



"There is a light on the horizon with a vaccine, but we must remain vigilant against COVID-19 by continuing to wear masks, wash hands, and practice social distancing." ~ Dr. Joe McLaughlin

CHAP Weekly Update

January 8, 2021

COVID-19 Long Hauler Syndrome

More than 80 million people around the world have recovered from COVID-19. However, among the people who recovered from acute infection, some continue to have symptoms.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease, information about it is still evolving. In the US and Europe, there are several ongoing studies gathering information about symptoms and treatment.

How Common Is Long Hauler Syndrome and Who Is Affected?

- In one study, about 35 percent of people with a positive COVID-19 test and symptoms were not back to normal after two weeks. If you compare this to influenza, about 90 percent of people are back to normal in that time.
- In another study, about 10 percent of people with a positive COVID-19 test still had symptoms after three weeks and some had symptoms that persisted for months.
- Long Hauler Syndrome may be more common in older people and in people with two or more chronic medical conditions; however, even in people age 18 to 34 years old, about 20 percent were not back to usual health after two weeks. Long Hauler Syndrome appears to be more common in women than in men.



Two Groups of Long Hauler Syndrome

Some researchers have begun sorting "Long Hauler COVID" (also known as "Long COVID") into two groups:

Post acute COVID: Symptoms last longer than three weeks

Chronic COVID: Symptoms last longer than 12 weeks

Symptoms Common to Both Post Acute and Chronic COVID

Most common symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Chronic cough and dyspnea (shortness of breath)
- Chest pain
- Body aches and joint pains



Other symptoms:

- Loss of taste or smell
- Difficulty sleeping
- Headaches
- "Brain fog" - forgetfulness, confusion, difficulty concentrating
- Skin rashes
- Depression, anxiety

For both groups, symptoms may come and go over hours, days or even weeks. Also, symptoms may interfere with work and family responsibilities, leading to financial problems and family conflict.

Let us know what you think! aka-CHAPCOVID-19weeklyupdates@anthc.org

Send questions for presenters and each other, and suggest topics for discussion.



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Causes of Long Hauler Syndrome

Scientists don't know the cause yet. Theories include:

- The virus is still in the tissues, causing damage.
- The body is reacting with a delayed immune response, including inflammation and autoimmune-like problems.
- The virus causes damage to the lining of small blood vessels, resulting in clotting problems and ongoing tissue problems.
- It may be a combination of the above.



How Can You Help Your Patients?

- Listen to your patients.
- If possible, provide pulse ox monitors for checking oxygen saturation; teach abdominal breathing techniques. (See past bulletin, June 19)
- Work with your referral doctor to keep any chronic medical problems well controlled (i.e., diabetes, high blood pressure).
- Fever may be treated with acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Talk to your referral doctor first.
- Encourage patients to pay attention to healthy habits:
 - Decrease alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and sugar.
 - Get lots of rest.
- Exercise, introduce gradually.
- Educate patients about dangerous remedies advertised on the internet such as high doses of vitamins or unproven unscientific herbal preparations.
- Most people recover spontaneously but it may take a long time.

Symptoms to Look For

Call your referral doctor for any of the following symptoms:

- Worsening breathing problems or SpO₂ is less than 96 percent
- Unexplained chest pain
- New confusion
- Focal weakness



Sources and More Information

JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association:

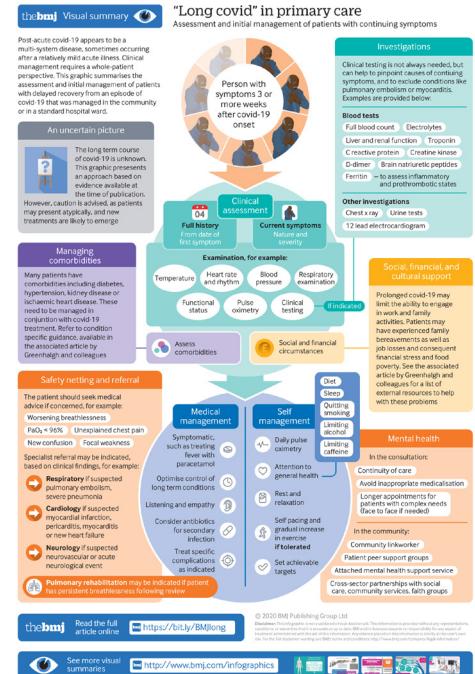
[Long-term Health Consequences of COVID-19](#)

British Medical Journal:
[Management of post-acute covid-19 in primary care](#)

CDC, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report:

[Symptom Duration and Risk Factors for Delayed Return to Usual Health Among Outpatients with COVID-19 in a Multistate Health Care Systems Network](#)

British Medical Journal:
[Long covid: How to define it and how to manage it](#)



thebmj Visual summary

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Vaccine Update

Both the Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines are being distributed in Alaska. Beginning January 11, 2021, all people over age 65 are eligible for the vaccine.

Vaccination is a great way to prevent both COVID and post COVID syndrome.

For information on vaccine safety and how these vaccines work, visit:

- ANTHC Remote learner: [COVID-19 Vaccines CE](#)
- Short video describing the vaccines:
[JN Learning: Coronavirus Vaccines video](#)
- Previous Bulletins: November 13, 2020 and December 3, 2020 available on [AKchap.org](#) in the Resources tab.
- Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Covid-19 Vaccine Status Update: [Covidvax.alaska.gov](#)
- Live webinar: Jan 13, 2021 12pm Alaska time. Motivational Interviewing and Vaccine Hesitancy. Register in advance at:
[APCA Lunch & Learn](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
[Clinical Resources for Each COVID-19 Vaccine](#)



Thanks to:

Thanks to Dr. Ellen Hodges for her presentation on Long COVID Syndrome. Thanks also to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Coronavirus Response Team who participated in the call and brought us education about COVID-19 Vaccination.



Covid by the Numbers

- Alaska Cases as of January 5, 2020: **44,280**
- Alaska average daily case rate: **43.84 cases per day, per 100,000 people**
- Case numbers are still high in YK, Delta region
- More stats at [Coronavirus.dhss.alaska.gov](#)



CHA/Ps, Earn CE Credit

Remember you can earn CE credit for attending the COVID-19 CHAP Weekly Update zoom meetings every Tuesday, 12pm to 1pm.

Each week has a corresponding CE certificate found online at:
<https://anthc.remote-learner.net>

CHA/P on Facebook



Community Health Aide/Practitioner Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/groups/AlaskaCommunityHealthAidesPractitioners](#)

SAVE THE DATE



January 12, 2021

We will take a break from COVID. Bethany Berry, CNM, a great supporter of CHA/Ps and their work, will present a talk called *Screening for Substance Use in Pregnancy and Marijuana in Pregnancy*.

January 19, 2021

COVID-19 Update on Vaccines and their use in people with immune problems as well as a brief talk on how medical studies are done and how they might be different than what you read on the internet.

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