



Editorial

The Role of Spine Surgeons in the Era of COVID-19 Outbreak



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Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a highly contagious disease and is considered more dangerous than seasonal influenza, with a higher case fatality rate.¹ As time goes on, after entering this April, COVID-19 is in a pandemic trend spreading widely all over the world. The number of patients has exceeded 4 million, hundreds of thousands people died, seriously threatening the health of the public. Doctors and nurses all over the world have devoted themselves to the fight against the virus and made great selfless contributions, even sacrifices. As a member of the medical staff, spine surgeons have also played an important role in this campaign.

First of all, it is still our primary task to do a good job in the clinical diagnosis and treatment of spine related diseases during this epidemic. Try to take the way of network consultation or Internet hospital to let patients get the consultation of the disease at home, avoid the flow of patients and go to the hospital to increase the probability of infection. When patients have to go to the hospital for treatment, they need to be informed to take protective measures, of course, spine surgeons also need to do the corresponding protection. For patients undergoing elective surgery, the operation schedule should be delayed as much as possible until the epidemic situation is relieved. For patients undergoing emergency surgery and surgery within a certain period of time, we must do a good job in screening work such as virus nucleic acid detection, and make sure whether the patients are infected with COVID-19. The uninfected patients can be treated in general ward, while the infected patients must be treated in isolation ward and special operation process to avoid virus transmission.

With the increase in the number of COVID-19 infections, there has been a shortage of medical supplies and staff around the world. On the basis of ensuring the department of spine surgery is in working order, some spine surgeons should invest in the treatment of patients with COVID-19. Spine surgeons are competent for the treatment of light patients, and can carry out diagnosis and treatment in the isolation ward of light patients or similar "shelter" hospitals. In addition, trained spine surgeons can assist respiratory physicians or intensive care unit physicians in the treatment of critical patients. Because the majority of spine surgeons have mastered the skills of endotracheal intubation and using ventilator, and spinal critical patients are common, surgeons are with sufficient experience in dealing with severe patients. Of course, as a medical worker, spine surgeons can also be involved in nucleic acid testing, patient screening, patient education and so on. I believe that through our unremitting efforts, we will certainly win the battle of COVID-19.



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1. Guo X, Wang J, Hu D, et al. Survey of COVID-19 disease among orthopaedic surgeons in Wuhan, People's Republic of China. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 2020 Apr 8 [Epub]. <https://doi.org/10.2106/JBJS.20.00417>.



Title: The Greedy
Artist: Pablo Picasso
Year: 1901
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