

POSH Update #23

We're aware that about 10 percent of VCH medical staff contracted COVID-19 in the pandemic, mostly in the recent Omicron upsurge.

Ninety four percent of the 129 VCH medical staff we spoke to since December 1, 2021, who indicated probable exposure sources, suggested a household or community source. This is supported by the findings of a case control study by our team,¹ and our comparison of healthcare staff rates with background community rates.^{2,3}

Fortunately, with vaccination, cases have been mostly very mild.



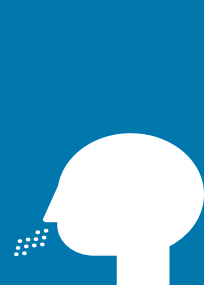
As a result of high vaccination coverage and mild disease among those who become infected, POSH no longer calls medical staff who test positive for COVID, but please feel free to contact us if you test positive and have questions.

Recovery from COVID-19 can look different for each person.

When symptoms are present 12 weeks following onset of COVID-19, and symptoms can't be attributed to other causes⁴, "long-COVID" is a possible diagnosis.

While some studies suggest that long COVID is rare (less than 2 percent of COVID-19 cases), others have estimated this to occur in as many as 20 percent of cases.^{5,6}

Symptoms can occur regardless of the severity of the acute illness.⁶ Long-COVID can significantly impair quality of life and the ability to work.⁷ Vaccination reduces the risk of long COVID.^{8,9} Common symptoms of long-COVID include:



- fatigue
- shortness of breath
- post-exertional malaise
- palpitations
- cough
- muscle and joint pain
- cognitive dysfunction (brain fog)
- anxiety
- depression
- sleep disorder
- headache
- fever
- altered taste or smell
- diarrhea
- menstrual cycle changes¹⁰



If you think you may have long-COVID, help is available.

- The Post-COVID-19 Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network offers help for BC residents with long-COVID. Comprehensive resources for self-care, clinical care, and additional information are available on the [website](#). Note that a PCR or lab test is not required for referral.
- Contact us at POSH if you would like to discuss possible workplace accommodations and need help navigating the process with your medical leader.

If you'd like to learn about care for long-COVID patients, BC ECHO has a [monthly online course](#) that may be of interest.

If you have ongoing concerns about your own health post-COVID, POSH can offer you tailored support in partnership with your medical leader, primary care provider, etc.

References

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Please feel free to email us at posh.covid@ubc.ca and we will be in touch.

