

COVID-19 existing resource response #10

(Last updated 11 May 2021)

Question

What is the best-available evidence about the management of long COVID symptoms and care models for long COVID patients?

What we found

We searched the COVID-END global and domestic inventories of best evidence syntheses to identify evidence documents that focused on the management of long COVID symptoms and care models for long COVID patients. The search terms used were: “long COVID-19” OR “long-COVID” OR “post-acute COVID”. We also contacted 40+ Canadian evidence-synthesis teams by email. The existing evidence we identified is provided in Table 1.

The documents identified, include:

- one guideline;
- one living review;
- five full systematic reviews;
- one rapid review;
- two protocols for systematic reviews;
- three single studies;
- nine other types of documents (non-systematic summaries, evidence briefs and correspondence).

Box 1: Our approach

COVID-END in Canada responds to requests for evidence syntheses about topics related to COVID-19 that are likely to be explicitly considered by high-level decision-makers in multiple Canadian jurisdictions. This includes conducting rapid evidence profiles, living evidence profiles, rapid syntheses and living evidence syntheses. Examples of these evidence products can be viewed [here](#).

Sometimes requests are submitted about questions that have already been addressed by one or more recently updated, high-quality evidence syntheses or will be addressed soon by work underway (e.g., through a rapid synthesis underway with or being planned by a Canadian team, registered synthesis protocol or CIHR funding to conduct a synthesis). Other times all the requestor needs is a list of available evidence syntheses undertaken by COVID-END in Canada partners or COVID-END global partners. In these situations, we prepare a response that profiles these existing resources. These responses are typically prepared by a combination of: 1) searching both the COVID-END domestic inventory and the COVID-END global inventory; and 2) contacting 40+ Canada evidence-synthesis teams to identify any additional resources or work underway that is relevant to the question posed in a request. Such an existing resource response is equivalent to a rapid evidence profile prepared with the same turn-around time.

We followed this approach to prepare this existing resource response, which was prepared in half of a business day (and hence the equivalent to a half-day rapid evidence profile) to inform next steps in evidence synthesis, guideline development and/or decision-making related to the question that was posed.

Table 1: Hyperlinked titles to evidence documents about long COVID

Evidence type	Evidence documents identified
Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 rapid guideline: Managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 (NICE guideline)
Living reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation and COVID-19: A rapid living systematic review 2020 by the Cochrane Rehabilitation Field (AMSTAR rating 4/10; literature last searched 30 September 2020)
Full systematic reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late complications of COVID-19: A systematic review of current evidence (AMSTAR rating 6/9; literature last searched 4 November 2020) • Pulmonary rehabilitation in COVID-19 patients: A scoping review of current practice and its application during the pandemic (AMSTAR rating 4/9; literature last searched 10 August 2020) • Respiratory function in patients post-infection by COVID-19: A systematic review and meta-analysis (AMSTAR rating 7/11; literature last searched 15 July 2020) • Diabetes mellitus and COVID-19 in the post-acute phase patients: Possible links with physical and rehabilitation medicine and balneotherapy (AMSTAR rating 4/11; literature last searched 15 May 2020) • Long-term clinical outcomes in survivors of coronavirus outbreaks after hospitalization or ICU admission: A systematic review and meta-analysis of follow-up studies (AMSTAR rating 7/10; literature last searched March 2020)
Rapid reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation needs of post-acute COVID-19 patients (AMSTAR rating 4/9; literature last searched 4 May 2020)
Protocols for reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 functional status sequelae • A mixed methods systematic review of post-viral fatigue interventions: Are there lessons for long COVID-19?
Single studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prospective study of 12-week respiratory outcomes in COVID-19-related hospitalisations • Post-COVID-19 symptom burden: What is long-COVID and how should we manage it? • Developing services for long COVID: Lessons from a study of wounded healers
Other types of documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of prevention and management of long-term consequences of post-acute respiratory distress syndrome in patients with COVID-19 (non-systematic summary) • Considerations for postacute rehabilitation for survivors of COVID-19 (non-systematic summary) • Management of post-acute COVID-19 in primary care (non-systematic summary) • Rehabilitation settings during and after COVID-19: An overview of recommendations (non-systematic summary) • Long COVID: An overview (non-systematic summary) • Post-acute COVID-19 syndrome (non-systematic summary) • Long COVID-19 clinics (evidence brief from Research, Analysis, and Evaluation Branch of Ontario's Ministry of Health) • Understanding long COVID-19 (evidence brief from Research, Analysis, and Evaluation Branch of Ontario's Ministry of Health) • UK guidelines for managing long-term effects of COVID-19 (correspondence from The Lancet)

Al-Khateeb, Wilson MG, Bains T, Mansilla C, Bhuiya A, Lavis JN. COVID-END in Canada existing resource response #10: What is the best-available evidence about the management of long COVID symptoms and care models for long COVID patients?. Hamilton: McMaster Health Forum, COVID-END in Canada, 11 May 2021.

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