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Title page

The COVID-19 outbreak: issue of face masks

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We appreciate Wang Q et al have reported the role of masks/respirator protection against COVID-19.¹ However, with the progress of COVID-19 epidemic, as of April 1, 2020, a total of 75948 cases have been confirmed by World Health Organization, and 36571 deaths have been declared. Face masks can prevent human-to-human airway transmission of such infections effectively,^{2,3} Thus, Asian countries such as China, South Korea and Japan encourage the public to wear face masks in public areas.

China has adopted its own country-specific comprehensive prevention and control measures, such as closing communities and cities, banning parties, delaying school, and restricting work to cut off, wearing face masks in public areas, etc. The domestic COVID-19 epidemic was effectively controlled in China in mid-March 2020. Therefore, we cannot abandon the use of masks because of insufficient evidence.^{4,5}

Increasingly more people began to wear face masks with the COVID-19 outbreak, and face masks began to become scarce at the beginning of 2020. It is difficult for the public to buy face masks. In addition, face masks will become ineffective and have to be disposed of. Discarded face masks have been found in many places, such as the street, parks, buses, hospitals, train stations, etc. (Fig 1).

We think that three measures should be done. First, improve the supply of masks. Second, promote public awareness about how to deal with mask garbage. Third, carry out innovation of mask. We believe that we will conquer COVID-19 outbreak.

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Authors' contributions

Ming-Wei Wang and Yong-ran Cheng carried out data analysis.

Zhan-hui Feng and Juan Chen drafted the manuscript;

Lan Ye and Meng-Yun Zhou participated in study design and data collection.

All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study requires no ethics approval due to public data-based analysis.

The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Consent for publication

Not applicable

Competing interests

All authors declare no conflict of interest in this study.

Human participants and animal rights

This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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