

The challenges of syndrome Post COVID-19 for science



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Post-COVID syndrome or COVID-long syndrome are the terms in use to characterize the persistent symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), which affect up to 10% of people with the disease.

In 2020, the challenge was to understand the natural history of the disease and its etiological agent (Sar-Cov-2); clinical manifestations, treatment and increased survival. The continuity of the pandemic has multiplied the challenges, be it in the identification and understanding of mutations of the virus, in reinfections, or in late repercussions in survivors, especially with serious illness.

The clinical course of COVID-19 is varied and may require hospitalization and admission to the Intensive Care Unit,

associated with high mortality.⁽³⁾ Among the survivors, the repercussions on physical and mental health are significant and the temporality of the manifestations has a growing interest from science and society.

Cohort studies^(4,5) register the existence of persistent symptoms for four to six months after infection. COVID-19 can affect several organs, if not all systems in the body, resulting in a multisystemic inflammatory syndrome.

The most expressive prolonged symptoms are related to the systems: respiratory with dyspnea, cough, chest pain, tonsillitis and fatigue; neurological, with chemosensory dysfunction (ageusia and anosmia), memory loss and headache; musculoskeletal, characterized by muscle weakness, arthralgia and myalgia; gas-

trointestinal with persistent diarrhea; dermatological, characterized by alopecia. In addition to changes in the cardiovascular, immune, metabolic and psychological systems, with sleep disturbance, anxiety and depression. Part of COVID-longa is called post-intensive care syndrome and results from the treatment of the disease, especially from hospitalization.

Despite the advances in facing the pandemic, there is a need for investments in the evaluation and monitoring of the consequences of the post-COVID syndrome, to support health professionals and managers in driving this new demand to the health system. While we do not have specific treatment and vaccines for everyone, the best way to avoid long-term complications is to prevent COVID-19. ■

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