



Editorial

Long Covid and persistent headache

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We are going through this moment with so many cases of patients with Covid-19, and the high mortality rate is very worrying. For patients recovering from the acute phase of viral infection, a significant number of sequelae can remain for a long time, probably some of these sequelae have a permanent character; we will only know about this over time.^{1,2}

Neurological alterations are frequent in Covid-19, such as cognitive complaints, headache, smell and taste dysfunctions, among others.^{2,12}

With a certain frequency, patients with rare migraine episodes or even those who never report any migraine or tension-type headache attacks are arriving in our offices with daily or almost daily headaches after being affected by Covid-19.^{4,13-17} This clinical picture of pain can persist for weeks or months, associated or not with other symptoms such as tiredness, inability to perform trivial tasks, discouragement, depression and aggressiveness. In addition, a deficit in the cognitive sphere is also a frequent problem in these patients.^{3,18,19} Thus, this clinical condition has been termed as “chronic Covid syndrome”, “Long Covid”, or “Covid long-haulers”.^{11,15,20-24}

In general, what has been considered for the diagnosis of long Covid is the persistence or appearance of symptoms, not explained by any other cause^{25,28}, days after SARS-CoV-2 infection.²⁰

There is a spectrum of severity observed in patients with Covid-19, from a complete absence of symptoms to severe deterioration of various physiological parameters, such as renal, cardiac, hematological, immunologic, nutritional, pulmonary or hepatic functions; in short, any organ can be affected during the viral infection. These critically ill patients need to receive ventilatory support with sedation in an intensive care unit, thus undergoing several invasive interventions to save their life.²⁶⁻²⁹ Recovery from this intense physio-emotional strain is very laborious for those who have survived and require many months of rehabilitation.³⁰

In this way, there are several possible causes of Long Covid, such as exhaustion of the organism against the virus, immunological, action of drugs, high level of stress, sleep deprivation, among others not yet understood. This group of patients needs to be better studied to prevent the onset of Long Covid or the headache associated with it. And we still know little about the best way to treat the headache attacks of these patients with Long Covid.

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