

Clinical Characteristics of 138 Hospitalized Patients With 2019 Novel Coronavirus–Infected Pneumonia in Wuhan, China

Dawei Wang, MD; Bo Hu, MD; Chang Hu, MD; Fangfang Zhu, MD; Xing Liu, MD; Jing Zhang, MD; Binbin Wang, MD; Hui Xiang, MD; Zhenshun Cheng, MD; Yong Xiong, MD; Yan Zhao, MD; Yirong Li, MD; Xinghuan Wang, MD; Zhiyong Peng, MD

IMPORTANCE In December 2019, novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)–infected pneumonia (NCIP) occurred in Wuhan, China. The number of cases has increased rapidly but information on the clinical characteristics of affected patients is limited.

OBJECTIVE To describe the epidemiological and clinical characteristics of NCIP.

DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS Retrospective, single-center case series of the 138 consecutive hospitalized patients with confirmed NCIP at Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University in Wuhan, China, from January 1 to January 28, 2020; final date of follow-up was February 3, 2020.

EXPOSURES Documented NCIP.

MAIN OUTCOMES AND MEASURES Epidemiological, demographic, clinical, laboratory, radiological, and treatment data were collected and analyzed. Outcomes of critically ill patients and noncritically ill patients were compared. Presumed hospital-related transmission was suspected if a cluster of health professionals or hospitalized patients in the same wards became infected and a possible source of infection could be tracked.

RESULTS Of 138 hospitalized patients with NCIP, the median age was 56 years (interquartile range, 42–68; range, 22–92 years) and 75 (54.3%) were men. Hospital-associated transmission was suspected as the presumed mechanism of infection for affected health professionals (40 [29%]) and hospitalized patients (17 [12.3%]). Common symptoms included fever (136 [98.6%]), fatigue (96 [69.6%]), and dry cough (82 [59.4%]). Lymphopenia (lymphocyte count, $0.8 \times 10^9/L$ [interquartile range {IQR}, 0.6–1.1]) occurred in 97 patients (70.3%), prolonged prothrombin time (13.0 seconds [IQR, 12.3–13.7]) in 80 patients (58%), and elevated lactate dehydrogenase (261 U/L [IQR, 182–403]) in 55 patients (39.9%). Chest computed tomographic scans showed bilateral patchy shadows or ground glass opacity in the lungs of all patients. Most patients received antiviral therapy (oseltamivir, 124 [89.9%]), and many received antibacterial therapy (moxifloxacin, 89 [64.4%]; ceftriaxone, 34 [24.6%]; azithromycin, 25 [18.1%]) and glucocorticoid therapy (62 [44.9%]). Thirty-six patients (26.1%) were transferred to the intensive care unit (ICU) because of complications, including acute respiratory distress syndrome (22 [61.1%]), arrhythmia (16 [44.4%]), and shock (11 [30.6%]). The median time from first symptom to dyspnea was 5.0 days, to hospital admission was 7.0 days, and to ARDS was 8.0 days. Patients treated in the ICU ($n = 36$), compared with patients not treated in the ICU ($n = 102$), were older (median age, 66 years vs 51 years), were more likely to have underlying comorbidities (26 [72.2%] vs 38 [37.3%]), and were more likely to have dyspnea (23 [63.9%] vs 20 [19.6%]), and anorexia (24 [66.7%] vs 31 [30.4%]). Of the 36 cases in the ICU, 4 (11.1%) received high-flow oxygen therapy, 15 (41.7%) received noninvasive ventilation, and 17 (47.2%) received invasive ventilation (4 were switched to extracorporeal membrane oxygenation). As of February 3, 47 patients (34.1%) were discharged and 6 died (overall mortality, 4.3%), but the remaining patients are still hospitalized. Among those discharged alive ($n = 47$), the median hospital stay was 10 days (IQR, 7.0–14.0).

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE In this single-center case series of 138 hospitalized patients with confirmed NCIP in Wuhan, China, presumed hospital-related transmission of 2019-nCoV was suspected in 41% of patients, 26% of patients received ICU care, and mortality was 4.3%.

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Author Affiliations: Author affiliations are listed at the end of this article.

Corresponding Author: Zhiyong Peng, MD, Department of Critical Care Medicine, Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University, Wuhan 430071, Hubei, China (Pengzy5@hotmail.com).

Section Editor: Derek C. Angus, MD, MPH, Associate Editor, JAMA (angusdc@upmc.edu).

Key Points

Question What are the clinical characteristics of hospitalized patients with 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)-infected pneumonia (NCIP) in Wuhan, China?

Findings In this single-center case series involving 138 patients with NCIP, 26% of patients required admission to the intensive care unit and 4.3% died. Presumed human-to-human hospital-associated transmission of 2019-nCoV was suspected in 41% of patients.

Meaning In this case series in Wuhan, China, NCIP was frequently associated with presumed hospital-related transmission, 26% of patients required intensive care unit treatment, and mortality was 4.3%.