Global threats in the Anthropocene: from COVID-19 to the future
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Surgery and COVID-19: reorganization, teachings and future perspectives

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Abstract

The health emergency caused by the first case of SARS-CoV-2 infection in the city of Wuhan and its spread around the world represents a global challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic, emblem of the current era, defined as Anthropocene, shows how human activity is responsible for virus spread and should act to try to stem and stop it. The pandemic redesigned the organization and caused a change in the way of thinking and acting in the health sector and, in particular, in surgery. During the current state of emergency, patients needing to undergo surgery (e.g., cancer patients or patients with acute pathologies requiring urgent intervention) remain. It is not only the surgical activity that was affected, but the whole health system underwent and is undergoing a human, structural and resource reorganization, in order to guarantee the right to health for all during the pandemic and in the post-pandemic. This nefarious event, however, also represents an opportunity to rethink everyday life and draw lessons for the whole society. Moreover, it shows that future prospects will depend on human action. The pandemic provides man with the opportunity to rediscover the importance of collaboration, which is essential in order to stop the virus spread and the state of emergency and gradually return to normal.

Keywords: COVID-19, Anthropocene, Surgery, health system, public health.

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