Welcome to
Talking with Patients about Long COVID

‘If not us, then who?’
These doctors and nurses battle covid all day. Then they go online and fight misinformation.

Photo courtesy of the Washington Post

October 27, 2022
12:00PM-1:00PM
Continuing Medical Education Disclosure

All planners, staff and others involved with this activity have reported no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

This activity has not received commercial support.
Housekeeping

For Panelists: Please remember to mute yourself when not speaking.

For Attendees: This session is being recorded. Please access today’s slides and recording through the following link: https://eziz.org/covid/crucialconversations

Please use “Q&A” to ask questions.

For post-webinar questions, contact rachel.jacobs@cdph.ca.gov.
Questions & Answers

During today's session, please use the Q&A panel to ask your questions.

Resource links will be dropped into the “Chat”
Webinar Objectives

Participants will learn:

• Definition, diagnosis, and manifestations of long COVID
• How to effectively talk with patients about long COVID
• Resources to use when talking with patients
## Agenda: Thursday, October 27, 2022

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**Questions & Answers**
12:40 – 12:55
Poll: CPDH appreciates your feedback

How confident are you in your ability to effectively talk with patients about long COVID?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Slightly confident
- Not confident
Talking with Patients about Long COVID

Atul Nakhasi, M.D., M.P.P.
Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Surgeon General
Co-founder, #ThisIsOurShot
Long COVID Definition

Although standardized case definitions are still being developed, in the broadest sense, post-COVID conditions can be considered a lack of return to a usual state of health following acute COVID-19 illness. (CDC)

- CDC considers post-COVID conditions to be present if recovery does not occur after the 4-week acute phase.
- Many patients continue to recover between 4 and 12 weeks; however, persistent illness becomes more likely after 12 weeks.
Long COVID Symptoms

- Dyspnea or increased respiratory effort
- Fatigue
- Post-exertional malaise and/or poor endurance
- Cognitive impairment or "brain fog"
- Cough
- Chest pain
- Headache
- Palpitations and tachycardia
- Arthralgia
- Myalgia
- Paresthesia
- Abdominal pain

- Diarrhea
- Insomnia and other sleep difficulties
- Fever
- Lightheadedness
- Impaired daily function and mobility
- Pain
- Rash (e.g., urticaria)
- Mood changes
- Anosmia or dysgeusia
- Menstrual cycle irregularities
- Erectile dysfunction
Methods:

- Longitudinal dynamics of 23 symptoms assessed using 24 repeated measurements March 2020 – August 2021
- Symptom severity before & after in participants with COVID compared to COVID-19-negative matched controls

Results:

- 76,422 participants (mean age 54 years, 61% female) completed a total of 883,973 questionnaires
- 4,231 participants had COVID-19 (positive test or diagnosis) and were matched to 8,462 controls
- 21.4% of COVID-19-positive participants versus 8.7% of COVID-19-negative controls had at least one core COVID symptom substantially increase 90-150 days after COVID-19 diagnosis or matched timepoint

Conclusion: In 12.7% of patients, these symptoms could be attributed to COVID-19
Observational cohort study from March 2020 to April 2022 in individuals working in 9 Italian health care facilities

The number of vaccine doses was associated with lower long COVID prevalence: **41.8%** (95% CI, 37.0%-46.7%) in unvaccinated patients, **30.0%** (95% CI, 6.7%-65.2%) with 1 dose, **17.4%** (95% CI, 7.8%-31.4%) with 2 doses, and **16.0%** (95% CI, 11.8%-21.0%) with 3 doses.
What we know:

- Post-COVID conditions (PCC) include a wide array of ongoing health concerns that may last weeks, months, or longer
- PCC are more likely in those who have had severe infections, hospitalizations, or MIS-C, but there are cases of PCC in those with mild cases
- Female, older, nonwhite
- Comorbidities (Cardiac, DM, CKD)
- Unvaccinated individuals are more likely to have PCC

What we still don’t know:

- The pathophysiology
- The constellation of symptoms, clinical manifestations, and duration of symptoms
- A deeper understanding of the risk factors
- The availability of treatments
Discussing Long COVID:
Five Key Messages
Key Messages: Long COVID

1. The term “post-COVID conditions” is an umbrella term for a wide range of physical and mental health consequences experienced by some patients that are present four or more weeks after SARS-CoV-2 infection, including by patients who had initial mild or asymptomatic acute infections.
Based on current information, many post-COVID conditions can be managed by primary care providers, using patient-centered approaches to optimize the quality of life and function of affected patients.
Objective laboratory or imaging findings should not be used as the only measure or assessment of a patient’s well-being; normal laboratory or imaging findings do not invalidate the existence, severity, or importance of a patient’s post-COVID symptoms or conditions.
Healthcare providers and patients are encouraged to set achievable goals through shared decision-making and to approach treatment by focusing on specific symptoms (e.g., headache) or conditions (e.g., dysautonomia).
Key Messages: Long COVID

Understanding of post-COVID conditions remains incomplete. The approach to caring for patients with post-COVID conditions will likely change over time as evidence accumulates.

