

# Most COVID-19 ICU survivors experience symptoms one year after ICU admission

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75% of the COVID-19 survivors who were treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) experience physical, mental and/or cognitive problems one-year post ICU. This shows the large-scale MONITOR-IC study led by

Radboud university medical center, in which the health status of ICU survivors is monitored with questionnaires up to five years after ICU admission.

The study regarding long-term health problems, published in the scientific journal *JAMA*, was conducted among 246 COVID-19 patients (176 men/70 women) who were treated in the [intensive care unit](#) (ICU) in the Netherlands. Their mean age was 61 years. Using questionnaires, they were asked how they were doing one-year post ICU. Worldwide, this is the first scientific research regarding long-term problems among COVID-19 ICU survivors. Patients in this study were admitted to the ICU during the first COVID-19 surge between March and July 2020.

## **Majority of patients experience health problems one-year post ICU**

This study shows that three quarters of the COVID-19 ICU survivors experience problems one-year post ICU. These are primarily physical problems, whereby half of the patients experience feelings of fatigue. Other [physical problems](#) are e.g. a reduced condition, pain, muscle weakness and shortness of breath. Also, mental symptoms are common; one in five COVID-19 ICU survivors experience feelings of anxiety or post-traumatic stress. Furthermore, one in six have cognitive problems such as memory or attention problems.

These various problems negatively affect former ICU patients' daily live. Over half of them indicate that they have work-related problems because of the health problems: they reduced their working hours; they are still on sick leave or have even given up their job.

Principal investigator Marieke Zegers of Radboud University [medical center](#) says that "this study shows what an incredible impact an ICU

admission has on the lives of former COVID-19 patients. Even after one year, half of them is tired or experience lack of the energy to fully resume their work."

**More information:** Marieke Zegers et al, Clinical outcomes among patients with 1-year survival following intensive care unit treatment for COVID-19, *JAMA* (2022). DOI: [10.1001/jama.2022.0040](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2022.0040)

Provided by Radboud University

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