

Cardiopulmonary examination of the patients with Covid-19 should be performed with electronic sound amplifying stethoscope

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Dear Editor,

Patients who complain of cough and dyspnea are suspicious for being infected with Corona virus (1). However, radiological findings of Corona virus disease 2019 (Covid-19) are vague on chest x-ray. Thus, computerized tomography of the thorax is used to support the diagnosis (2,3). Unfortunately, a definitive diagnosis is not possible without polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing of nasopharyngeal swabs obtained from patients (4). The patients are promptly admitted to hospital in order to administer empiric anti-viral treatment, until PCR test results are available. Most of the cases respond to the empiric anti-viral treatment. However, some of the patients have co-infections, both viral and bacterial (1). In this period, daily physical examination is of utmost importance. Daily physical examination should be performed to follow patients for rales, rhonchi, fremitus, wheezing, pleural effusion and pneumothorax. Moreover, patients with Covid-19 may also present with myocarditis, heart failure, cardiac arrhythmias and acute coronary syndrome (5). Thus, heart sounds should also be listened carefully on daily basis. As Corona virus is contagious, overall protective gown should be worn during physical examination (6). However, disposable coverall with hood does not let the physician to listen to heart and breath sounds through the ear tips of the stethoscope. Physicians try both to auscultate and comment on faint heart and breath sounds through the headset of the stethoscope placed on the protective hood. Nevertheless, faint heart and breath sounds are far from helping the physician to evaluate the patient in order to understand the progression of the disease, in most of the cases. Therefore, we recommend the usage of digital and electronic stethoscopes with sound-

enhancing capabilities. Amplification of the heart and breath sounds during physical examination can provide more accurate data about the current cardiopulmonary status of the patients infected with Covid-19.

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