

# AB131. SOH21AS023. Surgery during COVID: the impact of COVID-19 on emergency procedures in a district general hospital

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**Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced significant pressure on respiratory physicians, anaesthetists, and hospital bed capacity. But the impact of COVID on other services, especially surgery, hasn't been highlighted during this pandemic. The aim of this audit is to assess the impact of COVID on emergency surgical cases.

**Methods:** A list of emergency cases performed during the months of March, April and May in 2019 and 2020 was obtained. Patient demographics and operative details were extracted from online systems. Analysis of this data was performed to compare operative load in a three-month period prior to and during COVID.

**Results:** During this three-month period in 2019, a total of 509 patients underwent emergency surgical procedures. During the same period in 2020, in the midst of the COVID pandemic a total of 408 procedures took place. Which is a 20% decrease in operative capacity. The greatest decrease in cases was amongst the orthopaedic cases, dropping by 36%.

**Conclusions:** COVID-19 has affected many aspects

of healthcare delivery. The impact on elective surgery, endoscopy and surgical training has been immense. Contrary to this, we would not expect emergency cases to be affected or delayed given their acute nature; interestingly this has been the case in this study.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; emergency surgery; decrease; cases

## Acknowledgments

*Funding:* None.

## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* 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.

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doi: 10.21037/map-21-ab131

**Cite this abstract as:** Faisal MU, Al-Zubaidy R, Abbas M, Ahmed R, Singhal T. Surgery during COVID: the impact of COVID-19 on emergency procedures in a district general hospital. *Mesentery Peritoneum* 2021;5:AB131.