

EDITORIAL

DENGUE EPIDEMIC APPREHENDED IN PAKISTAN: KNOWLEDGE AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES CAN AVERT IT

Habibullah Khan¹, Iftikhar Ahmad²

¹Rauf Medical Center D.I.Khan & ²Department of Community Medicine, Gomal Medical College, D.I.Khan, Pakistan

Dengue fever (DF) is a viral disease transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. Dengue virus (DENV) has four subtypes or serotypes i.e. DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4.^{1,2} The incubation period is 3 to 14 days. Infection with one subtype confers life-long immunity to that type only. However, infection to other serotype in future may result in more severe disease with increased chances of serious complications.¹

The disease affects some 50-100 million people worldwide every year. Out of whom about 1-2% patients develop its serious complications like dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS), resulting in about 22,000 deaths per year. Dengue fever (DF) is endemic in all the regions of Pakistan and 3204 confirmed cases of dengue fever were reported during 2018.³⁻⁵

Pakistan has seen dengue epidemics in the past and such epidemics are always apprehended from August to October every year because of favourable seasonal conditions for its vector to flourish. Dengue epidemics are really like a nightmare and timely measures against the culprit mosquitoes is the only way to avoid these epidemics. The Field Epidemiology & Disease Surveillance Division of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination has issued an advisory for the prevention and control of Dengue fever, has timely issued the guidelines for the year 2019.^{3,6,7}

Early identification and good clinical management are important to reduce its mortality.³ A study from D.I.Khan of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa province has shown that knowledge regarding the DF is low and the public needs to be educated about dengue disease and its prevention utilizing all the sources of information employing mass media, print as well as electronic.^{3,8}

The health departments of both the Federal and Provincial Governments are leaving no stone unturned to increase the public awareness. The academia is also motivated to have research and write on this topic to further enhance the knowledge so that we see the preventive efforts in the practice among the masses.

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Corresponding Author:

Professor Iftikhar Ahmad
Department of Community Medicine
Gomal Medical College, D.I.Khan, Pakistan.
E-mail: iftikharahmadgandapur@yahoo.com



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