

Concerns raised about COVID-19 chronic olfactory dysfunction

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(HealthDay)—Chronic olfactory dysfunction (COD) as a symptom of

long-term COVID-19 is emerging as a growing public health concern among U.S. individuals, according to a research letter published online Nov. 18 in *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.

Amish M. Khan, from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, and colleagues examined the scale of public [health](#) concern for COVID-19 COD. The number of daily new cases of COVID-19 was estimated using publicly available data. Based on this estimate and two studies reporting the incidence of acute COVID-19 OD as 52.7 percent and reporting the recovery rate from OD as 95.3 percent, estimates of the cumulative frequency of COVID-19 COD were created.

The researchers note that the mean number of daily cases during the COVID-19 pandemic was 68,468. COD began emerging six months after the start of the pandemic, in August 2020, and the cumulative number of U.S. individuals with COD increased steadily through April 2021. A near exponential increase in the slope of the cumulative number of U.S. individuals with COD was predicted starting in May 2021 and through August 2021. By August 2021, the [number](#) of U.S. individuals expected to develop COD was 712,268 based on intermediate estimates, ranging from 170,238 to 1,600,241 based on low estimates and the highest estimate, respectively.

"These data suggest an emerging public health concern of OD and the urgent need for research that focuses on treating COVID-19 COD," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to a data and analytics company; a second author disclosed ties to a health insurance company.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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