



For the first time in my life I have to go to work as an HPB surgeon, as if I was going to war, doing everything possible to survive at the end. I am not at the frontline and I am working in the non- COVID-19 area. However there is a risk, because coronavirus is everywhere in my city. The security measures including PPE are necessary to minimize the possibility to get infected by COVID-19. The motto “Stay at home” does not work here.

My name is Orlando Torres, I am 57 year-old, HPB surgeon in Brazil, the COVID-19 changed my life and the life of my family. Instead of pancreatic, biliary and liver surgery for cancer every day, I am doing now just few selected cases. I have to take care of patients every day in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and in the wards.

My daughter has her graduation ceremony last January, her first job? She is at the frontline for COVID-19 in São Paulo. Does she have experience? Who does? She is dedicated, and I am always talking to her about security measures. She is alone in her apartment but I am sure she is going to be fine at the end.

My wife? She is intensivist; she works in the morning with covid-19 patients (20 beds in the ICU). Is she at home in the afternoon? No, she is in another ICU with non-COVID-19 patients (theoretically), near the COVID-19 ICU. We are at the same house living in different rooms, we decided: “one person at a time to be infected with covid-19”. Everything is separated since March 23rd and we work in different hospitals.

On my way to the hospital I keep wondering: at any moment I can be infected, regardless of the measures taken. Although I work in the non-COVID-19 area, there may also be a COVID-19 patient, still without diagnosis. The numbers about COVID-19 in my city are: 5,020 confirmed cases, 291 deaths. Some health workers included. Lockdown started today but the supermarkets are full of people. Unfortunately, the real numbers are much bigger than that.

What about your son? Is he a doctor? No, he is 14 year old and for security reasons he has been living with his grandmother, away from us since March 21st. I miss him a lot; he is my brother, and my best friend.

Talking to friends makes me cry, but we are strong enough to overcome it all. After that I felt sick, than I decided to do a chest CT that confirmed, I have COVID-19. Now I am at home, dealing with this terrible disease.

And the dog? I have no dogs, the dog belongs to my son, but I miss the dog too.

