

Could My Patient Have Long COVID?

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Long COVID Guiding Council
Convened by the Minnesota Department of Health
Long COVID Program in partnership with Stratis Health.



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Session Objectives:

- Describe scope and impact of long COVID in Minnesota and United States
- Identify key features in the clinical presentation of common COVID phenotypes
- Discuss options available for symptom management and support for patients presenting with symptoms consistent with long COVID

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Impacts of the virus that causes COVID-19

- Signs, symptoms, and continue or develop after a SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- Present 4+ weeks after infection
- May be multisystemic
- May be relapsing-remitting
- Progression may worsen over time, be severe, and last years

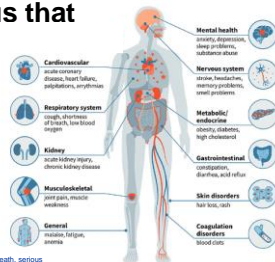


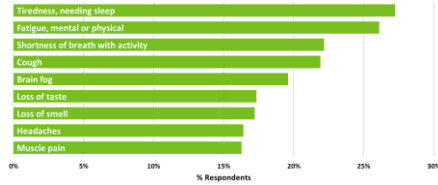
Image by Sara Moser: "Among COVID-19 survivors, an increased risk of death, serious illness." Washington University School of Medicine

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MDH Post-COVID Survey Findings

Most Frequently Reported Persistent Symptoms in Individuals with a Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection (n=1,597; March 15 – July 31, 2023)

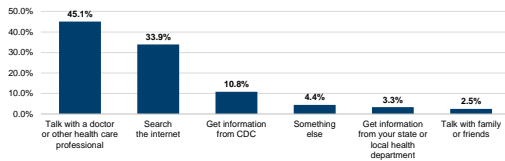


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Long COVID: Importance of providers

Percent distribution of where adults would go first to learn more about Long COVID, United States, August 2023



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Rapid Surveys System, Round 1, August 2023.

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Identifying Long COVID in Primary Care

- Have you had a viral illness or COVID recently?
- Do you feel back to normal?
- Consider Long COVID for any symptoms lingering longer than 2 months.

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Identifying Long COVID (Specialist Perspective)

Two buckets:

"Familiar" Conditions

- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Asthma
- Dementia
- Myocarditis
- Etc.

"Less Familiar" Conditions

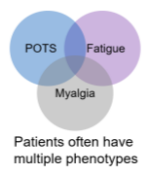
- ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Fibromyalgia
- Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome
- Mast Cell Activation
- Etc.

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Long COVID Phenotypes

- When in the "less familiar" realm:
 - Fatigue Phenotype ~ ME/CFS
 - Myalgia Phenotype ~ Fibromyalgia
 - Orthostasis Phenotype ~ POTS
 - Dyspnea, Other phenotypes depending on symptoms



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Management Options in Primary Care

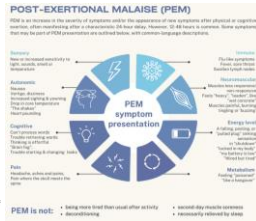
- Consider additional testing for: neurologic, cardiac and pulmonary symptoms
- Past history of concussion - COVID may have a TBI-like appearance. Consider therapies, PM&R, neurology referrals.
- Vague symptoms: consider referral to therapies (PT, OT, ST) for evaluation
 - Remember pacing
 - Therapy availability in rural communities
- Behavioral health support for brain fog, cognitive concerns, mood changes
- FMLA or Disability for Long COVID. Link to document (includes resources for social supports and workplace accommodations template letter): https://stratishealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Workplace-accommodation_Provider-FAQ-letter-template-pdf

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Management – Specialist Perspective

- Once post-COVID dysautonomia / post-exertional malaise is confirmed, **pacing is key**
 - Other therapies cannot be fully effective if there is no energy left to work with!



Grach, SL, Seltzer J, Chon TY and Ganesh R. Diagnosis and management of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome. Mayo Clin Proc. 2023

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Phenotype/Symptom-Based Tx

Phenotype	Fatigue	Dyspnea	POTS	Myalgia
Treatment options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low dose naltrexone Low dose Abilify Guanfacine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inhaled corticosteroids Antihistamines (1st generation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate Control – β-blocker, Ca channel blocker, ivabradine Vessel constriction – midodrine Salt and water retention – fludrocortisone Pyridostigmine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNRI – duloxetine, milnacipran TCA – amitriptyline, nortriptyline Gabapentinoid – pregabalin, gabapentin

Patients often have multiple phenotypes

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To conclude...

Long COVID Tips

- Invisible Illness is not the same as Absent Illness
 - Ask about recovery from recent viral illnesses
 - Listen carefully and keep Long COVID on your differential
 - Patients need to feel heard and believed
 - Stay curious, there is so much still to learn about Long COVID

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Long COVID Resources

- [Long COVID A Post-COVID Condition - MN Dept. of Health](#)
- [Long COVID Guiding Council](#)
- [Long COVID or Post-COVID Conditions | CDC](#)



Long COVID ECHO in partnership with MN Academy of Physicians - Scan QR code to sign up!
Registration link: [Long COVID ECHO Registration](#)



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Long COVID Guiding Council - Provider Representation

- Carris Health/CentraCare
- Community-University Health Care Center (CUHCC)
- Essentia Health
- Genevieve
- HealthPartners Clinics and Hospitals
- Hennepin Healthcare
- M Health Fairview/University of Minnesota
- Mayo Clinic
- Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Health Care System
- Minnesota Community Care
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
- St. Mary's Health Clinics



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Thank you! We appreciate your participation. See you on ECHO!

ECHO Registration: [Long COVID ECHO Registration](#)

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