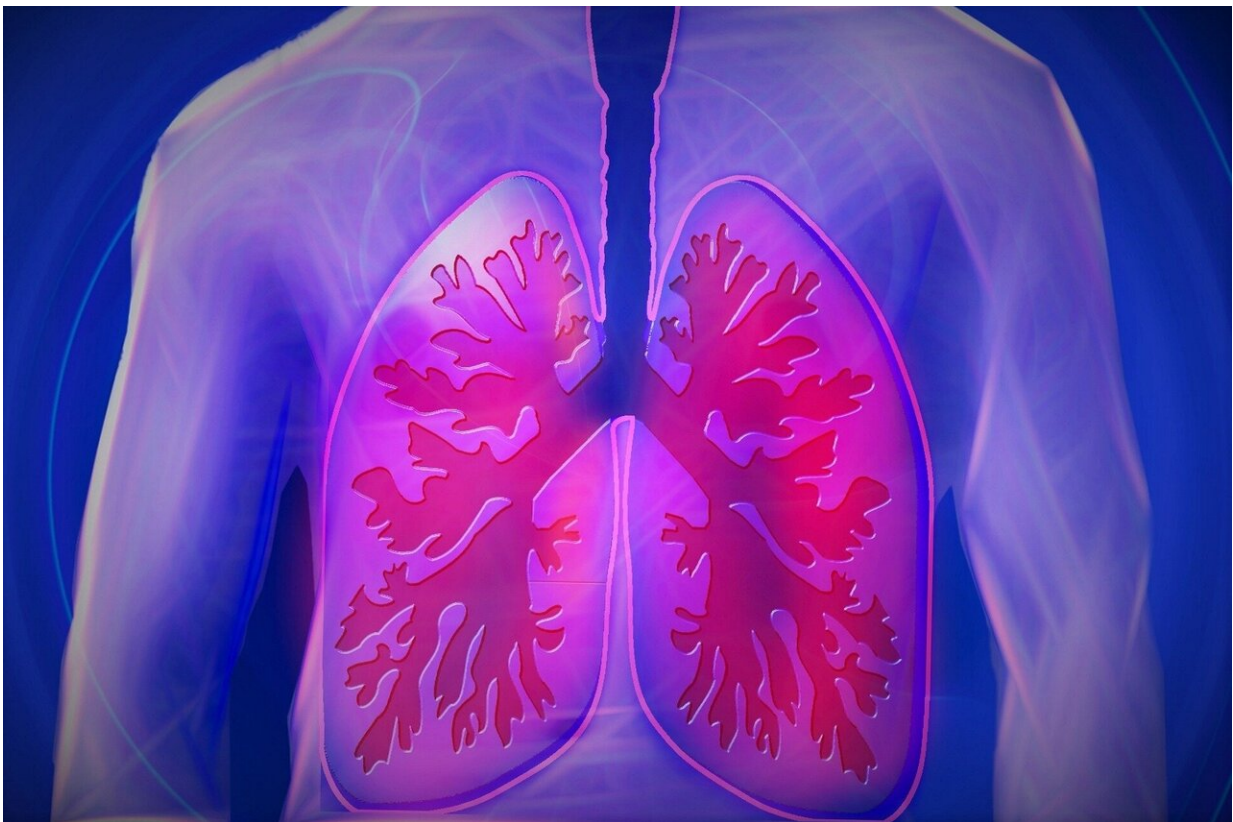


New study finds fully recovered COVID-19 patients do not suffer permanent lung damage

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A new study suggests that patients who contract COVID-19 and completely recover from all symptoms do not show evidence of lasting

damage to the lungs.

The multicenter [observational study](#) looked at COVID-19 survivors who experienced asymptomatic, moderate or severe COVID-19 infections and underwent an unrelated elective lung operation for lung nodules or [lung cancer](#) sometime after recovery. While traditionally the focus of the examination is on the tumor that is removed, this study also focused on the benign [lung tissue](#) around the tumor that had previously been afflicted with COVID-19.

"Since the start of the pandemic, a big question has been whether COVID-19 will have long-term or [permanent damage](#) on our lungs," said Zaid Abdelsattar, MD, MS, senior author of the study and thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon at Loyola Medicine. "This research provided us with the rare opportunity to study the asymptomatic survivors of COVID-19 and make observations to help us answer this question."

Of all the COVID-19 survivors studied, none showed any detectable lasting lung damage that was directly attributable to COVID-19.

While autopsy reports of deceased COVID-19 patients and pathologic studies from patients with end-stage lung disease from COVID-19 report severe fibrosis, diffuse alveolar damage, perivascular T-cell infiltration, severe endothelial injury, intracellular viral particles and cell membrane disruption in lung tissue, this study indicates that the large majority of COVID-19 survivors can recover without significant lasting lung damage.

"Further research is still needed on why some patients recover completely, and others don't. Our study shows that if you contract COVID-19 and then completely recover clinically and on imaging, your [lung](#) tissues are also likely to have completely healed as well without permanent damage" said Dr. Abdelsattar.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, 116 million people worldwide have contracted COVID-19, and more than 2.5 million people have lost their lives.

The study, "Pulmonary parenchymal changes in COVID-19 survivors," appeared in the *Annals of Thoracic Surgery*.

More information: Ashley Diaz et al, Pulmonary parenchymal changes in COVID-19 survivors, *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery* (2021). DOI: [10.1016/j.athoracsur.2021.06.076](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.athoracsur.2021.06.076)

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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