

# *Cuba can control a possible major COVID-19 epidemic, says IPK director*

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Havana, April 3 (RHC)-- Cuba can control a possible major epidemic caused by COVID-19 thanks to its health system and planned organization, said Dr. Manuel Romero Placeres, director of the Pedro Kourí Institute of Tropical Medicine (IPK).

In a conversation with Cuban News Agency, he explained that in general, the evolution of those admitted for the new coronavirus in the center has been favorable and although there are patients reported in serious condition due to complications typical of the disease, medical discharges such as the 94-year-old Cuban citizen prevail.

Three weeks after the confirmation of the first cases of COVID-19 in Cuba, Romero Placeres revealed that the increase cannot be described as abrupt.

He said that together with other entities, the IPK is developing different diagnostic protocols, either by rapid kit or real-time PCR, and care, by using different drugs that are used in the world to fight the pandemic.

The protocols are always different because patients are different, and each is given specific care, the epidemiologist emphasized.

Regarding the rapid tests that are being implemented this week, he said that they make possible an initial diagnosis of positive cases that are asymptomatic, which are immediately admitted for confirmation through the nasopharyngeal exudate.

Romero Placeres said that we must all be alert because the new coronavirus can be confused initially with an arbovirus, presenting feverish symptoms. In the absence of respiratory symptoms, he added that it is also similar in this phase to common influenza or cold.

The director said the IPK has been preparing for the current situation since last December while admitting that they never thought the disease would reach current levels, which require action from all countries or the numbers of infected and dead will exceed those of previous pandemics, he said.

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