

Prevalence of gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with COVID-19 referred to Afzalipur Hospital of Kerman

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Abstract

Introduction: Although the lungs are the main target of SARS-CoV-2 infection; but SARS-CoV-2 can damage various organs and cause several extra-pulmonary effects, including gastrointestinal manifestations. The main symptoms of gastrointestinal involvement are abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and less common gastrointestinal bleeding. This study aimed to evaluate the prevalence of gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with COVID-19.

Materials and Methods: This cross-sectional study investigated the prevalence of gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with COVID-19 referred to Afzalipour Hospital in Kerman from April 2020 to May 2021. The records of patients with definitive diagnosis of COVID-19 who were hospitalized in the emergency department, ward and ICU and had gastrointestinal bleeding at the time of admission or in the course of hospitalization were reviewed and their endoscopic and colonoscopic findings were recorded. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics (frequency, relative frequency and mean central index), analytical (chi-square test and regression) and SPSS software version 20 were used.

Results: A total of 80 patients with gastrointestinal bleeding with COVID-19 were included in the study. Considering the total number of patients with COVID-19 in the study period (3563 patients), the prevalence of gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with this disease was 2.24%. The mean age of the patients was 58.01 ± 20.71 years. The majority of patients were men (63.8%). Gastric erosion 27.7%, gastric ulcer 23%, duodenal ulcer 21.5%, esophageal ulcer 12.3%, esophageal erosion 6.1%, were the most common endoscopic findings. On colonoscopy, hemorrhoids were the most common lesion with consisting 25% of colonoscopic findings. The mortality rate of the patients studied in this study was 36.2% and 63.8% were discharged.

Conclusions: The current study presented findings on the pattern of gastrointestinal bleeding and its overall prevalence in patients with COVID-19 in Afzalipour Hospital in Kerman. These findings can be used to adopt the best approaches for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal bleeding in patients with COVID-19 and provide a basis for further studies on useful interventions and a more accurate understanding of the pathophysiology of the disease.

Keywords: COVID-19, Gastrointestinal Bleeding, Patients