

THE BEST OF THE WEEK (06 mar – 12 mar 2023)

Carl Wahlgren et al.

Two-year follow-up of patients with post-COVID-19 condition in Sweden: a prospective cohort study

The Lancet, February 2023; doi.org/10.1016/j.lanepe.2023.100595

Abstract

Background

Few studies have reported the long-term health effects of COVID-19. The regional population-based Linköping COVID-19 study (LinCoS) included all patients hospitalised due to COVID-19 during the first pandemic wave. Four months post-discharge, over 40% (185/433) experienced persisting symptoms and activity/participation limitations, indicating post-COVID-19 condition (PCC). The present follow-up study aimed to determine the long-term recovery among these patients 24 months post-admission.

Methods

This prospective cohort study included all patients from LinCoS with PCC at four months post-discharge. We repeated the same structured interview at a 24-month follow-up to identify persisting symptoms and their impact on daily life. Intercurrent health issues were identified by reviewing medical records.

Findings

Of 185 patients with PCC at 4 months post-discharge, 181 were alive at the 24-month assessment and 165 agreed to participate. Of those, 21% (35/165) had been readmitted to hospital for various causes in the interim period. The majority of patients (139/165, 84%) reported persisting problems affecting everyday life at 24 months. Significant improvements were seen in the prevalence and magnitude of some symptoms/limitations compared with four months post-discharge. Cognitive, sensorimotor, and fatigue symptoms were the most common persisting symptoms at 24 months. No clear difference was evident between individuals treated in the intensive care unit (ICU) and non-ICU-treated individuals. Approximately half of those who were on sick leave related to PCC at four months after infection were on sick leave at 24 months.

Interpretation

This is one of the first studies to report 2-year outcomes in patients with PCC following COVID-19 hospitalisation. Despite some improvements over time, we found a high prevalence of persisting symptoms and a need for long-term follow-up and rehabilitation post COVID-19 infection.

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An update on COVID-19: SARS-CoV-2 variants, antiviral drugs, and vaccines

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Abstract

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a highly contagious and pathogenic virus that first appeared in late December 2019. This SARS-CoV-2 causes an infection of an acute respiratory disease called "coronavirus infectious disease-2019 (COVID-19). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared this SARS-CoV-2 outbreak a great pandemic on March 11, 2020. As of January 31, 2023, SARS-CoV-2 recorded more than 67 million cases and over 6 million deaths. Recently, novel mutated variants of SARS-CoV are also creating a serious health concern worldwide, and the future novel variant is still mysterious. As infection cases of SARS-CoV-2 are increasing daily, scientists are trying to combat the disease using numerous antiviral drugs and vaccines against SARS-CoV-2. To our knowledge, this is the first comprehensive review that summarized the dynamic nature of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, SARS-CoV-2 variants (a variant of concern and variant of interest), antiviral drugs and vaccines utilized against SARS-CoV-2 at a glance. Hopefully, this review will enable the researcher to gain knowledge on SARS-CoV-2 variants and vaccines, which will also pave the way to identify efficient novel vaccines against forthcoming SARS-CoV-2 strains.