

What are the lasting impacts from COVID-19?



While we are only beginning to understand the long-term impacts of COVID-19, early evidence suggests a combination of lung, neurological, and heart effects.

Lungs Health Effects

Some patients may experience a drop of 20-30% in lung function after full recovery from COVID-19.¹

Those who suffer from a severe COVID-19 infection in their lungs may develop Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.^{2,3}

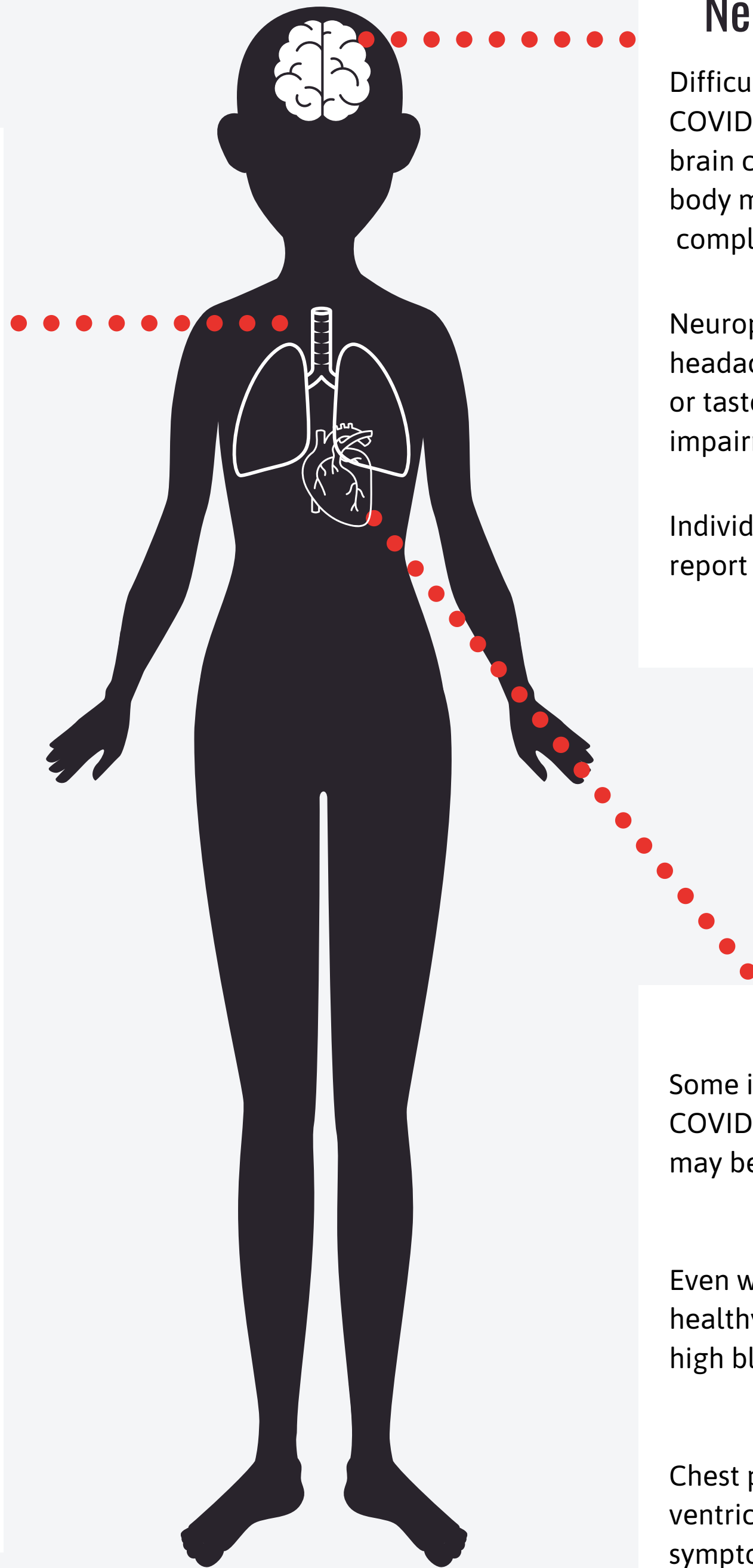
Ground-glass opacity, which indicates lung damage, may exist in high levels for long duration.⁴

Recovered patients have reported ongoing shortness of breath and general exhaustion.^{6,7}

Lung scarring is more common in those who have underlying health conditions like lung disease or hypertension. Lung damage is also seen in people who spent prolonged time on ventilators.⁸

Pneumonia caused by COVID-19 tends to affect both lungs, which may result in severe lung injury and breathing difficulties.⁹

Lasting lung damage seen in those who have recovered from COVID-19 can develop into progressive, irreversible interstitial lung disease.⁵



Neurological Health Effects

Difficulty thinking can occur after an acute COVID-19 infection. The virus may damage brain cells, and inflammation in the brain or body may cause neurological complications.⁶

Neuropsychological problems can include headaches, dizziness, lingering loss of smell or taste, mood disorders, or deeper cognitive impairments.¹²

Individuals recovering from COVID-19 also report fatigue lasting longer than six weeks.⁷

Heart Health Effects

Some individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 have a myocarditis-like scar that may be permanent.^{10,11}

Even with mild cases and in previously healthy individuals, some have reported high blood pressure.⁶

Chest pain, thromboembolism, and ventricular dysfunction are common symptoms of post-acute COVID-19.⁷

Slow the Spread

Living in an area where COVID-19 positivity rate falls between 11%-20% makes individuals five times more likely to test positive for COVID-19.¹³ You can help slow the spread by:



Wearing a face covering.



Using hand sanitizer or washing hands frequently.



Keeping at least a six foot distance from others.



Staying home if you feel ill.



Regularly cleaning items you use frequently.

Sources

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