



Practice Update - Long Covid

Dear Palace Gate Practice Patient

You will be aware from the news coverage of the reduction in coronavirus viral infection and the successful roll-out of the vaccination campaign. Whilst this is excellent news many people who have been infected with coronavirus over the last year may still have ongoing symptoms.

When these symptoms have continued for more than twelve weeks they are considered to be Post Covid-19 syndrome (commonly known as Long Covid). Symptoms that last between four and twelve weeks are considered to be Ongoing Symptomatic Covid-19. Now that these syndromes have been recognised studies are starting to look at ways to treat them.



It was not immediately obvious quite how many body systems could be affected by Covid19 but we now recognise that nearly all body systems can be affected. The presenting symptoms of Long Covid (outlined below) are varied and not always related to the symptoms initially experienced at the time of the acute infection.

Studies have shown that between 2.5% and 18% of all Covid-19 patients may go on to have persisting symptoms beyond 12 weeks and be diagnosed with Long Covid. Most of these studies have looked at patients who were admitted to hospital with their initial infection. However, significant numbers of patients are being seen with Long Covid who had milder initial infections which were managed at home. Patients who had a greater number of symptoms in their initial illness, older people and women seem to be at a higher risk of developing Long Covid.

Examples of common symptoms seen in Long Covid:

Respiratory and Cardiovascular Symptoms

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Palpitations
- Cough

Gastrointestinal/Abdominal

- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain
- Anorexia
- Nausea

Neurological

- Dizziness
- Headache
- "Brain Fog"
- Cognitive Impairment

Generalised/Psychological

- Loss of taste/smell
- Anxiety/depression
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Fatigue/Muscle ache



The challenge with these symptoms is to work out if there is an associated medical process going on or whether this is related purely to the virus itself. We have seen that this virus can cause new presentations of medical problems such as heart disease and diabetes.

The doctors at Palace Gate have kept up to date with the latest advice and guidance about the management of Long Covid and we are able to start investigations to look for the causes of ongoing symptoms and refer patients on to appropriate specialists if needed.

So please let us know and come and talk to us if you think you are experiencing persistent Covid symptoms.

Best wishes from the Palace Gate Practice Team.