“We don’t fully understand what causes long COVID, why it happens, and how to treat it at this time but what we can do is focus on the symptoms you’re experiencing right now and put a plan together to get you to start feeling better.”
Long COVID: Three Tips for Symptom Management Approach
Tip 1 for Symptom Management Approach

• Many post-COVID conditions can be improved through already established symptom management approaches (e.g., breathing exercises to improve symptoms of dyspnea).

• Creating a comprehensive rehabilitation plan may be helpful for some patients, and might include physical and occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, or vocational therapy, as well as neurologic rehabilitation for cognitive symptoms.

• A conservative physical rehabilitation plan might be indicated for some patients (e.g., persons with post-exertional malaise). Gradual return to activity as tolerated could be helpful for most patients.
Tip 2 for Symptom Management Approach

Optimizing management of underlying medical conditions might include counseling on lifestyle components such as nutrition, sleep, and stress reduction (e.g., meditation). COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to all eligible people, regardless of their history of SARS-CoV-2 infection.
Tip 3 for Symptom Management Approach

• **Patient diaries and calendars** might be useful to document changes in health conditions and symptom severity—especially in relation to potential triggers such as exertion (physical and cognitive), foods, menstruation, and treatments or medications.

• Such diaries and calendars can **provide greater insight into patients’ symptoms and lived experience** for healthcare providers.

• Healthcare providers should encourage patients to report **any new or changing symptoms** and to discuss any changes in activities or routines.
TRIALS TAKE OFF
At least 26 randomized trials are under way to test therapies for long COVID. Many candidates target symptoms such as inflammation or clots. Some, such as the antidepressant fluvoxamine, act on different symptoms. Some researchers are repurposing drugs already approved for other conditions.

- Anti-inflammatory
- Dietary supplement
- Cell-based therapy
- Steroid
- Antithrombotic
- Other

Source: Airfinity
Help us determine the future of #ThisISOurShot and #VacunateYa

Take our survey here!
Q&A, Poll, and Resources

Rachel Jacobs, CDPH
Questions & Answers

During today's session, please use the Q&A panel to ask your questions.

Resource links will be dropped into the “Chat”
Poll: CPDH appreciates your feedback

Following this webinar, how confident are you in your ability to effectively talk with patients about long COVID?

- Very confident
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Additional Resources

- What is Long COVID? Fliers in English and Spanish
- Resources for People with Post-COVID Conditions (Long COVID)
- Post-COVID Conditions (Long COVID)
- Voices of Long COVID Toolkit
Toolkits, Fliers, Conversation Guides, and Videos

#ThisIsOurShot Toolkit
COVID-19 Crucial Conversations Campaign
Next Crucial Conversations Webinar: Safely Combatting Misinformation on Social Media

Please join Vicki Chan, MD, #ThisIsOurShot, and the CDPH Trust & Safety Team to discuss current COVID-19 misinformation trends and safely combating misinformation on social media.

**When:** Thursday, November 3 at 12:00PM-1:00PM

[Register here!](#)
Upcoming Opportunities

**Monday**
*My Turn and myCAvax Office Hours*
Next session: Monday, October 31, 12PM

**Friday**
*Provider Consolidated Webinar*
Next session: Friday, October 28, 9AM

**Note:** New session length of 90-minutes to include COVID-19 Vaccine, COVID-19 Therapeutics, MPX Vaccine, and MPX Therapeutics
## Additional Support

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| **COVID-19 Provider Call Center** | The COVID-19 Call Center for Providers and Local Health Departments is dedicated to medical providers in California and their COVID-19 response, specifically addressing questions about State program requirements, enrollment, and vaccine distribution, including the Vaccine Marketplace.  
  • Email: covidcallcenter@cdph.ca.gov  
  • Phone: (833) 502-1245, Monday through Friday from 8AM–6PM |               |
| **Enrollment Support**          | For Provider enrollment support, please contact myCAvax Clinic Operations at  
  • Email: myCAvaxinfo@cdph.ca.gov |               |
| **myCAvax Help Desk**           | Dedicated staff provide up-to-date information and technical support on the myCAvax system.  
  • Email: myCAvax.HD@Accenture.com  
  • Phone: (833)-502-1245, option 3, Monday through Friday 8AM–6PM |               |
| **My Turn Clinic Help Desk**    | For **onboarding support** (those in the process of onboarding): myturnonboarding@cdph.ca.gov  
  For **technical support** with My Turn Clinic for COVID-19 and flu vaccines: MyTurn.Clinic.HD@Accenture.com or (833) 502-1245, option 4: Monday through Friday 8AM–6PM |               |
|                                 | For job aids, demos, and training opportunities: flu at https://eziz.org/covid/myturn/flu/ and COVID at https://eziz.org/covid/myturn/ |               |
| **Archived Communications**     | For archived communications from the COVID-19 Provider Call Center about the California COVID-19 Vaccination Program visit  
  • Website: EZIZ Archived Communications |               |
Special Thanks to
Today's Presenter:
Atul Nakhasi, M.D., M.P.P.

Webinar Planning & Support:
Rachel Jacobs, Tyler Janzen, Blanca Corona, Charles Roberts