



Humbled by nurses' selflessness: Survivor

Bandra engineer who battled Covid-19 says they made his hospitalisation tolerable and boosted his morale

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For nine days, it was touch and go for Faraz F. The 38-year-old Bandra engineer was on the ventilator after being diagnosed with Covid-19 on March 25.

Three days after being discharged on Friday, Faraz tells *Mirror* that he's forever indebted to the nurses of Lilavati Hospital. "There was one day when a nurse had to clean me up three times in a few hours, but she did it with so much care each time. Then there was the time when another nurse boosted me morale and urged me not to give up."

Faraz, who also runs a consultancy company, says he isn't sure where he picked up the virus—he returned from the US via Dubai on February 7 and then took another trip to Dhaka on February 19-20—he is sure that it wasn't during any of his foreign travels. The first symptom of the virus surfaced on March 13, when he had a raging fever for three days. It subsided



Faraz F says he isn't sure where he picked up the virus

but returned with a chronic cough two days later.

Faraz visited Kasturba Hospital for a Covid-19 test on March 21, but his results came back negative the next day. Tests can throw up false negatives owing to low viral load or inadequate samples. Faraz returned home but his symptoms didn't abate. After he began experiencing breathlessness on March 24, he was admitted to Lilavati Hospital. His second test came back positive the next day. "I was immediately sent to the ICU, and then put on the ventilator a few days later," says Faraz. His father and sister also tested positive but were asym-

ptomatic and placed under isolation.

Faraz began showing signs of improvement only last week.

Back home but still struggling to breathe, he wants to dispel the myth that the virus only affects the aged or the immunocompromised. "I was in the best of health, but I contracted it too. It can affect people of all ages with varying degrees of severity. So regardless of whether you are young or old, practise social distancing and good hygiene protocol," he says.

Dr Jalil Parkar, a pulmonologist who led the team that treated Faraz, says the medical staffers counts his recovery as a double success—not only did the treatment work but they also avoided performing a tracheostomy on him. A tracheostomy is an opening created at the front of the neck so a tube can be inserted into the windpipe (trachea) to help one breathe. While it's generally a safe procedure, complications include bleeding, damage to the oesophagus (the food pipe), and a build-up of mucus and fluids in the tracheostomy tube, which can make breathing difficult and lead to infection.