

WEBINAR QUESTIONS:

NEUROLOGIC COMPLICATIONS WITH POST-COVID SYNDROME

Shruti Agnihotri, MD – Associate Professor, Department of Neurology

How can memory loss and confusion be addressed or slowed?

The first step is to look for any obvious causes, such as abnormal thyroid hormone levels, low vitamin B12 levels, anxiety, and poor sleep. If any of these conditions are found, they should be treated first. Secondly, following a healthy diet and exercising regularly are very important to help reduce memory loss and confusion.

What can I do about blurry vision nine months after having COVID-19?

It is best to be evaluated by an ophthalmologist (eye doctor).

What do you suggest for insomnia?

The first step is to look for any obvious causes for insomnia and address them if found. The next step is to practice good “[sleep hygiene](#)”, which is a term used to describe healthy sleep habits or behaviors that may help you fall asleep better and remain asleep through the night.

Are there any treatments for parosmia?

Our otolaryngology (ear, nose, and throat, or ENT) physicians at the UAB Post-COVID Clinic can help with this.

What are some tips to help improve symptoms such as anxiety and depression?

Stress reduction techniques may help, including mindfulness and meditation. If those do not help, it is best to seek help from a counselor or psychiatrist.

Is it common for neurological symptoms to come and go?

Yes, symptoms may come and go for some people, but they may stay more constant or continue longer for other people.

How long do neurological symptoms continue after having COVID-19?

There is no clear answer, as the time can vary for different people.

Have you seen patients who report having strange tastes?

Yes, we have seen patients who complain of unpleasant or abnormal tastes. This usually happens with people who also report issues with their sense of smell, but it can occur in people who don't report any effects on their sense of smell.

Is it normal to have lots of symptoms, even after having a mild case of COVID-19?

Yes. In fact, what we have seen and what studies have found is that most patients with post-COVID symptoms had a mild case of COVID-19.

Can extreme hydration efforts (such as regular infusions) designed to treat postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), fatigue, headache, and autoimmune problems help regulate my blood volume and blood flow post-COVID?

This needs to be evaluated on an individual basis.

I am experiencing brain fog, “COVIDsomnia”, and fatigue. Are sleeping pills OK for treating my sleep deprivation?

We recommend looking for any underlying reasons for your sleep problems and addressing them, if found. The next step is to practice good “[sleep hygiene](#)”, which is a term used to describe healthy sleep habits or behaviors that may help you fall asleep better and remain asleep through the night.

Have you seen paralysis in people with post-COVID syndrome?

Muscle weakness is sometimes seen in people suffering from post-COVID syndrome.

I had COVID-19, and now I’m having trouble finding the right word or using the correct form of certain words when speaking. Will this get better over time?

For some people, it improves with time, but for others, it continues longer. We do not have a good understanding of when this symptom will stop in all cases.

Is there any evidence of neurological causes for when the heart races without exertion?

This may be one result of a condition called dysautonomia (abnormal functioning of the autonomic nervous system).

If COVID-induced delirium (hallucinations and paranoia) stops on its own, are there possible long-term effects that should be watched for or checked?

For most people, no. However, people who had mild dementia before COVID-19 are more likely to experience delirium. If there are any concerns about ongoing memory loss, they should be discussed with a physician.

I had postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) before COVID-19, and now I sometimes experience brain fog, anxiety, and insomnia. What is the best way to overcome these three symptoms?

If you were diagnosed with POTS, that should be treated first. If the symptoms listed above continue after being fully treated for POTS, a neurologic evaluation is recommended.

Will symptoms of neuropathy (weakness, numbness, or pain from nerve damage) improve over time?

It is important to first look for any obvious causes of neuropathy, such as a low level of vitamin B12. With neuropathy symptoms that are definitely due to COVID-19, we have seen patients improve over time.