, we know essentially little about the key parameters. 4/n

Later on, it was also reported that this new variation is quick to spread yet less deadly than previous forms. The effect on those who have been properly vaccinated is essentially non-existent. 5/n [@ShriguruPawani](#)

When the Central Government issues guidelines, the State Governments issue their own, which confuses the public. The ones issued by the Maharashtra government are merely a source of inconvenience for travelers. 6/n

Although only 12 nations are specified, imposing this standard on all travelers is a kind of harassment. In African countries that are thought to be less developed than India, the turnaround time (TAT) for a rapid RTPCR test is only 90 minutes, 7/n

yet a TAT of 4 hours is too long for a traveler who only travels for 2 hours. 8/n

The overreaction can be seen all over the world, not only in India. Air travel bans will only hurt the economy, which is limping back after a two-year hiatus. We are more ready today to deal with Corona than we were in late 2019 or early 2020. 9/n

All we have to do now is get vaccinated. Those who fall into the special category – primary health workers, frequent travelers, etc. – should have a booster shot if at all possible. 10/n

All of the current precautions – pre-flight Covid testing, securing bubble-flights, assuring traveler immunization, quarantine or covid testing upon arrival, and if necessary, a test 5 days after arrival – are more than sufficient to limit the spread of new variants.11/n

Mutations will continue to occur. For the past two years, we've learned to live with Corona Virus and its variants. We'll be able to coexist. It is too early to remark on Omicron at this time, however, it is clear that we are overreacting since we are unaware of this variety. 12

The normal precautions of wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), avoiding crowds or community gatherings, ventilation, and isolation are all-sufficient to keep this variety at bay. 13/n

Omicron is a threat, but it has yet to be identified in India, but it will most likely be short. We should, however, be able to decrease spread and risk with proper public health mitigation initiatives. 14/n

I'd be wary of eating in restaurants and going into public locations where mask use is impossible to maintain. 15/n

When hosting a party with family and friends, make sure everyone is up to date on their vaccinations and consider measures to improve ventilation, such as opening a window.16/n

I'd cut back on eating out and going to public places where not everyone is wearing masks and ventilation may be inadequate. 17/n

We know a lot about the mutation genetically, but not so much about it clinically or in terms of public health. Is it more easily transmitted? Is it able to escape the immunological response induced by vaccination? To answer such queries, we need more information and evidence. 18

We need to reassure people—a worldwide panic is brewing, but it is excessive. I don't believe a complete lockdown is necessary if we stick to tried-and-true infection control techniques. It's important to remain cautious as the Christmas holidays approach.19/n

Previously, the Mu variety, which had been spreading in Colombia and Ecuador, had quietly faded away. That's an example of a type of worry that didn't turn out to be a significant threat. 20/

The Omicron modifications appear to be located in areas of the virus that would make it more transmissible. A virus will stop spreading if it is more capable of transmitting and propagating but kills its host rapidly. 21

As a result, there's a roughly inverse relationship: if something is considerably more transmissible, it's usually connected with reduced mortality and danger of death. However, it's difficult to say whether this is true for Delta, for example. 22

Although Delta is far more transmissible [than earlier coronavirus versions], there has been an increase in the number of persons being vaccinated in several areas where Delta has circulated.23

In general, if a virus improves its ability to kill its host quickly, it cannot spread very far. A virus that wants to spread should not have a high death rate.²⁴

It is past time for wealthy countries and countries that make vaccines to step up and assist all African countries who rely on them to vaccinate their citizens. Vaccination is the only way to prevent disease. ²⁵

Countries should band together and assist one another in vaccinating the entire world's population.²⁶

This is, without a doubt, a worrying scenario, but it is not a panic situation. ²⁷

As is customary, the media sensationalizes every action around the world, and governments, fearful of being blamed by the media, which runs a parallel trial to the courts on television and paper, begin to react in a "knee-jerk" manner. ^{28/28}