

Severe Postpartum Hemorrhage in an Asymptomatic COVID-19 Patient: A Call to Be on Guard

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Abstract: Postpartum hemorrhage (PPH), the loss of more than 500 mL of blood following childbirth, is a leading cause of maternal mortality worldwide. The current coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has strained health-care systems globally. Pregnant women are a vulnerable group at a high risk of severe infection with COVID-19 due to the physiological changes in their immune state. Although the infection can be asymptomatic, severe COVID-19 infection is associated with respiratory distress, fever and coagulopathies that can complicate an already hypercoagulable pregnancy state. There is a dearth of existing literature regarding the complications of COVID-19 infection during pregnancy, and much is yet to be known about this rapidly evolving pandemic. In our case report, we received a 23-year-old gravida 2 para 1 woman who was COVID-19 positive but asymptomatic; she presented to the obstetric department with labor pains which progressed to severe postpartum hemorrhage and development of mild respiratory distress.

Keywords: postpartum hemorrhage, COVID-19, asymptomatic

Introduction

The ongoing pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has made a serious public health threat worldwide, with millions of people at risk in a growing number of countries.¹ Because pregnant women have a suppressed immune system, they may be at an increased risk of developing severe or critical diseases associated with COVID-19, particularly pneumonia and respiratory failure.² Clinical experience of pregnancies complicated with infection by other coronaviruses, eg, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome, has led to pregnant women being considered potentially vulnerable to severe SARS-CoV-2 infection.³ Their babies are at a higher risk of stillbirth (2.4%, 1/41), neonatal death (2.4%, 1/41), and admission to the intensive care unit.² COVID-19 is also associated with coagulopathies characterized by mild thrombocytopenia, slight prolongation of the prothrombin time, high levels of D-dimer, and elevated levels of fibrinogen, factor VIII, and von Willebrand factor, sepsis-induced disseminated intravascular coagulopathy (DIC)^{4,5} that can complicate pregnancy. Here, we report an unusual case of an initially asymptomatic COVID-infected woman who later developed Postpartum Hemorrhage (PPH) and mild respiratory distress at Mal Superspeciality Hospital, West Bengal, India.

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