

The SARS-Cov-2 in the Americas: a look from Paraguay

Gabriela Sanabria-Báez*

Facultad de Ciencias Médicas, Universidad Nacional de Asunción - Filial Santa Rosa, Paraguay

***Corresponding Author:** Gabriela Sanabria-Báez, Facultad de Ciencias Médicas, Universidad Nacional de Asunción - Filial Santa Rosa, Paraguay.

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In December 2019 we learned that a new viral disease was stalking in Wuhan - China. It was accompanied by non-negligible mortality and affected a large number of individuals with increasing impact. The causative virus, SARS-CoV-2, is a recently recognized virus, associated with other coronaviruses such as SARS-CoV, which caused a similar viral disease in 2003 in China, and MERS-CoV, which causes a viral disease in 2012 in Saudi Arabia. Both viral diseases had a higher mortality than those caused by SARS-Cov-2, but they coincide with this virus in lung involvement and that they can cause mortality in affected patients.

World Health Organization (WHO) has officially declared it a pandemic, since March 11, 2020. It has affected, and continues to affect, multiple countries, producing a respiratory condition characterized by cough and respiratory symptoms that in 80% of cases are of mild to moderate severity and in 20% of greater severity that warrant hospitalization. In 5% of cases, the severity is critical, requiring patients to be hospitalized in an intensive care unit. Of the patients who require mechanical ventilation in their management, 50% die. Mortality has been reported between 3% - 5%, but there are countries with higher mortality such as Italy where it has been 10%, and Brazil, the second country with more cases the mortality rate is 7%.

After severely affecting Europe, the epicenter of the pandemic is in America. The US, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Panama are among the most severely affected countries. And the epidemic has no end date.

In the southern cone of the Americas, Paraguay continues to be one of the countries with the least number of affected, due to the previous closure of activities, the closure of borders and the quarantine of national immigrants. Despite the good actions carried out at the beginning of the pandemic, the measures have not been sustained and the situation is currently worrying, added to the lack of vaccines available to the general population.

This semester will be critical to see the behavior of the epidemic in our countries. It will depend on the actions taken in the country. Likewise, the collaboration of citizens to maintain social distancing, adequate and frequent hand washing, the cough label (cough in the internal angle of the elbow) and absent from school or work activities with the first respiratory sign is essential.

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